1. **The RFQ suggests a budget threshold of £12,000. Is there any scope for increasing this, given the requirement for a literature review, data collection and analysis and workshopping?**

The RFQ lists the contract value as being between £10,000 and £50,000. The £12,000 figure is NE’s transparency threshold, not the contract value. What this means is that all contracts over £12k inc VAT have to be advertised on our Contracts Finder for an open quotation process.

The purpose of this in the RFQ is to explain to suppliers what has been and will be published due to our legal transparency requirements.

1. **Will Natural England provide any ground-truthed data or areas which can be used as a reference for identifying additional areas of downland?**

No – we want the contractor to take a fresh, evidenced based look at what areas of land make up the downland landform. The areas that the Countryside Agency mapped as downland during the original mapping process can be made available, but we believe that the methodology used to identify those areas to be flawed as set out in the Identification of Downland Specification document.

1. **What historical mapping do NE have available for the study?**

We have access to, and a licence to use, the historical County Series of OS mapping. We are permitted to supply this to contractors and partners but would need to draw up a contractor licence.

In the same way, we would also be able to provide access to a full range of current OS mapping through the Public Sector Geospatial Agreement (PSGA). Examples include:

* OS MasterMap® Topography Layer and 1:50,000, 1:250,000
* OS MasterMap® Geology layers  1:625,000
* OS Digital Terrain Model (DTM) data

                Other examples of dataset we have access to are:

* Living England Habitat Map
* National Character Area Profiles
* Conclusive open country
* Priority Habitat Inventory

1. **Is NE confident that Streetview services can be used given any license restrictions?**

NE does not have a specific licence with Google regarding this product. It would be for the suppliers to determine whether they can use it.

1. **Would NE be able to provide any aerial imagery for the study?**

Yes we would be able to provide access to a range of aerial photography and earth observation data under the PSGA.

1. **Would NE be willing to have a conversation about the scope of the project, and what might be in scope for the available budget?**

All questions must be managed via email, which will then be published alongside the RFQ. This ensures we are giving equal information to every potential supplier.

1. **Was reading over the details of the "Identifying Downland Research Contract" via the government directory and just wanted to reach out to clarify what sort of outcome is being looked for with this?**

**Trying to determine if it's just looking for help in determining what counts as downland to mark on map data or if you'd also be looking for some form of updated mapping system to go alongside it.**

The idea would be for Natural England to take the ‘results’ of this contract to feed into the development of (a) a statutory mapping methodology for the CROW Map Review and (b) to help us to map the downland landform as part of our wider mapping work (we have the required GI capability to do that ourselves).