**Re: HDC202207 - Quotation for Development of a Biodiversity and Carbon Offsetting Delivery Strategy - 2022 Clarifications**

1. How many sites are we expected to survey/ground truth?

At this stage HDC (Hart District Council) is looking for a high-level scope in terms of identifying potential strategic land opportunities for all its sites. This is intended to provide an overview of whether there might be any suitably located sites that could enable HDC to expand the offsetting capacity of their landholding portfolio. It is anticipated that this be informed by Hampshire’s Ecological Network mapping to illustrate sites within this network that are adjacent to or in the locality of HDC sites that are either likely to be in poor condition or could be enhanced to provide increased habitat connectivity and / or biodiversity and carbon benefits. These could include protected sites that are in unfavorable condition. The bid does not expect the contractor to produce meaningful baselines for sites not currently in HDC ownership.

1. What is the purpose of the site visits, e.g., 1) to confirm non-priority habitat types suggested through aerials, 2) to assess habitat condition for the BNG (Biodiversity Net Gain) calculations, or 3) to check the suitability of sites flagged up as uncertain in the scoping exercise?

The need will be led by the Bidder. It could be for any of the reasons listed but is intended to be needed where sites are selected after the scoping process as suitable for offsetting sites and there may be a need for more detailed information.

1. Footnote 1 of the RFQ leads to a webpage listing just 5 large and 3 small countryside sites, and yet Appendix 1 lists 20 sites. Are we required to consider all 20 sites in the study, or just the 8 listed on the website?

The bidder should consider the 20 sites listed in Appendix One

1. Are we expected to establish the baselines of all listed countryside sites, or only those deemed appropriate from the scoping/survey stages?

We require a baseline for those deemed suitable after the initial scoping / survey stages.

1. Does HDC own other sites not listed here, e.g., farmland, that should be scoped/assessed?

The starting point is the sites listed in Appendix One. If the Bidder feels there is merit in exploring further, then we can consider this during the process. However, the Bidder should initially only consider the 20 sites identified.

1. Are enhancement projects required to be proposed for any strategically located non-countryside/ non-HDC owned sites, or is it simply the identification of such sites (and high-level feasibility) that is required?

The Bidder should be quoting based on the specification, but any additional sites should be presented for consideration during the scoping phase.

1. If enhancement projects are required regarding the non-countryside sites, are baseline and post enhancement calculations also required for these?

Preference is for the 20 sites to be considered first. If non-countryside is identified and agreed at scoping, then we will require this information.

1. What does “contractor to demonstrate understanding of works required, e.g., through site meeting or similar” mean?

The example we set is incorrect and we will leave it to the bidder to choose how they will demonstrate this.

1. What is the scale and makeup of the portfolio (ideally to include as a minimum: total area, no. of sites, land uses, and tenancy types)?

The details are contained in Appendix One

 10. Can you clarify what format the GIS layer will come in please?

We use Shape Files on the QGIS on-line system (which I believe is also compatible with Arc GIS)

 11. The T&Cs at Cl 4.2 says the council can extend for up to 2 years. Is this in addition to the 12 months mentioned above or part of it?

This is inclusive of the 2 years.

 12. The early part of the RFQ (2.3.1) refers to carbon credits and use of the Woodland Carbon Code but the latter section (2.5.2) suggests only using Natural England’s published carbon storage and sequestration values. Please could you clarify if you’re seeking any estimates of carbon credits using the Woodland Carbon Code method?

The value in section 2.5.2 is required. The Woodland Carbon Code is added as an example and could be considered as an additional value if the Bidder feels like this will provide a more accurate assessment.

 13. The RFQ refers to strategically acquired sites/strategic sites in addition to HDC’s countryside sites. Can you provide any further information on your expectations regarding the identification of such sites in the scoping phase?

At this stage HDC is looking for a high-level scope in terms of identifying potential strategic land opportunities. This is intended to provide an overview of whether there might be any suitably located sites that could enable HDC to expand the offsetting capacity of their landholding portfolio. It is anticipated that this be informed by Hampshire’s Ecological Network mapping to illustrate sites within this network that are adjacent to or in the locality of HDC sites that are either likely to be in poor condition or could be enhanced to provide increased habitat connectivity and / or biodiversity and carbon benefits. These could include protected sites that are in unfavorable condition. The bid does not expect the contractor to produce meaningful baselines for sites not currently in HDC ownership

 14. Is there any flexibility on the timescales for this work i.e., could the project run later than 21st November if necessary?

We will consider alterations if the bidder feels that this is not achievable in the identified timeframe.

 15. Are there any word limits on the three response sections scored against the quality criteria?

No, we did not include a limit. It would be the bidder's discretion in response to the criteria