



Role Profile

Job title:	Senior Landscape Architect
Role Profile reference:	LP2598
Date:	16/09/2020
Manager/Director:	Service Manager – Placemaking / Head of Strategic Place
Directorate:	Strategic Development
Team:	Landscape

Job Purpose:

As a professionally qualified landscape architect, this role promotes and delivers high quality landscape led development in both the natural and built environment across the Borough. This is achieved, through the planning system acting as an expert consultee in the Council's statutory planning process and through project delivery, in the design, specification and contract implementation of a programme of complex external works as architect/contract administrator/project manager. The ability to communicate and work at all levels, often working under pressure to deliver to projected timeframes is key.

Responding to planning applications, requests for pre-app advice and as a specialist advising the councils capital programme projects, it requires close working with team members across a range of environmental disciplines on responses to - and the creation of - development masterplans, supplementary planning documents, detailed responses to planning applications and detailed design proposals.

These include the delivery of Swindon's growth priority areas, New Eastern Villages and Kingsdown. In the projects role, this post will be the principal architect in the delivery of capital programme projects, landscape, public realm, Community Forest and Leisure schemes, requiring financial budgeting and contract authorisation responsibility for schemes ranging from £50,000 to £3.6m.

This post will also implement and evolve office procedures and procurement protocols for the delivery of projects in a changing digital environment that requires modernisation of processes to deliver efficiencies.

Key Accountabilities:

- Design hard and soft landscape schemes in accordance with the Clients' brief
- Using appropriate IT packages (AutoCAD, GIS, Photoshop etc.) and drawing skills produce detailed working drawings and contract documentation; shortlist and select contractors and undertake tender action and evaluation
- Manage projects on site and administer contracts, to meet specified standards and timescales and approve the works.
- Exercise contract financial control, issuing variations, certificates and approving payments, to internal and external Contractors, to ensure projects are delivered within budget.
- Budget responsibility in the delivery of Landscape Projects typically £50,000 to £3.6m and authorised signatory for the financial administration of such contract works
- Produce detailed landscape surveys, appraisals, feasibility studies, reports and tree / vegetation surveys; prepare briefs for professional surveys and commission surveyor/engineering/quantity surveyor/ecological/arboricultural/heritage consultants.
- Lead and participate in public consultation exercises and prepare public exhibitions to ensure local people are represented in the development of neighbourhood projects.
- Provide an advisory and consultancy service for external organisations, including national and regional agencies, stakeholders / partner groups and Parish Councils.
- Provide detailed expert advice on matters of landscape and design to planning applications to planning officers, to members of the public, developers and other external agencies in relation to their planning applications. This includes recommending courses of action, and negotiation on proposals and projects to secure high quality design principles and placemaking.
- Provide landscape advice to the forward planning section in the development of local Plans and supplementary planning guidance.
- Prepare, provide and deliver written and oral evidence in representation of the Council, to Public Examination, Hearings, Appeals and Inquiries.
- Negotiate Section 106 agreements in conjunction with the Planning Officer and external agencies.
- Attend meetings with the public, developers, partners, agencies, and Council Members regarding landscape aspects in relation to planning and development.
- Attend / address Council Committees as required, including project updates to Corporate Board
- Implement and participate in public participation exercises including exhibitions and workshops in the course of planning and development management.
- Liaise with adopting bodies (Highways/parish Councils etc.) to agree the orderly handover of completed projects for adoption.
- Implement current H&S legislation with particular reference to the Construction, Design and Management (CDM) regulations and undertake designer's risk assessments for the project.
- Act in accordance with and execute the responsibilities and duties required by the CDM Regulations.
- Compile bids for external/partnership funding to support Borough initiatives.
- Administer projects in accordance with Council standing Orders and governance, including the preparation of reports, business cases, capital bids, briefing and decision notes.

- Present schemes to Council Committees and Council member briefings.
- Review and evaluate landscape products and technical information, and through CPD, ensure that best practice and the highest professional standards are applied to all aspects of landscape work.
- Develop a mechanism for implementing Public Art projects, a written and graphic documentation and policy for the procurement and delivery of Public Art projects in line with Council governance and financial standing orders
- Advise team members, officers and members on the emerging policy and monitor the implementation of individual Public Art projects and the Public Art s106 account
- Draft and gain approval of Capital bids for the inclusion of s106 sums in projects
- Liaise with Public Art Consultants where necessary
- Maintain a thorough and current knowledge of existing and emerging standard forms of contract and advise team members on their appropriate selection at project inception and in their administration during the course of implementation
- Maintain a thorough and current knowledge of existing and emerging relevant specification systems (incl. NBS) and advise team members on their appropriate selection at project inception and in their administration during the course of implementation
- Represent the interests of the council at meetings with developers, external agencies and other statutory bodies
- Assist in the recruitment and development of staff

Knowledge and Experience:

- Bachelor Degree and postgraduate qualification (min. diploma level) in Landscape Architecture
- Fully chartered member of the Landscape Institute (CMLI). This is an essential requirement of this senior position to sign off project work and ensure that support to the planning authority and clients is endorsed by full membership of the professional governing body for Landscape Architects.
- Post qualification experience, working at a senior level in landscape practice (essential), within a Local Planning Authority (highly preferred)
- A thorough understanding of the UK town & country planning system and associated legislation and guidance relevant to landscape led, high quality development and a detailed knowledge of its application. Knowledge and experience of the planning process, development control, TPO and Conservation Areas with strong knowledge of Land law, Nature Conservation and Environmental legislation key requirements.
- Highly motivated, with the ability to use initiative, with strong interpersonal skills and a collaborative outlook - with a passion for Landscape Architecture, sustainability and placemaking.
- Demonstrate creativity and strong attention to detail evident through a portfolio of selected previous projects.
- Exceptional design skills, IT proficiency and technical ability, working knowledge of landscape construction, planting and maintenance, and the ability to produce detailed construction details, working drawings and specifications using both industry standard software and excellent hand drawing skills to communicate ideas and design proposals.
- Strong communication skills are demanded - verbal, written and drawn.

- Strong IT proficiency, to enable production of documents, graphic presentation drawings, technical drawings, reports, spreadsheets and general correspondence (AutoCAD, Photoshop, Sketchup, NBS, MS Office, understanding of BIM).
- Confident and skilled presenter, to enable proposals to be communicated to colleagues and external agencies, members of the public and Council Members.
- Excellence in negotiation skills with a passion for securing high quality landscape outcomes.
- Ability to manage contractors and resolve conflict in relation to contractual matters.
- Proven project management skills and an ability to work well under pressure, with minimum supervision to enable project delivery in accordance with a client brief, to specification, budget and on time.
- A successful track record in implementing landscape schemes using key standard forms of contract.
- Conversant with construction Health and Safety and CDM regulations, duties and the ability to produce designer's risk assessments for projects.
- Experience of working directly with clients, the community, council members, senior officers, stakeholders, partners and developers in development management and the delivery of projects.
- Ability to make site visits and work on site without supervision - work undertaken outdoors can include visiting remote locations and working in inclement weather, accessing rough terrain and construction sites.

Decision Making:

The role necessitates a daily requirement to make decisions and judgements for the job's key accountabilities, to ensure the Council is provided with the highest standards of Landscape Architecture, all of these decisions have significant consequences in supporting Swindon as a growing, successful place.

The job holder is the Council's principle point of contact for landscape architecture, requiring decisions to be made on the acceptability of proposals based on experience and judgement. Key decision groupings include Financial / Work Planning / Project Design / Project Implementation / Planning decisions as follows:

- **Financial**
 - Integral part of tender process and project implementation. Procedures include tender reports, bills of reduction to hit budget target, issuing variation orders and orders for payment. Impact of decisions affect efficient expenditure and the ability to meet project budgets.
- **Work Planning**
 - Organising project work tasks to ensure efficient time management and project delivery. Many projects are subject to seasonal considerations. Impact of decision affects measurable outputs.
- **Project design**
 - Decisions regarding site layout, style, choice of materials and construction techniques. Impact of decision affects corporate commitments to achieving climate change and sustainability targets, Health and Safety issues, and liability through law.

- **Project implementation**
 - Making prompt and sometimes pressurised decisions on site to cope with unexpected circumstances, e.g. unrecorded underground services, contamination, unstable ground etc. Impact of decisions potentially have contractual implications; disputes and costs.
 - Ensuring health and safety, council policy, government directives and legal requirements are incorporated into evolving landscape design schemes.
 - Estimating projected fees and construction costs required for Landscape design projects and monitoring expenditure alongside analysis of financial statements for capital and Section 106 budgets
 - Testing design through consultation with all relevant parties and through the planning process. Impact of decision affects choice of the design and the impact lasts for the design life of the built scheme, often much further into the future (new woodlands, layouts of new development etc.)
- **Planning**
 - Regular and timely decision-making in relation to the expert advice given in the Development Management Planning process light of legislation and professional judgement based on experience and knowledge. This advice is also made in the context of the potentially long-term consequences for Swindon's growth, its inherent landscape character and other conflicting requirements
 - Policy formulation: judgemental recommendations on Green Infrastructure allocations in relation to built form and the configuration / components of open space and public realm.
 - Inquiries: Delegated responsibility for certain minor policy formulation and amendment at Inquiries.
 - Working with Developers Architects and Urban Designers for Major Development areas. Within multidisciplinary meetings, negotiating elements of acceptable design, detailing and quality of the built environment for the expansion of urban areas. This will include the requirement to minimise long-term revenue impacts upon the Council's financial expenditure.
 - Recognising opportunities for the seeking of funding for Planning gain via Section 106 Agreements. A regular task applied as part of the pre-application stage of planning applications.

Creativity and Innovation:

The post-holder will be required to produce dynamic and innovative solutions drawing on their own talent, creativity and experience, for a variety of situations and to negotiate skilfully in the pursuit of high quality design and landscape led solutions, for the benefit of Swindon. These will always focus on maximising existing potential in green infrastructure and wider public realm assets, whilst leveraging the post holders own creativity and innovative approach to the role; seeking and developing opportunities for enhancement, growth and successful establishment of new natural and public outdoor spaces wherever possible.

- **Project design and implementation:** Each project is different and site specific with a different brief demanding new approaches to design. Advances in horticultural

knowledge, new materials and construction techniques allow innovative design solutions in project work and necessitate a professional obligation for the post holder to remain inquisitive and always open to seek out new learning opportunities.

- Specialist Landscape Advice on Planning Applications: Review and challenge development proposals to ensure development is to the highest standard and has minimum impact on significant and valued landscape features.
- Feasibility studies, landscape assessments and master plans require the ability to consider and analyse a broad range of factors. Design solutions and recommendations demand analytical skills, expertise, problem solving, creative thought and professional landscape experience to arrive at sound judgements.
- Continually develop presentation techniques to communicate design ideas to a wide range of audiences across a wide range of platforms.
- Contributing to Council & Strategic Plans and policies.
- Sourcing funding from developers, grant aid and government bodies to achieve Council objectives and policy.
- Participate in corporate compilation of briefs supplying Landscape advice to ensure viable, sustainable and cost effective schemes are achieved.
- The diversity of schemes the job encompasses are all unique in brief and without set parameters or existing examples upon which to refer to. The job holder has to rely on the required skill set outlined in this profile which all support the job holders' innate ability to innovate, motivate and inspire others to achieve successful outcomes in both project and planning work.

Job Scope:

- Lead officer for all matters relating to Landscape Architecture.
- Design, detailing, tendering and delivery of projects
- Checking staff work in line with procedures
- Financial control of projects and fees
- Planning advice on minor and major projects
- Planning policy advice

Budget and resources:

- The post is a budget holder for both landscape capital projects and projects forming part of the councils wider corporate capital programme, ranging from c£50k to £3.6m. Authorised signatory for contractual payments and invoices.

Contacts and Relationships:

- Vast array of contacts and relationships day to day across the Council, at all levels from senior management (e.g. chief executive/director level outward), including (but not limited to) the wider Planning team, Property colleagues, Highways and those working on development projects to provide professional judgements on planning applications as well as all manner of landscape enquiries. Additional close professional connections with specialists in related disciplines including Urban Design, Ecologist, Community Forest and Arboricultural Officer, all in the pursuit of high

quality design and placemaking to ensure a holistic and comprehensive approach to schemes. Also participate in / chair meetings with team members, consultants and stakeholders in the review of project working and in the training and development of staff.

- Daily contact with Members of the public, key stakeholders, community organisations and Members of the Council, at all levels, including council leader level. This includes ongoing engagement throughout the statutory planning process, formalised through the Statement of Community Involvement, as well as presentations to Parish liaison groups, Parish Council meetings, public and/or community meetings, Council Working Parties and Committees. Also daily contact responding to telephone, e-mailed or written enquiries on a range of related queries and providing advice. Contact with colleagues in PR/Media to initiate output and updates to the website (or other media formats), respond to enquiries including the provision of standing advice, and undertake initiatives as may be required to promote landscape including training events, press articles or other publicity. These will include attending evening and weekend meetings and consultation exercises.
- Government Bodies, Professional Institutes and Regional Organisations such as Environment Agency, English Nature, DEFRA, English Heritage, Wiltshire Wildlife Trust, Community Forest, NWDAONB and other government and regional organisations. Seek written approval from Government Agencies for authority to develop land for residential, commercial and recreational activities where there exist biological constraints, such as protected species. The delivery of this development necessitates preparing contract documentation and drawings for tender action, communicating design and contractual parameters of scheme to a wide range of Contractors simultaneously, managing often complex tender queries which are both time and budget sensitive.

Values and Behaviours

We strive to underpin our culture of being at our Best through strong management and authentic leadership. This means getting the management basics right. We own and demonstrate accountability, both individually and collectively, and aim to get things right first time. Building on this we also expect everyone at SBC to demonstrate and live our organisational values and behaviours, by displaying:

- Accountability at all levels
- Customer care and pride in what we do
- Continuous learning and evaluation
- Valuing one another and the contribution each of us makes

Other Key Features of the role:

- Innovate in service delivery – using the posts dual focus on project and planning work to mutually support the other in the delivery of high quality design in accordance with national guidance and initiatives and in line with Corporate projects and priorities.

- Personal drive and resilience as this is a specialist role assisting in delivering change and inspiring, motivating and leading by example, seeking out learning opportunities and advice and support from external specialist bodies.
- Flexible in approach to secure the main aims and objectives of the role including out of work hours attending Planning Committees and lone working on site visits and meetings away from the office.
- Business awareness – anticipate changes to service delivery, seizing commercial opportunities for new projects and putting strategies in place
- Technical competence – extensive and thorough knowledge and experience of landscape architecture design principles and drivers and the application of statutory policy
- Strong verbal drawing and presentation skills – to present ideas to stakeholders.

Please add the names of the employee(s) that do the job and their line manager.	
Employee:	
Date:	
Line Manager:	
Date:	