

June 2017

SMALL IS B-E-A-U-TIFUL



Well I would say that wouldn't I.

RML is small and what we do is b-e-a-u-tiful.

We create new lively spaces from old tired ones. We can take land that has been disturbed and restore it. We manage new landscapes so that they mature to meet a long term plan. We give careful consideration to the existing site conditions before we allow work to commence. We put to good purpose the things that nature made rather than subjecting them to 'mean or no usage'. We have helped other people to work with nature by writing guidelines on good practice. We win approvals on behalf of people who want to build things. We have a positive impact on the lives of people.

Well that is quite enough trumpet blowing but even small trumpets can make much noise that travels far. I see our newsletters as trumpets that demonstrate the claims that I have just made. I hope that the newsletters as well as our activities do confirm my claims to some extent and bring you a little pleasure too when I am allowed to join in.

Philosophers might argue at great length and in great depth about what beauty is and how one finds it. One thing is for sure, beauty is not related to size. There are big things as well as small things that are beautiful, big mountains are often seen as things of great or even sublime beauty but small hills are admired for their picturesque charm.

Big businesses are important and can provide advantages that small business do not. But small businesses do exist in their millions in the UK so they must have special attributes that are related to them being small and valued by their clients.

What special qualities does RML display? Answers attached to a £20 note please, well you know how it is these days. The price of mammoth feed will surely rise after any Brexit deal, if we have a deal at all after the election result, but any response will be most welcome and mammoths eat quite a lot.

The owners of small businesses choose to do what they are doing because they want to. They believe that being small allows them to focus but occasionally it can seem that you and your mates are really on your own in a big wide world. In small firms 'the team' is immediately identifiable and the team boundary lies without the firm's extreme limits. It is not walled in, indeed in times of trouble the small firm can re-invent itself. By contrast, experience tells us that in large organisations the project team is a sub-set of the whole and the whole organisation employs a defensive mechanism that might or might not provide that much security for what lies inside.

One common feature of today's world is that very large firms of consultants are getting even bigger as they swallow up large ones.

Kind regards

**Idris**

Chief ranter and problem solver  
Richards, Moorehead & Laing Ltd.

A NEW DIXON OF DOCK GREEN

## The Role of the Environmental Clerk of Works – project management through common sense and understanding.

In recent years it has become a common place for there to be a requirement for an Environmental Clerk of Works (ECoW) to be appointed as a condition of a planning consent and / or environmental permits.

The Environmental Clerk of Works is typically a suitably qualified and experienced environmental professional, who is responsible for overseeing all environmental matters on site, and discussing these matters with the contractor, developer, and local authorities. RML as an environmental consultancy provides a full ECoW service to their clients.

My purpose in writing this newsletter is to outline the roles and responsibilities of the ECoW when visiting development sites that are under construction, as sometimes there is a lack of understanding of the role.

### What does an ECoW do?

The main role of the ECoW is to oversee ecological and environmental issues and ensures compliance with legislation, planning conditions and other documentation relevant to the project. The ECoW role requires a broad working knowledge of construction sites and their potential environmental issues, and is ideally supported by a multidisciplinary team to function correctly. Within RML the ECoW team works alongside the Environmental/Project Manager and other specialists to ensure that the Client is fully compliant with relevant legislation, planning conditions and project specific documentation.

The RML team has extensive experience in providing environmental management and monitoring of construction works ranging from highways to wind farms. Post construction management is also an important element in most contracts.



Peat bog restoration on a windfarm, Scottish Highlands

The ECoW role itself requires regular on-site presence, the frequency of which is determined on a site and construction requirements basis. The key aspects of the role are the communication with the client, site personnel and all other stakeholders as well as the production of written reports.

The ECoW works closely with the Client, Site Manager and the RML team to ensure that legislation is adhered to, project specific protection measures are implemented and site specific environmental/ecological mitigation measures are fulfilled. It is important to point out that only under the instruction from the client does the ECoW have the authority to halt construction works on a development should there be an unacceptable environmental risk.

It is a common misconception that the ECoW's role is to "Police" construction activities; I see me being there to advise the client of their environmental obligations.

In my next email I will discuss elements of the legal framework and responsibilities of an ECoW.

Kind regards

**Siôn**

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