Background to Natural England

Natural England works for people, places and nature, to enhance biodiversity, landscapes and wildlife in rural, urban, coastal and marine areas; promoting access, recreation and public well-being, and contributing to the way natural resources are managed so that they can be enjoyed now and in the future.

Natural England is working towards the delivery of four strategic outcomes, which together deliver on our purpose to conserve, enhance and manage the natural environment for the benefit of current and future generations.

• A healthy natural environment: England’s natural environment will be conserved and enhanced.

• Enjoyment of the natural environment: more people enjoying, understanding and acting to improve, the natural environment, more often.

• Sustainable use of the natural environment: the use and management of the natural environment is more sustainable.

• A secure environmental future: decisions which collectively secure the future of the natural environment

Project reference: NNR19/0124 Holton Heath Sea Dump

Background to the specific work area relevant to this purchase

The Holton Heath site is managed by the East Dorset National Nature Reserve Team and consists of former MoD-owned land that was part of a World War 1 and 2 cordite factory complex. The specific area for assessment is known as the ‘sea dump’ and was used to deposit waste materials. A previous contaminated land assessment undertaken in 2005 contains a great deal of information about the site and concluded that there was not enough evidence to prove that the pathways to receptor would have an ‘irreversible’ long-term effect. However, this was challenged at the time both by NE Protected Sites and the NE Marine Specialist. The site lies on the edge of Poole Harbour and is contained within a very low and crumbling sea wall. During the last 20 years climate change has picked up pace and it is thought outflanking by sea level rise or storm surges is likely within the medium term. Therefore, a refreshed Contaminated Land Assessment is required and should include:

Requirement

1. A review of historical paperwork related to the site. Historical paperwork will be provided by Natural England, the Environment Agency and Dorset Council as appropriate (note some content may not be readily released due to GDPR and Security Classifications).
2. Undertake site visits as necessary, advise what additional sampling and site surveying might be required based on the review of existing paperwork.
3. Any additional bolt-on survey and sampling contracts/costs will be at the discretion of Natural England and must be agreed in writing prior to being undertaken.
4. The first two bullet points shall inform a preliminary risk assessment and conceptual model of the site. Analysis, description and summary of all potential Sources, Pathways and Receptors related to the site and its contamination.
5. Liaise with the Environment Agency and Dorset Council as necessary.
6. From the RA and Conceptual model, determine where to target site investigation to establish the presence and extent of contamination, to include estimates of volume wherever possible.
7. Structural assessment of current condition of existing sea wall and its projected life-time (assuming it is still in condition to protect the site) in view of its current condition and predicted sea level rise.
8. Identification of the risks and their significance, including on the protected sites adjacent; both marine and land and their associated Protected Species, industries, and any other likely or possible Receptors as identified by the analysis.
9. Evaluation of these risks to the environment, protected species and future site users, to include assessment of any future potential for public access.
10. Conclude whether the site should be formally declared a contaminated site so that the Part IIA process can be begun if necessary.
11. Provide a comprehensive options appraisal derived from the prior analysis in order to:
12. Advise on what future steps may need to be taken to make the site safe in the short, medium and long term. In particular, if it possible to break the pollutant linkages or reduce the assessed risk so that there is no longer a possibility of significant risk.
13. Advise on what, if any, actions could be taken to remediate the site to the extent that its status as a risk could be removed completely or made negligible, with an associated analysis of limitations of each action being reasonably practicable.
14. Estimate Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM) costs for all recommended and/or potential options to inform a cost-benefit analysis, taking into consideration the nature of access to and from the site.
15. All to be presented in a final written report.

It is anticipated that this contract will be awarded for a period of 4 months and to end no later than 28/02/25. 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.

See attached map for site location.

Health and Safety

All operational measures must conform to the Health & Safety at work Act 1974 and current Codes of Practice. All site visits must be arranged with the East Dorset NNR Team and accompanied by NNR staff as access to the site is closed to the public and accessed only via crossing a trainline. A full risk assessment for the site will be supplied.

* Sustainability

Natural England protects and improves the environment and is committed to reducing the sustainability impacts of its activities directly and through its supply chains. We expect the Contractor to share this commitment and adopt a sound, proactive sustainable approach in keeping with the 25 yr environmental plan/our commitments compliant with all applicable legislation. This includes understanding and reducing direct and indirect sustainability impacts and realising opportunities, including but not restricted to; resilience to climate change, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, water use and quality, biosecurity, resource efficiency and waste, reducing the risk of pollution, biodiversity, modern slavery and equality, diversity & inclusion, negative community impacts.

As a delivery partner, the successful contractor is expected to pursue sustainability in their operations, thereby ensuring the Contracting Authority is not contracting with a supplier whose operational outputs run contrary to the Contracting Authority’s objectives. The successful contractor will need to approach the project with a focus on the entire life cycle of the project

Outputs and Contract Management

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Reference | Deliverable | Responsible Party | Date of completion |
| Historical paperwork | Review | Natural England (NE)/ Environment Agency(EA)/ Dorset Council (DC) to supply documents.Contractor to review. | Dec 2024 |
| Liaise with NE/EA/DC | One start-up meeting with client. Six client touchpoint meetings, incl. partners at EA & DC when necessary. One final wash-up meeting. | Contractor to set dates, all to attend. | 1- Project start2-5 Bi-monthly6- Review draft report.7- Final wash-up |
| Site visits | Minimum one site visit to ground-truth maps and historical documents. | NE to provide all necessary access and risk assessment for visiting of site and accompany contractor | Visit 1 - Dec 2024 |
| Additional site visits | If additional surveys are required to inform the assessment further site visit may be required | Contractor to advise if further site visits are necessary. NE to provide necessary access. | Feb 2025 |
| Preliminary risk assessment and conceptual model of site | To be contained within final report. | Contractor | Jan 2025 |
| Determine sites where additional investigation may be needed. | To be contained within final report. | Contractor | Jan 2025 |
| Structural assessment of existing to sea wall | Structural Assessment report, provided as annex to main report. | Contractor or sub-contractor. | Feb 2025 |
| Identify, evaluate and conclude on nature of risks | To be contained within final report. | Contractor | Feb 2025 |
| Options appraisal, advice on future steps, potential costs. | To be contained within final report. | Contractor | Feb 2025 |
| Final report | Final report containing above stated elements and conclusion as to whether the site fulfils criteria to be formerly declared as contaminated land. | Contractor | Feb 2025 |
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The main contact for the project will be Julie Merrett, who will organise liaison and meetings with the site manager and partners from the Environment Agency and Dorset Council as necessary. Access to site must be organised through Senior Reserve Manager Tez Otter only.

W/C 18th November – Meeting 1 - Start-up meeting between project officer and supplier

2nd Dec – 14th Feb – Meetings 2-5 - Bi-weekly touch-point meetings

W/C 10th Feb – Draft report due in digital format via email

W/C 17th Feb – Meeting 6 – Presentation and review of draft report

W/C 24th Feb – Final Report due in digital format via email

W/C 24th Feb - Meeting 7 – Wash-up

Natural England Contacts:

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