LANCS38

Plan and manage site assessments in the land-based and environmental sector

Overview

This standard covers the planning and management of site assessments in the land-based and environmental sector. This includes deciding on the type of assessment to be carried out, setting the parameters of the assessment, determining effective methods and systems for data collection, allocating work, monitoring the collection, the interrogation and analysis of data and evaluating the data to produce and present the final outcome of the assessment.

Site assessments may be required for a wide range of reasons, such as to help determine how the site should be used and managed. Most assessments will involve both primary and secondary sources of data.

You must carry out your work in a way that takes account of its impact on the environment.

This standard is suitable for those with responsibility for planning and managing site assessments in the land-based and environmental sector.

Performance criteria

You must be able to:

1. confirm the purpose, scope and objectives of the site assessment in the land-based and environmental sector
2. determine the type/s of assessment required and the timescale for completion
3. identify potential sources of information and existing data relevant to the site
4. undertake preliminary studies to identify the range of issues that need to be taken into consideration for the effective assessment of the site, such as site restrictions or designations
5. confirm that the necessary permissions, consents or licences are in place for the site assessment
6. identify data collection methods that enable the site assessment to be undertaken with minimum damage or disturbance to the site
7. select suitable formats and systems for capturing and storing data, which allow it to be obtained in a valid and reliable manner and in a form that is capable of subsequent analysis
8. determine data analysis methods that allow valid and reliable conclusions to be drawn
9. confirm the format for the presentation of results and conclusions
10. identify and plan resource requirements to carry out the site assessment including surveyors, equipment and materials
11. develop a plan and specifications for the site assessment containing all the relevant information
12. provide those responsible for data collection and analysis with all the necessary details to enable them to complete their job, including site access arrangements
13. manage the site assessment at regular intervals to ensure that it is being done correctly and is producing valid and reliable outcomes
14. maintain communication with interested parties
15. check that all work is carried out in accordance with the relevant environmental and health and safety legislation, risk assessment requirements, codes of practice and policies of your organisation
16. check that site assessment does not adversely affect the condition of the survey site and that the site is reinstated to the required condition which is consistent with the surrounding area
17. confirm survey data is analysed using all available, relevant and current

information

18. evaluate the outcomes of data collection and analysis to confirm they are valid and reliable and that sufficient information has been generated
19. manage the production of accurate, unbiased results and conclusions
20. present the results of the site assessment in a manner that enables the information to be used

Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

1. the purpose, scope and objectives of the site assessment in the land-based and environmental sector
2. the different types of assessment that can be carried out
3. the parameters of the site assessment, including time constraints and any site restrictions or designations in place
4. the circumstances in which permissions, consents or licences are required for site assessment activities and how these are obtained
5. the various sources of data and methods of data collection available and how to determine those that would be most relevant for the site assessment
6. the purpose of undertaking preliminary or feasibility studies
7. the difference between primary and secondary sources of data and how the source may affect validity and reliability
8. how to select formats and systems for capturing and storing information so that it can be used for subsequent analysis
9. how to produce a plan and specifications that contain all the relevant information to enable the site assessment to be carried out
10. how to optimise the use of resources for planning site assessments, given the complexity of the task in hand, the resources available (including people, equipment and materials), the time of year and any other relevant factors
11. the effective methods of preparing and briefing those responsible for data collection and analysis
12. your responsibilities under the relevant environmental and health and safety legislation, risk assessment requirements, codes of practice and policies of your organisation
13. the ways in which conducting site assessments may impact on the site itself and how to minimise these
14. how to manage the site assessment to ensure that data is sufficient, valid and reliable
15. the importance of maintaining communication with interested parties and the best way to do this
16. the potential sources of error and bias
17. the qualitative and quantitative ways of analysing data that will provide the

information required

18. the possible actions to take when there are problems with the collection or analysis of data
19. the methods of presenting information that meet the audience requirements and how they will use the information
20. the ethical and moral responsibilities for alerting the organisation to any decisions that could adversely affect the outcome
21. the relevant legislation, local, regional and national policies

Glossary

Data collection methods could include: written, oral, aural, electronic, visual.

Data analysis methods could include: mathematical calculations, use of biodiversity metrics, use of modelling, use of application software.

Interested parties:

- those directly involved
- those affected by, or with an interest in, the site

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Scope of assessment: including legal, environmental, ecological, historic, social, cultural, aesthetic, and economic factors.

Site restrictions or designations could include**:**

- National Park
- Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
- Special Protection Area (SPA),
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
- National Nature Reserve
- Marine Conservation Zone
- World Heritage Site (WHS)
- Archaeological site
- Nitrogen Vulnerable Zone (NVZ)
- Drinking Water Safeguard Zones
- Scheduled Monument (SM)
- Listed Building (LB)
- Registered Parks and Gardens (RPGs)

- Registered Battlefield (RB)
- Sites identified on the Historic Environment Record (HER)
- Public rights of way and access land
- Military training area

Sources of data:

- primary
- secondary

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Types of assessment could include:

- Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)
- Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)
- Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA)
- Physical (abiotic) environment survey
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA)
- Habitat condition assessment
- Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA)
- Landscape/Seascape Character Assessments

Types of data:

- quantitative
- qualitative

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