**Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment and Green Investment Opportunities for non-designated land at North Moor**

# Background to Natural England

Natural England is the government’s advisor on the natural environment. We provide practical advice, grounded in science, on how best to safeguard England’s natural wealth for the benefit of everyone. Our remit is to ensure sustainable stewardship of the land and sea so that people and nature can thrive. It is our responsibility to see that England’s rich natural environment can adapt and survive intact for future generations to enjoy.

# Background to the specific Natural England work area relevant to this piece of work

This piece of work is funded through the Somerset Wetlands Nature Recovery Project (NRP). This is a landscape scale project, focusing on recovering nature across 41,000 hectares of wetland on the Somerset Levels and Moors. A portion of Natural England’s BNG funding has been allocated to Nature Recovery Projects, to allow them to be a vehicle for developing BNG within a local area.

Natural England has recently acquired land on and around North Moor SSSI, within the Somerset Levels and Moors Landscape and Somerset Wetlands Nature Recovery Project Area.

We would like to gain a greater understanding of what is required to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain, by using Natural England owned non-designated land and land owned by a local farmer as a case study, looking at how this can be integrated with other green finance initiatives such as carbon credits and nutrient credits and identifying opportunities for improving public health and wellbeing. This piece of work will make an important contribution to advancing the understanding how BNG can be delivered in the landscape.

This piece of work aims to develop the understanding of BNG and green investment opportunities through the completion of the following work items:

1. Conduct a biodiversity metrics assessment of approximately 150 hectares of arable, grassland, ditches, ponds, hedgerows, scrub and woodland, to establish baseline biodiversity value, as well as the expected future biodiversity value, following potential habitat improvement works (see Appendix 1 for site location and the extent of the area to be assessed). Natural England will provide baseline vegetation data for ditches, grassland and arable land. Additional surveys of ponds, hedgerow, scrub, trees and woodland habitats are required.
2. Use the area as a case study within the Nature Recovery Project that demonstrates how BNG units can be delivered within the Nature Recovery Project, how these units would integrate with other finance initiatives such as carbon credits, phosphate credits and nutrient credits.
3. Add the site to the net gain site register.
4. Identify ways to connect habitat within North Moor and between North Moor and local green spaces.
5. Identify opportunities for green investment, such as carbon/nutrient/phosphate credits, that are sympathetic with BNG.
6. Identify how BNG can contribute to nature-based solutions to major challenges in the NRP area including flood risk management and improving water quality.
7. Identify opportunities to improve public health and well-being through enhancement of green spaces.

These work items will achieve the following aims:

1. The number and type, if possible, of BNG units will be completed
2. Demonstrate how BNG units might integrate with green investment opportunities including carbon, nutrient, and phosphate credits.
3. Recommend improvements to green spaces and access to help people connect with nature.
4. Develop up to date information to feed into the local nature recovery strategy and other strategic plans.

# Requirements

Four items of work will be delivered within this contract:

1. Use non-designated land near North Moor SSSI as a case study of how BNG units could be created within the NRP. This piece of work focuses on the creation of off-site BNG units, including how these integrate with other tools such as carbon credits, phosphate credits and nutrient neutrality.
2. Produce a map to show the types of habitats number of units created and how these might stack with other finance streams including carbon credits, phosphate credits and nutrient credits.
3. Produce a map of opportunities to improve habitat connectivity within and between North Moor and local green spaces and contribute to development of LNRS.
4. Produce a map of opportunities to create and enhance areas of for public health and while being including improvements to access ability

# Outputs and timescales

The main outputs for this project will be:

1. A report presenting the results of the Nature Recovery Project BNG unit case study, to include mapping opportunities and BNG matrix assessment.

Key timescales:

Project start 5th December 2022

Inception meeting between contactor and NE Project Manager: w/c 5th December 2022

1st Draft report February 2023

Final Report due: March 2023

Contract Completed by 31/03/2023

Prices will remain fixed for the duration of the contract award period. We may at our sole discretion extend this contract to include related or further work. Any extension shall be agreed in advance of any work commencing and may be subject to further competition.

**Project management**

# The contractor will appoint a project leader who must have sufficient experience, authority to act on behalf of the contractor and time allocated to manage the project effectively. The contractor’s project leader (CPL) will be responsible for the management and delivery of the project and will act as the liaison point, particularly liaison between members of any consortium, with the Natural England project manager (NEPM).

# Supporting Documentation

The following supporting documentation should be provided:

* + Research Methodologies
  + Health & safety Policies/certificates
  + Environment Policies
  + VAT registration number
  + Public Liability Insurance
  + Professional Indemnity Insurance
  + CV’s
  + Past Work
  + Sustainable Procurement Practices

# Sustainability

As a delivery partner, the successful contractor is expected to pursue sustainability in their operations, thereby ensuring Natural England is not contracting with a supplier whose operational outputs run contrary to Natural England’s objectives. The successful contractor will need to approach the project with a focus on the entire life cycle of the project. The successful contractor is likely to be able to provide a copy of their environmental policy and any environmental accreditation schemes such as ISO 14001 or EMAS which they have been awarded or are working towards.

1. **Operational Sustainability -** Explain to Natural England what your organisation is doing to incorporate sustainability within its operations. This may include any details you are able to provide in relation to steps you may be taking to reduce your carbon footprint.
2. **Environmental Management -** Detail what you will do to assess the environmental impact of completing this project and provide mitigations. Examples may include operational measures to reduce emissions and noise impacts, efficient energy use, efficient use of raw materials and minimisation of waste where possible.

# Key Contacts

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Appendix 1. Site Location Map

