



Request for Quotation

Innovative Governance Models for Protected Site Strategies: the Humber Estuary Case Study – Phase I (HEGM001)

Date: December 2023

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Request for Quotation

You are invited to submit a quotation for the requirement described in the specification, Section 2.

Please confirm by email, receipt of these documents and whether you intend to submit a quote or not.

Your response should be returned to the following email address by:

Email: Katharine.Carson@naturalengland.org.uk

(cc Eirini.Saratsi@naturalengland.org.uk)

Date: 15/01/2024

Time: 23:59

Ensure you include the name of the quotation and 'Final Submission' in the subject field to make it clear that it is your response.

Contact Details and Timetable

Katharine Carson will be your contact for any questions linked to the content of the quote or the process. Please submit any clarification questions via email and note that, unless commercially sensitive, both the question and the response will be circulated to all tenderers.

Action	Date
Date of issue of RFQ	11-12-2023 at 23:59 GMT
Deadline for clarifications questions	08-01-2024 at 23:59 GMT
Deadline for receipt of Quotation	15-01-2024 at 23:59 GMT
Intended date of Contract Award	Week commencing 22-01-2024
Intended Contract Start Date	Week commencing 22-01-2024
Intended Delivery Date	30-04-2024

Section 1: General Information



Glossary

Unless the context otherwise requires, the following words and expressions used within this Request for Quotation shall have the following meanings (to be interpreted in the singular or plural as the context requires):

“Authority”	means Natural England who is the Contracting Authority.
“Contract”	means the contract to be entered into by the Authority and the successful supplier.
“Response”	means the information submitted by a supplier in response to the RFQ.
“RFQ”	means this Request for Quotation and all related documents published by the Authority and made available to suppliers.

Conditions applying to the RFQ

You should examine your Response and related documents ensuring it is complete and in accordance with the stated instructions prior to submission.

Your Response must contain sufficient information to enable the Authority to evaluate it fairly and effectively. You should ensure that you have prepared your Response fully and accurately and that prices quoted are arithmetically correct for the units stated.

By submitting a Response, you, the supplier, are deemed to accept the terms and conditions provided in the RFQ. Confirmation of this is required in Annex 2.

Failure to comply with the instructions set out in the RFQ may result in the supplier's exclusion from this quotation process.

Acceptance of Quotations

By issuing this RFQ the Authority does not bind itself to accept any quotation and reserves the right not to award a contract to any supplier who submits a quotation.

Costs

The Authority will not reimburse you for any costs and expenses which you incur preparing and submitting your quotation, even if the Authority amends or terminates the procurement process.

Self-Declaration and Mandatory Requirements

The RFQ includes a self-declaration response (Annex 1) which covers basic information about the supplier, as well as any grounds for exclusion. If you do not comply with them, your quotation will not be evaluated.

Any mandatory requirements will be set out in Section 2, Specification of Requirements and, if you do not comply with them, your quotation will not be evaluated.

Clarifications

Any request for clarification regarding the RFQ and supporting documentation must be submitted via email no later than the deadline for clarifications set out in the Timetable. The Authority shall be under no obligation to respond to queries raised after the clarification deadline.

The Authority will respond to all reasonable clarifications as soon as possible but cannot guarantee a minimum response time. The Authority will publish all clarifications and its responses to all suppliers via email unless deemed commercially sensitive.

If a supplier believes that a request for clarification is commercially sensitive, it should clearly state this when submitting the clarification request. However, if the Authority considers either that:

- the clarification and response are not commercially sensitive; and
- all suppliers may benefit from its disclosure,

then the Authority will notify the supplier (via email), and the supplier will have an opportunity to withdraw the request for clarification by sending a further message requesting the withdrawal of the clarification request. If not withdrawn by the supplier within 2 working days of the Authority's notification, the Authority may publish the clarification request and its response to all suppliers and the Authority shall not be liable to the supplier for any consequences of such publication.

The Authority reserves the right to seek clarification of any aspect of a quotation and/or provide additional information during the evaluation phase to carry out a fair evaluation. Where the Authority seeks clarification on any aspect of the quotation, the supplier must respond within the timeframe requested by the Authority.

Amendments

The Authority may amend the RFQ at any time prior to the deadline for receipt. If it amends the RFQ the Authority will notify you via email.

Suppliers may modify their quotation prior to the deadline for Responses. No Responses may be modified after the deadline for Responses.

Suppliers may withdraw their quotations at any time by submitting a notice via the email to the named contact.

Conditions of Contract

The Authority's Standard Goods and Services Terms & Conditions can be located on the [Natural England Website](#) and will be applicable to any contract awarded as a result of this quotation process. The Authority will not accept any changes to these terms and conditions proposed by a supplier.

Suppliers should note that the quotation provided by the successful bidder will form part of the Contract.

Prices

Prices must be submitted in £ sterling, exclusive of VAT.

Disclosure

All Central Government Departments, their Executive Agencies and Non Departmental Public Bodies are subject to control and reporting within Government. In particular, they report to the Cabinet Office and HM Treasury for all expenditure. Further the Cabinet Office has a cross-Government role delivering overall Government policy on public procurement, including ensuring value for money and related aspects of good procurement practice. For these purposes, the Authority may disclose within Government any details contained in your quotation. The information will not be disclosed outside Government during the procurement.

In addition, the Authority is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004, which provide a public right of access to information held by public bodies. In accordance with these two statutes, the Authority

may be required to disclose information contained in your quotation to any person who submits a request for information pursuant to those statutes.

Further to the Government's transparency agenda, all UK Government organisations must advertise on Contract Finder in accordance with the following publication thresholds:

- Central Contracting Authority's: £12,000
- Sub Central Contracting Authority's and NHS Trusts: £30,000

For the purpose of this RFQ the Authority is classified as a Central Contracting Authority with a publication threshold of £12,000 inclusive of VAT.

If this opportunity is advertised via Contracts Finder, we are obliged to publish details of the awarded contract including who has won the contract, the contract value, and indicate whether the winning supplier is a small and medium-sized enterprise ("SMEs") or voluntary organisation or charity. A copy of the contract must also be published with confidential information redacted.

By submitting a Response, you consent to these terms as part of the procurement.

Disclaimers

Whilst the information in this RFQ and any supporting information referred to herein or provided to you by the Authority have been prepared in good faith the Authority does not warrant that this information is comprehensive or that it has been independently verified.

The Authority does not:

- make any representation or warranty (express or implied) as to the accuracy, reasonableness or completeness of the RFQ;
- accept any liability for the information contained in the RFQ or for the fairness, accuracy or completeness of that information; or
- accept any liability for any loss or damage (other than in respect of fraudulent misrepresentation or any other liability which cannot lawfully be excluded) arising as a result of reliance on such information or any subsequent communication.

Any supplier considering entering into contractual relationships with the Authority following receipt of the RFQ should make its own investigations and independent assessment of the Authority and its requirements for the goods and/or services and should seek its own professional financial and legal advice.

Protection of Personal Data

In order to comply with the General Data Protection Regulations 2018 the supplier must agree to the following:

- You must only process any personal data in strict accordance with instructions from the Authority.
- You must ensure that all the personal data that we disclose to you or you collect on our behalf under this agreement are kept confidential.
- You must take reasonable steps to ensure the reliability of employees who have access to personal data.
- Only employees who may be required to assist in meeting the obligations under this agreement may have access to the personal data.
- Any disclosure of personal data must be made in confidence and extend only so far as that which is specifically necessary for the purposes of this agreement.
- You must ensure that there are appropriate security measures in place to safeguard against any unauthorised access or unlawful processing or accidental loss, destruction or damage or disclosure of the personal data.
- On termination of this agreement, for whatever reason, the personal data must be returned to us promptly and safely, together with all copies in your possession or control.

General Data Protection Regulations 2018

For the purposes of the Regulations the Authority is the data processor.

The personal information that we have asked you provide on individuals (data subjects) that will be working for you on this contract will be used in compiling the tender list and in assessing your offer. If you are unsuccessful the information will be held and destroyed within two years of the award of contracts. If you are awarded a contract it will be retained for the duration of the contract and destroyed within seven years of the contract's expiry.

We may monitor the performance of the individuals during the execution of the contract, and the results of our monitoring, together with the information that you have provided, will be used in determining what work is allocated under the contract, and in any renewal of the contract or in the award of future contracts of a similar nature. The information will not be disclosed to anyone outside the Authority without the consent of the data subject, unless the Authority is required by law to make such disclosures.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI)

The Client is striving to create a diverse and inclusive working environment where every individual has equality of opportunity to progress and to apply their unique insights to making the UK a great place for living. The Service Provider is expected to respect this commitment in all dealings with Natural England staff and service users.

Suppliers are expected to;

- support Defra group to achieve its Public Sector Equality Duty as defined by the Equality Act 2010, and to support delivery of [Defra group's Equality & Diversity Strategy](#).
- meet the standards set out in the [Government's Supplier Code of Conduct](#)
- work with Defra group to ensure equality, diversity and inclusion impacts are addressed (positive and negative) in the goods, services and works we procure, barriers are removed, and opportunities realised.

Sustainable Procurement

Addressing global sustainability impacts and realising additional community benefits within commercial activity is core to Defra group's approach, working with its supply chain is key to achieving sustainable outcomes. In addition to supporting Defra group to meet its outcomes we look to understand and reduce negative sustainability impacts associated with our commercial activity and realise benefits.

The Client encourages its suppliers to share these values, work to address negative impacts and realise opportunities, measure performance and success.

Suppliers are expected to have an understanding of the Sustainable Development Goals, the interconnections between them and the relevance to the Goods, Services and works procured on the Client's behalf.

Conflicts of Interest

The concept of a conflict of interest includes but is not limited to any situation where an Involved Person or Relevant Body has directly or indirectly, a financial, economic or other personal interest which might be perceived to compromise their impartiality and independence in the context of the procurement procedure and/or affect the integrity of the contract award.

We expect suppliers to mitigate appropriately against any real or perceived conflict of interest through their work with government. A supplier with a position of influence gained through a contract should not use that position to unfairly disadvantage any other supplier or reduce the potential for future competition.

Where the supplier is aware of any circumstances giving rise to a conflict of interest or has any indication that a conflict of interest exists or may arise you should inform the Authority of this as soon as possible (whether before or after they have submitted a quotation). Tenderers should remain alert to the possibility of conflicts of interest arising at all stages of the procurement and should update the Authority if any new circumstances or information arises, or there are any changes to information already provided to the Authority. Failure to do so, and/or to properly manage any conflicts of interest may result in a quotation being rejected.

Provided that it has been carried out in an open, fair and transparent manner, routine pre-market engagement carried out by the Authority should not represent a conflict of interest for the supplier.

Section 2: The Invitation

Specification of Requirements

Background to Natural England

Natural England (NE) is the government's advisor on the natural environment. It is our responsibility to ensure England's natural environment can adapt and survive for future generations to enjoy.

Our priorities are to secure a healthy natural environment; a sustainable, low-carbon economy; and a thriving farming sector. Further information about the Authority can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england>

Protected Site Strategies (PSS) are a new instrument introduced in The Environment Act 2021. They are designed to facilitate local partnerships that will implement landscape scale solutions to address key pressures and improve the condition of nature within England.

The PSS Research and Development (R&D) Project, overseen and delivered by NE, has been set up to explore avenues for creating such collaborative partnerships. It focuses on five pilot areas across the country covering a range of environmental and social contexts. The overarching aim of the PSS R&D project is to generate learning to further understanding of how and when a PSS could be deployed. Therefore, learnings from the PSS R&D project will shape how our most precious habitats, species and geodiversity is managed at and around protected sites.

Background to the specific work area relevant to this purchase

This research will be delivered as part of the **PSS Humber Estuary Pilot**.

The Humber Estuary is a large estuary in the north of England, separating the counties of Yorkshire and Lincolnshire. Historically, it acted as the capital of North Sea fishing, providing a safe haven for the extensive offshore fleets operating out of Hull and Grimsby. Now, it is an important industrial area and busy commercial waterway, making significant contributions to the local and national economy.

The estuary houses the largest shipping complex in the UK, with the ports on the Humber accounting for an estimated 13-15% of the UK seaborne trade. Other industries along the estuary include chemical works, oil refinery complexes and power stations, and the area is anticipated to be a key location for strategic scale carbon capture and storage technologies, and green and blue energy production, designed to help meet the UK's Net Zero targets.

Away from the heavily urbanised and industrialised coastal fringes, the hinterlands are dominated by intensive agriculture. Farming in these areas is a central part of the local economy and community.

However, the Humber Estuary, and surrounding area, is also a haven for wildlife. It is home to some of our most precious habitats and species. It is internationally designated as a [Special Area of Conservation \(SAC\)](#), [Special Protection Area \(SPA\)](#), and a wetland of international importance under the [Ramsar Convention](#). The estuary, in its entirety, is also covered by several Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). These designations are in recognition of the importance of the area for the habitats and species found here and afford legal protection against the deterioration of habitats and damaging impacts to the species for which they have been designated.

With plans for the area now focused on meeting priority sector targets in green energy, job creation, and UK supply chain logistics, the demand for development land is set to increase. The newly established Humber Freeport comes with a comprehensive package of measures, including business tax reliefs and customs support, and will establish the Humber as a global hub for investment and trade. It is perhaps inevitable then that there is a challenge that exists in the need to balance the demand for land for industry and housing, and the need to safeguard the special conservation value of the area, as well as providing access to good quality greenspace for local communities to enjoy.

The PSS Humber Estuary Pilot provides an opportunity to further understanding of the components needed to develop, and successfully deliver, a strategic land use management plan, on an estuary scale that would equally support nature recovery, social and economic prosperity in the area. One such component is governance.

Political Landscape

Adaptation to increasing environmental pressures is widely recognised to affect governance at every level, from international unions down to local authorities (Bauer & Steurer, 2014)¹. The recent Devolution Deals (DLUHC, 2023)² for the Humber region (subject to ratification) recognise the importance of environmental management in the transition to a more productive, low carbon economy.

¹ Bauer, A. & Steurer, R. (2014) Multi-level governance of climate change adaptation through regional partnerships in Canada and England, *Geoforum*, Volume 51, 121-129.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2013.10.006>

² DLUHC 2023 - [Hull and East Yorkshire devolution deal - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

There are five local authorities on the Humber Estuary, all of which include areas of protected sites. These are namely Kingston upon Hull, East Riding of Yorkshire, North Lincolnshire, North-East Lincolnshire, and East Lindsey District. A further three local authorities fall within the PSS Humber Estuary Pilot study area. These are West Lindsey District, City of Doncaster and Selby District. Each must champion its area's interests, deliver on local priorities, and be accountable to local people. However, maintaining a strategic approach to dealing with environmental pressures at a regional level remains challenging. Further, their position as 'mid-level' governance requires mediation between high-level government policy and the communities in which they operate (Bauer & Steurer, 2014). The last decade has seen an increasingly restricted budget and reduced resources for local authorities to manage the countryside in their localities (Mathers *et al.*, 2015)^[OBJ], compounded by increasing demands.

In addition, multiple nature conservation organisations and statutory bodies, businesses and community groups have diverse, and often conflicted, interests in this area. With no mechanism to come together to deliver collaborative action, combined with ongoing resource limitations within stakeholder organisations, coordinated management of the estuary presents a significant challenge for all involved.

Requirement

Encouraging and supporting long-term, collaborative partnerships is fundamental to the success of future Protected Site Strategies. PSS are likely to be especially valuable where there are complex issues affecting the condition of protected sites and, where the solutions involve multiple stakeholders with vested and conflicting interests. Identifying the most effective approach to local governance will be key to successful delivery of PSS over the next decade and beyond.

The efficacy of governance structures is fundamental to the sustainable management of estuary environments yet, achieving it is a complex endeavour that requires balancing internal and cross stakeholder dynamics (van Bets *et al.*, 2020)³. The advantages of joint governance arrangements within the Humber region have been recently acknowledged in the Devolution Deals (subject to ratification) (DLUHC, 2023). As a key stakeholder themselves, Natural England has a strong interest in investigating how collaborative stakeholder relationships can be improved in the Humber. This piece of research is part of a case study designed to explore existing, and propose alternative, governance structures in the Humber region.

³ Van Bets, L., Deelstra, Y., van Lieshout, M., Taal, M., Enemark, J., & Gerrits, L. (2020). *Improving estuary governance: Comparison of the governance of the Elbe, Scheldt and Humber regarding estuary management*. Interreg North Sea Region IMMERSE.

Specific objectives / deliverables

The Humber PSS Pilot Coordinator and the Social Science team are seeking a contractor that will examine and map existing structures that govern land use on and around the estuary and explore their impacts on managing development and nature, especially in relation to functionally linked land⁴.

The geographical extent of the case study is coarsely defined by a 10 km buffer zone around the protected sites on the estuary (see Figure 1 below).



Figure 1:1 Geographic scope of the Humber Protected Site Strategy Pilot

Methodology

The research is expected to deliver on the following objectives:

- a) **Review existing institutional and governance structures** for relevant local authorities, nature conservation organisations and statutory bodies, and development agencies operating within the wider Humber area and, explore and illustrate the relationships (positive or negative) between these stakeholders

⁴ Functionally linked land (FLL) refers to areas of land or sea outside a designated site which are considered to be critical to, or necessary for the ecological or behavioural functions of a qualifying feature for which a site has been designated.

- b) **Explore and analyse the diverse views and objectives** of development and environmental conservation that impact (positively or negatively) on sustainable management of protected areas and their functionally linked land across the Estuary.

Insights from this research are expected to inform further research and the design of deliberative and innovative participatory processes that would allow stakeholders to interact, share evidence, and debate alternative governance structures that would engender cross-estuary land-use management decisions at the long-term.

The key research questions we seek to answer with this piece of work are: What governance structures operate in a Humber-Wide area, and how have they been modified (or not) in recent years? Were there any past (or new) attempts to create a Humber-wide approach to governance? What kind of motivations and challenges were behind such attempts? How do governance structures impact the development and environmental objectives in the Humber Estuary? How are such structures expected to influence development and environmental goals in the future?

To answer these research questions and deliver its objectives the project is structured in four parts.

Part I – desk top study and stakeholder scoping. Reviewing, collating and analysing published (paper or electronic) resources on interrelationships between stakeholder participation, governance structure and environmental outcomes. This review will include peer review and grey literature and especially studies on the local area and will inform stakeholder scoping. Respond to Objective 1.

Part II – mapping of stakeholder and governance structures. Based on the findings of part I this exercise will illustrate relationships and interdependencies between stakeholders, governance structures and challenges for delivering environmental outcomes and sustainable development. Respond to Objective 1.

Part III – exploring current objectives for development and nature conservation in the Humber. Contact a number of interviews (online, telephone or face-to-face) with a representative sample of informants of a wide variety of stakeholders to record internal structures and hierarchies of each organisation. Respond to Objective 2.

Part IV – Analysis and write up. Data collected during Parts I-III, will be analysed to evaluate challenges and opportunities for further engagement. An output will outline the processes, reflect and synthesise findings from the desktop study, stakeholders mapping and interviews. Respond to Objectives 1 & 2.

Expected outputs (deliverables)

1. A short report presenting stakeholder mapping with visualisation linking stakeholders, governance structures and nature conservation pressures
2. A final report outlining baseline information, findings, and reflections about:

- a. Relevant literature on stakeholders, governance structures and environmental outcomes;
- b. Existing governance structures and decision-making strategies on the Humber Estuary;
- c. Stakeholder mapping and links to governance structures;
- d. Stakeholder priorities and objectives regarding land use.

No findings of this research shall be published before April 2025. Any peer review publications of this work can be subsequently co-produced by the contractors and Natural England. Findings of this research will be used by natural England to inform the next stages of the wider study exploring suitable Governance structures for PSS.

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-year 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

This contract shall be managed on behalf of NE/PSS by:

Project officer: Eirini Saratsi

Support officer: Katharine Carson

The NE project officer will serve as the principal point of contact from Natural England and will be responsible for day-to-day management of this project. The project will be overseen by an NE project management team with input from the PSS working group and other Natural England stakeholders and/ or external experts in the area.

The contractor will meet the project lead, plus others from the project management group if available, four times over the duration of the project (as suggested in table 1 - MS Teams preferred) to discuss work progress and ensure it meets the project's aims and

objectives. NE will organise these meetings and the contractor will be responsible for additional email/ phone updates, where necessary. The contractor will provide a brief written summary of main points and what was agreed.

The contractors will be expected to provide a detailed work plan once the contract is awarded, guided by the timeline below. Any unforeseen issues arising in the course of the contract must be raised with the Project Officer as early as possible to facilitate prompt resolution. The contractor is responsible for assessing the risks associated with the project as planned and for putting in place mitigation measures to respond to them.

The table below sets out important timescales and deadlines for key deliverables.

Task/activity - Deliverable - Responsible Party	Date of completion
Project meeting 1: Research strategy outline (NE)	29 Jan 2024
Part I – Desktop study and stakeholder scoping (The contractor) Part II – Mapping of stakeholder and governance structures (The contractor)	29 Jan – 18 Mar 24
Deliverable 1: Short report on Stakeholders mapping with visualisation (The contractor) (Payment Milestone 1)	18 Mar 24
Project meeting 2: Update on progress and forward planning (NE)	18 Mar 24
Part III – Exploring current objectives (The contractor)	1 Mar - 11 April 24
Project meeting 3: Update on interviews and forward planning (NE)	11 April 24
Part IV – Analysis and write up (The contractor)	11 – 30 April 24
Project meeting 4: Presentation of results (The contractor)	22 April 24
Deliverable 2 – Final report with baseline data (The contractor) (Payment Milestone 2)	30 April 24

There will be some flexibility to adapt to emerging context within this overall timeframe. Any changes or delays to the agreed timetable during the contract should be discussed with the NE Project Officer.

Please note that the contractor will need to fill in an ethics checklist for the research to satisfy NE's ethics guidelines. The list will need to be considered by NE's ethics committee unless the supplier has adequate ethics processes in place.

The outputs will need to be written in line with good practice guidance on writing and accessibility (see: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/guidance-and-tools-for-digital-accessibility#designing-accessible-content>). There is also a standard template and guidance on formatting reports which the Authority will make available if needed.

To deliver this contract, we are seeking social scientists with expertise in governance studies and deliberative approaches (for example, researchers from the fields of political science, sociology, political economy, public policy, human geography, social anthropology), and who also have demonstrable experience and knowledge of qualitative social research skills (including appropriate approaches to analysis).

Payment

The Authority will raise purchase orders to cover the cost of the services and will issue to the awarded supplier following contract award.

The Authority's preference is for all invoices to be sent electronically, quoting a valid Purchase Order number. Invoices will be submitted following submission of each deliverable.

It is anticipated that this contract will be awarded for a period of **13 weeks** to end no later than **30/04/2024**. 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 writing in advance of any work commencing and may be subject to further competition.

Evaluation Methodology

We will award this contract in line with the most economically advantageous tender (MEAT) as set out in the following award criteria:

Technical – 70%

Commercial – 30%

Evaluation criteria

Evaluation weightings are 70% technical and 30% commercial, the winning tenderer will be the highest scoring combined score.

The table below provides an overview of the overall evaluation breakdown.

Award Criteria	Weighting (%)	Evaluation Topic & Weighting	Sub-Criteria	Weighted Question
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Technical	70%	Service / Product Proposal	Approach and Methodology	1 Question Q1 (30% of technical score available)
			Capacity, Capability and Expertise	2 Questions Q2.1 (25% of technical score available) Q2.2 (10% of technical score available)
			Project Management	2 Questions Q3.1 (15% of technical score available) Q3.2 (10% of technical score available)
			Sustainability and social value	1 Question Q4 (10% of technical score available)
Commercial	30%	Whole life cost of the proposed Contract	Commercial Model	1 Question Q4 (100% of commercial score available)

Technical (70%)

Technical evaluations will be based on responses to specific questions covering key criteria which are outlined below. Scores for questions will be based on the following:

Description	Score	Definition
Very good	100	Addresses all the Authority's requirements with all the relevant supporting information set out in the RFQ. There are no weaknesses and therefore the tender

		response gives the Authority complete confidence that all the requirements will be met to a high standard.
Good	70	Addresses all the Authority's requirements with all the relevant supporting information set out in the RFQ. The response contains minor weaknesses and therefore the tender response gives the Authority confidence that all the requirements will be met to a good standard.
Moderate	50	Addresses most of the requirements with most of the relevant supporting information set out in the RFQ. The response contains moderate weaknesses and therefore the tender response gives the Authority confidence that most of the requirements will be met to a suitable standard.
Weak	20	Substantially addresses the requirements but not all and provides supporting information that is of limited or no relevance or a methodology containing significant weaknesses and therefore raises concerns for the Authority that the requirements may not all be met.
Unacceptable	0	No response or provides a response that gives the Authority no confidence that the requirement will be met.

Technical evaluation is assessed using the evaluation topics and sub-criteria stated in the Evaluation Criteria section above.

Separate submissions for each technical question should be provided and will be evaluated in isolation. Tenderers should provide answers that meet the criteria of each technical question.

Approach and Methodology	Detailed Evaluation Criteria
Q1.1 Please describe what methodology (research and analysis) and approaches	Your response should:

<p>you will use to deliver the requirements of this project.</p> <p>Responses should not exceed 5 sides of A4, and use Arial font, size 11.</p> <p>Please outline:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • appropriate, innovative plans that will enable and support successful engagement and deliberation of diverse stakeholders. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Demonstrate a clear understanding of the nature of the requirements. 2) Be a clear, practical, achievable, and cost-effective methodology to deliver these requirements that includes an outline and justification of appropriate analytical approaches. 3) Include information in sufficient detail to allow a full appraisal of the suitability of the approach to deliver for the project 4) Include a realistic, measurable and deliverable workplan, detailing stages of the project, key activities and deliverables with dates.
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Capacity, Capability and Expertise	Detailed Evaluation Criteria
<p>Q2.1 Please provide details of the key personnel proposed to deliver the requirements of this project.</p> <p>Responses should not exceed three sides of A4, and use Arial font, size 11. In addition, please include short CVs (no longer than two sides of A4, Arial font size 11).</p> <p>Please provide all names of those included in your team and outline:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the team's past contributions that best evidence their ability to carry out the proposed project; • examples of previous outputs (provide links or DOI); and • other relevant skills, such as managing research, experience of applied and policy-related research, data management, and writing reports, etc. 	<p>Your response should demonstrate your team has:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Relevant research and analytical experience and skills to deliver this research project to a high standard. 2. Excellent understanding of issues around governance and deliberative, participatory approaches. 3. Ability to produce high quality, accessible, imaginative and user-friendly outputs, including reports for non-academic audiences.

<p>Q2.2 How much time will each member of your team spend on the project and on which aspects?</p> <p>Responses should not exceed one side of A4, and use Arial font, size 11</p>	<p>Referring to the tasks/activities outlined, your response should demonstrate:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sufficient time allowed for each stage and task. 2. Staff with appropriate level of experience and knowledge involved in each stage and task.
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Project Management	Detailed Evaluation Criteria
<p>Q3.1 Provide details of how you intend to manage the project to identify risks and ensure that project tasks are achieved within the timescales, to a high standard, and to budget.</p> <p>Responses should not exceed one side of A4, and use Arial font, size 11.</p> <p>Please outline:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A project management plan, and internal governance for this project. • A risk register that assesses risks to the successful delivery of the project including the following: difficult recruiting a diverse stakeholder sample for the interviews and deliberative workshops; retaining participants; and/or project continuity in the face of any staff absences? Explain how the risks will be mitigated. 	<p>Your response should indicate:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) How the project will be managed, by whom, and what measures will ensure successful delivery. 2) How the Authority will be kept informed of progress made and any difficulties encountered. 3) Risks to project delivery and how you would mitigate these. 4) Resilience for dealing with unexpected events.
<p>Q3.2 Provide details of how you intend to quality assure work undertaken as part of this project.</p> <p>Please outline what processes and experience you have in relation to quality</p>	<p>Your response should briefly demonstrate:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Your quality assurance processes and measures.

assurance, research ethics and data management. Responses should not exceed one side of A4, and use Arial font, size 11.	2) Your proposed data management processes particularly in accordance with Data Protection legislation. 3) Any ethics processes your organisation has and any research ethics considerations that might apply in this project.
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Sustainability and Social Value	Detailed Evaluation Criteria
<p>Q4.1 Provide evidence that you pursue sustainability in your operations, thereby ensuring Natural England is not contracting with a supplier whose operational outputs run contrary to its objectives.</p> <p>Please detail sustainability policies your organisation has and how these apply to this project.</p> <p>Responses should not exceed one side of A4, and use Arial font, size 11.</p>	<p>Your response should:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Describe your approach to sustainability and how this will be managed and adopted throughout the project. The successful contractor is likely to be able to provide a copy of their environmental policy and any environmental accreditation schemes, which they have been awarded or are working towards.

Commercial (30%)

The Contract is to be awarded as a fixed price which will be paid according to the completion of the deliverables stated in the Specification of Requirements.

Suppliers are required to submit a total cost to provide the deliverables stated in the Specification of Requirements. In addition to this the Commercial Response template must be completed to provide a breakdown of the whole life costs against each deliverable used in the delivery of this requirement.

Calculation Method

The method for calculating the weighted scores is as follows:

- Commercial Score = (Lowest Quotation Price / Supplier's Quotation Price) x 30%
(Maximum available marks)

- Technical Score = (Bidder's Total Technical Score / Highest Technical Score) x 70% (Maximum available marks)

The total score (weighted) (TWS) is then calculated by adding the total weighted commercial score (WC) to the total weighted technical score (WT): $WC + WT = TWS$.

Information to be returned

Please note, the following information requested must be provided. Incomplete tender submissions may be discounted.

Please complete and return the following information:

- completed Commercial Response template
- separate response submission for each technical question (in accordance with the response instructions)
- completed Mandatory Requirements (Annex 1)
- completed Acceptance of Terms and Conditions (Annex 2)

Award

Once the evaluation of the Response(s) is complete all suppliers will be notified of the outcome via email.

The successful supplier will be issued the contract, incorporating their Response, for signature. The Authority will then counter sign.

Annex 1 Mandatory Requirements

Part 1 Potential Supplier Information

Please answer the following self-declaration questions in full and include this Annex in your quotation response.

Part 1.1 Potential Supplier Information:

Question no.	Question	Response
1.1(a)	Full name of the potential supplier submitting the information	
1.1(b)	Registered office address (if applicable)	
1.1(c)	Company registration number (if applicable)	
1.1(d)	Charity registration number (if applicable)	
1.1(e)	Head office DUNS number (if applicable)	
1.1(f)	Registered VAT number	
1.1(g)	Are you a Small, Medium or Micro Enterprise (SME)?	(Yes / No)

Note: See EU definition of SME https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/business-friendly-environment/sme-definition_en

Part 1.2 Contact details and declaration

By submitting a quotation to this RFQ I declare that to the best of my knowledge the answers submitted and information contained in this document are correct and accurate.

I declare that, upon request and without delay you will provide the certificates or documentary evidence referred to in this document.

I understand that the information will be used in the selection process to assess my organisation's suitability to be invited to participate further in this procurement.

I understand that the authority may reject this submission in its entirety if there is a failure to answer all the relevant questions fully, or if false/misleading information or content is provided in any section.

I am aware of the consequences of serious misrepresentation.

Question no.	Question	Response
1.2(a)	Contact name	
1.2(b)	Name of organisation	
1.2(c)	Role in organisation	
1.2(d)	Phone number	
1.2(e)	E-mail address	
1.2(f)	Postal address	
1.2(g)	Signature (electronic is acceptable)	
1.2(h)	Date	

Part 2 Exclusion Grounds

Part 2.1 Grounds for mandatory exclusion

Question no.	Question	Response
2.1(a)	Please indicate if, within the past five years you, your organisation or any other person who has powers of representation, decision or control in the organisation been convicted anywhere in the world of any of the offences within the summary below.	

	Participation in a criminal organisation.	(Yes / No) If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b)
	Corruption.	((Yes / No) If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b)
	Fraud.	(Yes / No) If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b)
	Terrorist offences or offences linked to terrorist activities	(Yes / No) If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b)
	Money laundering or terrorist financing	(Yes / No) If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b)
	Child labour and other forms of trafficking in human beings	(Yes / No) If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b)
2.1(b)	<p>If you have answered yes to question 2.1(a), please provide further details.</p> <p>Date of conviction, specify which of the grounds listed the conviction was for, and the reasons for conviction.</p> <p>Identity of who has been convicted</p>	

	If the relevant documentation is available electronically please provide the web address, issuing authority, precise reference of the documents.	
2.1 (c)	If you have answered Yes to any of the points above have measures been taken to demonstrate the reliability of the organisation despite the existence of a relevant ground for exclusion? (i.e. Self-Cleaning)	(Yes / No)
2.1(d)	Has it been established, for your organisation by a judicial or administrative decision having final and binding effect in accordance with the legal provisions of any part of the United Kingdom or the legal provisions of the country in which the organisation is established (if outside the UK), that the organisation is in breach of obligations related to the payment of tax or social security contributions?	(Yes / No)
2.1(e)	If you have answered yes to question 2.3(a), please provide further details. Please also confirm you have paid or have entered into a binding arrangement with a view to paying, the outstanding sum including where applicable any accrued interest and/or fines.	

Part 2.2 Grounds for discretionary exclusion

Question no.	Question	Response
2.2(a)	The detailed grounds for discretionary exclusion of an organisation are set out on this webpage , which should be referred to before completing these questions.	

	Please indicate if, within the past three years, anywhere in the world any of the following situations have applied to you, your organisation or any other person who has powers of representation, decision or control in the organisation	
2.2(b)	Breach of environmental obligations?	(Yes / No) If yes please provide details at 2.2 (f)
2.2(c)	Breach of social obligations?	(Yes / No) If yes please provide details at 2.2 (f)
2.2(d)	Breach of labour law obligations?	(Yes / No) If yes please provide details at 2.2 (f)
2.2(e)	Shown significant or persistent deficiencies in the performance of a substantive requirement under a prior public contract, a prior contract with a contracting entity, or a prior concession contract, which led to early termination of that prior contract, damages or other comparable sanctions?	(Yes / No) If yes please provide details at 2.2 (f)
2.2 (f)	If you have answered Yes to any of the above, explain what measures been taken to demonstrate the reliability of the organisation despite the existence of a relevant ground for exclusion? (Self Cleaning)	

Annex 2 Acceptance of Terms and Conditions

I/We accept in full the terms and conditions appended to this Request for Quote document.

Company _____

Signature _____

Print Name _____

Position _____

Date _____

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