



**Geotechnical &  
Environmental Consultants**

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### **Quality Management System Requirements**

Soils Limited will operate a Quality Management System for this project in accordance with the requirements and principals of BSEN ISO9001:2000. A director will be responsible for implementing the system and this will be monitored and developed in accordance with the identified needs of both Lancashire County Council and Soils Limited's performance objectives in respect of the three year consultancy service contract. Soils Limited have designed and commissioned software to specifically assist in implementing our QMS. All personnel are actively encouraged to seek new ways to maintain monitor and improve quality.

### **Environmental Management Systems**

Soils Limited operate an EMS complying with ISO 14001 through continual review and improvement both by Soils Limited and external consultants (Croner) complying with relevant environmental legislation and appropriate to Soils Limited's sphere of operations or operations Soils Limited may have influence. The EMS is controlled and managed by one person within the organisation. The objectives and limits/targets are documented and cover sub-contractors operating for Soil Limited and supervising staff. The EMS ensures that all relevant staff are kept up to date with current legislation and site specific requirements. Clear staff structures are given for each project with third party (client, statutory authorities etc) references and contact details and emergency procedure specific for any environmental impact that a specific job could make are documented with measurement and monitoring procedures. The policy covers both legal requirements and objectives and potential community environmental concerns.

### **Contractor and Council Working Together**

The management strategy will be a key element in ensuring cooperative working and added value. The overall management of the term contract will be assigned to a Director.

The companies activities are recorded on a project specific basis on a web based SQL-server database. Data recorded includes all contact information, resource requirements and allocation, key events and dates programmed and achieved as well as access to reports, logs etc. Protected read access will be given to the Client on a individual project basis so that they can obtain real time information.

All technical data i.e. Trial hole records, geotechnical and contamination test results are available in Association of Geotechnical Specialist (AGS) format that can be imported directly into GIS and other systems.

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Primary report supply is by email in PDF format CD ROM and/or paper copy in accordance with the client's instruction. Reports can also be made available in PDF format via a password protected FTP web based server if multi-departmental access were required.

By combining efficient project management and direct project access the Client is better informed, project completion dates minimised and field work streamlined. This directly leads to less disruption to local residents, business and commuters. Direct access to project control data allows the Client to give immediate response to queries from the public.

Soils Limited have a strong bias, both in project numbers and staff experience to working on urban brownfield regeneration projects, often requiring cooperative working with existing site occupants/users. Our records show projects for most of the London Boroughs, the Metropolitan Councils and many of the other Local Authorities across the UK. In addition, we have worked for many of the leading civil engineering and multidisciplinary consultancies and most of the leading housebuilders involved in brownfield urban regeneration.

Our wide experience means that we have met and successfully dealt with many problems and issues (technical and practical) that can arise and have the staff and resources to ensure speedy resolution of all such issues. We consider that the company knowledge of these matters will bring significant added value to the contract.

### **Contract Quality Performance and Best Value**

A performance report will be supplied at the completion of each project. This will record key performance indicators including programmed key dates and markers, both cost and time dependent and compare them to actual performance. Non-compliance points and cost variations will be analysed and action points defined that can be used to ensure best value. A quarterly summary report will be submitted to the client with key performance indicators identified as part of our commitment to supply continuous improvement over the contract term.

The quality of work will be assured using the principals of the QMS. Technical performance will be assessed by internal peer and management review at Director level and the procedures allow for external peer review as appropriate.

Where non-compliance is identified rectification will be conducted in a transparent documented method. The proposed project summary report will ensure that non-compliance is always identified and notified to the client in such a manner that any corrections or modifications to procedures are immediate.

Our success as an organisation depends on continuous improvement, both managerially and technically and this is a key responsibility of the Directors. We will supply the Client with continuous improvement over the duration of the contract. Technical improvement will be achieved by staff training for new and innovative engineering techniques and by updating plant and equipment to increase the value of site information. Project performance will be continuously improved by matching technology advances in IT for electronic delivery of data and reports. Excellence depends on high quality management and staff and a supportive working environment.

Our most important asset is our staff of professional engineers, geologists and support staff. Promoting excellence is achieved by the management creating an environment where they are valued and supported.

We are committed to encouraging and supporting the lifelong development of all employees.

We do this by requiring all staff to remain current by workplace training, for all professional

staff to fulfill the CPD requirements of their professional institution and by recognising and rewarding excellence in individuals. We actively encourage staff to develop and improve professionally through conferences, publications and events.

Senior members of staff are encouraged to motivate staff both by guidance, discussion and constructive criticism. Staff are given annual questionnaires which allow them to think about, discuss and criticise company management, policy and daily company methodology. This permits staff members to partake in active development of the company methodology and direction.

### Key Performance Indicators

Both financial and non-financial metrics are used as Key Performance Indicators (KPI) mindful of the SMART acronym of Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely.

Best value financial KPI is measured indirectly by the tender process where the value of a basket of rates is compared directly to those of a competitor. Only the client has access to the individual rates as this is commercially sensitive information, however an anonymised list of total tenders is supplied.

KPI measured and assessed internally are:-

<b>KPI</b>	<b>Information source</b>	<b>Assessed by</b>	<b>Within wider market sector</b>
Customer satisfaction (actionable indicator)	feedback request on completion of a project	Project Engineer Quality Manager/Director	Successful growth and profitability compared to competitors (filed accounts)
Tender win rate (quantitative indicator)	Client	Company Manager/Director	Tender summary of total amounts supplied by client.
Project programme compliance (actionable indicator)	Internal project records	Project Engineer/ Company Manager	Not applicable
Ditto quarterly review for term contracts (actionable indicator)	Internal project records	Director	Not applicable
New clients obtained quarterly (quantitative indicator)	Internal records	Company Manager/Director	A client won equals a competitors loss
Customers lost quarterly (quantitative indicator)	Internal records/estimation	Company Manager/Director	A client lost equals a competitors gain
Bad Debt monthly (quantitative indicator)	IT - accountancy	Company Manager/Director	Estimated from competitors filed accounts
Financial turnover monthly, quarterly and yearly (quantitative indicator)	IT - accountancy	Company Manager/Director	Estimated from competitors filed accounts

Staff performance six monthly and yearly performance review (actionable indicator)	Informal interview and discussion, review of training record	Director	No applicable
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Feedback from clients and end-users is obtainable by a feedback form. If there is a perception that our services have fallen below the level required this is checked against the KPI matrix and actioned accordingly.

### **Organisational Structure**

For the contract Soils Limited will designate a Project Director, whom will delegate each individual project to one of ten geoenvironmental engineers. Depending of the requirements of the project, intrusive investigation work will be undertaken by either our in house engineers, technicians and drillers or by dedicated subcontracted drillers.

Laboratory analysis will be undertaken by our preferred subcontracted geotechnical and chemical laboratories.

A number of staff CVs are appended for your information

Staff are encouraged to attend seminars and courses, this benefits both the company and the individual. Through membership of professional bodies and suppliers of documents (BRE, CIRIA etc) technical documents, both in the form of magazines (New Civil Engineer, Quarterly Journal of Engineering Geology and Hydrogeology, Geotechnique, Ground Engineering etc) and standards, codes of practices and current documents are available to staff. The Directors ensure that pertinent articles are disseminated amongst the staff.

Soils Limited have actively encouraged and fund staff to obtain qualifications such as higher degrees.

Soils Limited try to obtain new staff by reputation as opposed to wholly through agencies. References are always taken up prior to offering employment. We try to provide a working package that offers staff not just good remuneration but offers free health insurance and flexibility with holidays and time off. We try to provide an environment that allows staff to both enjoy work, to improve their knowledge and engineering experience.

Soils Limited maintains contacts within the academic community that permits the staff to discuss technical issues with leading lights in their fields of expertise.

Soils Limited was established over twenty-five years ago and has grown at a rate that is sustainable within the general economy and within the available staffing levels. We are very conscious that the company is only as good as its staff and so growth has to an extent been dictated by the availability of good staff. Present staff levels and the general organisation of the company allows us to expand and absorb the anticipated workload from Lancashire County Council.

### **Communications, IT Systems and Invoice**

Clear, accurate and timely communication between the Contractor and Client is essential and forms the backbone of the construction industry. The company uses multi-node communications. All staff are contactable by direct dial telephone lines with Voicemail; by email and by individual mobile phone numbers (voice and SMS). The inherent limitation of emails is proof of delivery as there are factors that are not in the control of the sender, e.g. Aggressive Spam filters on recipients email system. We address this in our QA system by requesting a 'read receipt' for every sent email with a follow-up protocol if this is not received after 24 hours. We request that the client uses the same protocol for sending emails to us.

Key elements of telephone conversations with the Client are confirmed by email to ensure that there is an audit trail for communications.

Critical project communications are addressed by faxing with traditional mail hardcopy.

IT systems are based on a server system. Data backup redundancy ensures security. Server disks are mirrored on a RAID 1 array. Physical backups are taken to an off-site file server and to a data warehouse via an FTP server using a ADSL connection.

All hardware is supplied by Dell.

Software

email server – vpop3	one per site
Windows XP SP2	
MS WORD, ACCESS, EXCEL, OUTLOOK	one per desk
Holebase III and support modules	four licenses
Surfer, 3D Field	one per site
Grapher	one per site
Autodesk	one per site

Our accounting system can be modified to use OB 10.

The Project Engineer records resource utilisation in accordance with the Schedule of Rate for each project and either on completion, or monthly subject to prior agreement with the Client. Totals for each item are calculated from the contract rates to produce a draft application for payment that is laid out in the same format as the Schedule of Rates in the tender to enable a straightforward comparison. This enables the Client to readily reconcile the application against the tender. Supporting documentation, comprising daily works sheets, plant records and staff time sheets are supplied as required by the contract and the Clients accounting regime.

Reconciliation of disputed items or amounts is dealt with by the Project Engineer who will supply additional supporting data, if applicable, where a quotation has been given for a project the amount and/or work quantities will not be amended without prior authorisation from the client.