

Invitation to Tender

A35 Junction Active Travel Feasibility Study

(NFNPA – 0057)

Date : 19 November 2024

New Forest National Park Authority

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CHAIRMAN DAVID BENICE **CHIEF EXECUTIVE** ALISON BARNES

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1. SUMMARY

The New Forest National Park Authority (NFNPA or 'the Authority'), in partnership with Hampshire County Council (HCC), together known as 'the partners' is **seeking a consultant / consultancy** to prepare an Active Travel Feasibility Study for new crossings on the A35 in the New Forest National Park, Hampshire.

The purpose of the feasibility study is to identify options to improve road safety and reduce severance of active travel routes caused by traffic movements on the A35 road through the New Forest. The study will need to look at the provision of new walking and cycling (and where appropriate equestrian) crossing facilities at three sites on the A35 west of the village of Lyndhurst, within the County of Hampshire. The study will also need to consider a fourth site where conditions for cyclists need to be improved and road danger reduced, the section of road is called Old Railway (C10), known locally as the 'Holmsley Straight Mile' between the Old Station Tea Rooms and Brockenhurst Road. The roads and site locations referenced here are identified in maps further within this document.

Hampshire County Council is the Highway Authority for all the roads identified above. The recommended design options will need to be in accordance with their policies and guidance documents and engagement with their officers will be essential.

The study will need to identify appropriate interventions, consider all relevant constraints and risks, then recommend preferred options with concept designs and realistic costings. The **final study should be completed by 30th March 2025**, unless the partners agree to an extension. Regular updates including a written monthly progress report will be provided to the partners throughout the study period.

The contract value is expected to be **in the range of £25,000 to £30,000**. Responses should be broken down into parts to assist evaluation of overall costs to deliver this work, so responses over £30,000 may be considered if appropriately evidenced.

2. OVERVIEW

The **New Forest National Park Authority** is the organisation responsible for promoting the two statutory purposes of the National Park as set out in the Environment Act 1995 which are:

- To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area
- To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the Park by the public.

The Authority also has a duty to seek to foster the economic and social well-being of the local communities within the National Park. The **New Forest National Park** hosts an extraordinary diverse range of species that are rare, uncommon, and declining elsewhere in the UK and Western Europe. It also has wonderful opportunities for quiet recreation, learning and discovery.

Hampshire County Council is the Highway Authority for the public highway within the New Forest District (excluding the A31 and A36 Strategic Road Network), including the roads being assessed as part of this study. Hampshire has recently adopted its new Local Transport Plan (LTP4) which sets out its principles for improving walking and cycling conditions in the County.

[Local Transport Plan | Transport and roads | Hampshire County Council](#)

The County Council has a suite of technical guidance notes relating to the design and development of its public highway network, they can be found here: [Technical guidance notes | Transport and roads | Hampshire County Council](#)

The County Council, in partnership with NFNPA and other partners, has developed the draft New Forest Local Walking & Cycling Infrastructure Plan which recently went out to public consultation. The draft document can be found here: documents.hants.gov.uk/transport/new-forest-district-lcwip.pdf

The work will be supported by stakeholder involvement from a sub-group of the **Cycle Working Group** (CWG) which includes representation from Forestry England, local cycling clubs and businesses in the area.

3. WORKING ARRANGEMENTS

Any queries may be submitted through our [In-tend supplier portal](#) or via the contact details below:

For tender process / procurement queries:

Tom Knott, Finance & Sustainable Procurement Officer - 01590 646678
tender@newforestnpa.gov.uk

For technical queries:

Ben Kennedy, Principal Transport Planner, HCC
Ben.Kennedy@hants.gov.uk

Joe Malone, Principal Transport Planner/Engineer, Scheme Development, HCC
joe.malone@hants.gov.uk

Jim Mitchell, Access and Learning Manager, NFNPA
jim.mitchell@newforestnpa.gov.uk

4. TENDER SPECIFICATION

Overview of requirements (if applicable, supplementary documents are placed in the Appendices section)

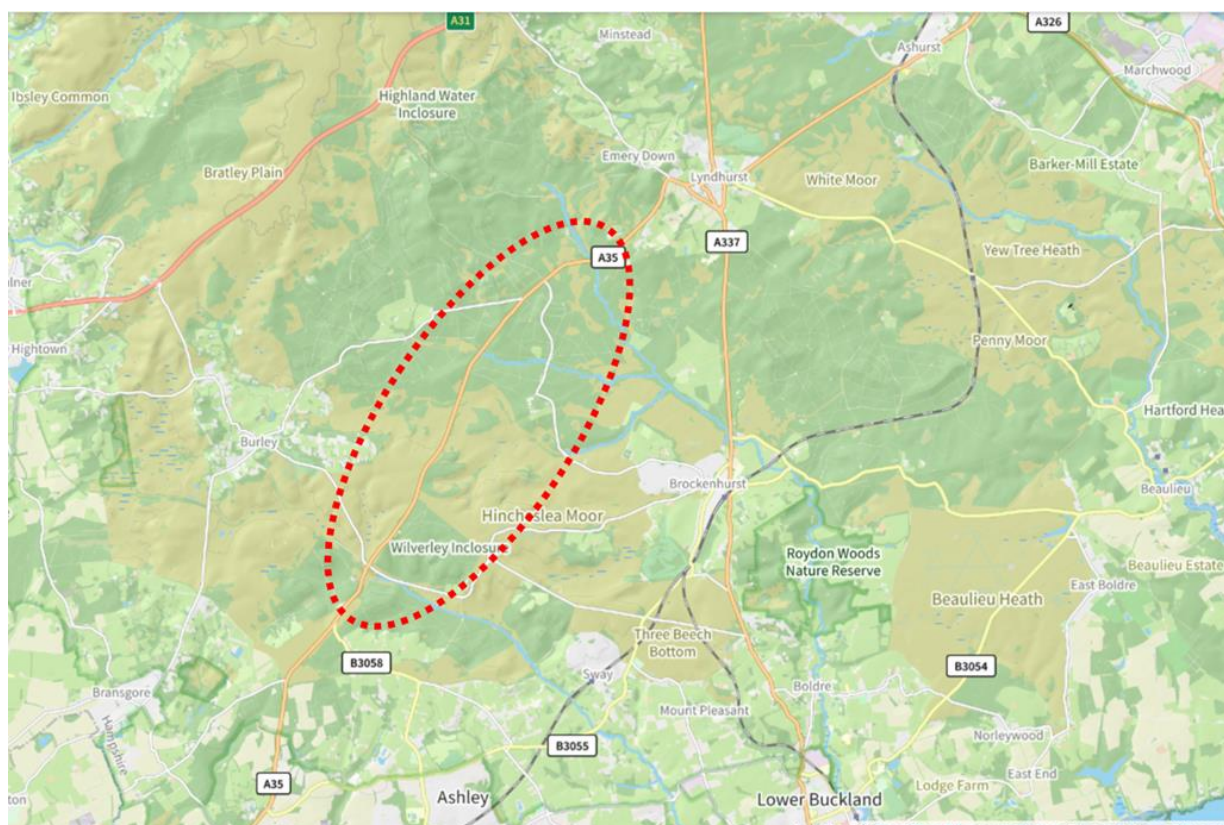
The task

This task order outlines the requirements to undertake a feasibility study into options to improve walking and cycling crossing facilities at three sites on the A35 west of Lyndhurst, within Hampshire. The study will also need to consider options to improve conditions for cyclists and pedestrians, and reduce road danger at a fourth site, on the section of road called Old Railway between the Old Station Tea Rooms and Brockenhurst Road.

The A35 is a single carriageway arterial road that bisects the New Forest National Park between Southampton and the Bournemouth area via the small town of Lyndhurst. The A35 to the west of Lyndhurst cuts through some of the most attractive and environmentally sensitive areas of the New Forest. The speed limit for most of the section of the A35 between Hinton Admiral and Lyndhurst is the derestricted speed limit for single carriageway roads (i.e. 60 miles per hour). Due to the volume and speed of traffic it acts a barrier for many people looking to cross it on foot, by mobility scooter, by cycle or on horseback. Many of those crossing are leisure users of the National Park, but there are also utility cyclists crossing the A35 for commuting or service access.

The National Cycle Network 2 (NCN2) crosses the southern section of the A35, albeit the NCN2 stops at the western end of the C10 and recommences beyond the eastern end, by Wootton Bridge car park. This means there is a missing section of the NCN route along the C10 between the Old Station Tea Rooms and Brockenhurst Road. The reason for this is due to concerns about the safety of cyclists using it. Work is currently underway to determine whether a new alignment for the NCN2 is feasible or necessary to overcome the safety concerns and the outcomes of this study will inform that work.

Image 1: Overview map showing study area within the New Forest area



This commission will need to identify appropriate interventions, consider all relevant constraints and risks, and then recommend preferred options with feasibility designs and realistic costings to reduce road danger and provide active travel crossing improvements at the following locations:

Site 1: Rhinefield Ornamental Drive/A35 Junction – the main active travel movement is thought to be on a north/south axis between Rhinefield Ornamental Drive and Bolderwood Arboretum. Ornamental Drive across the A35, this is a cycle route alignment that has been identified in the draft LCWIP. We are seeking a feasibility design options for the provision of a non-signalised/uncontrolled crossing facility within the vicinity of the junction alongside other appropriate road danger reduction improvements.

Site 2: Lyndhurst Road/A35 Junction – with limited active travel movement at this junction and it not being on an identified LCWIP route we are not necessarily looking for a new crossing facility. The junction geometry does makes it difficult to cross so we are seeking feasibility design options for small-scale interventions to reduce road danger and reduce severance.

Site 3: A35 / Holmsley Passage and Wootton / Brownhill alignment – this site has been identified as a potential key crossing point on the A35 to facilitate an alternative alignment of NCN2 that avoids Old Railway. We are seeking feasibility design options for the provision of a non-signalised/uncontrolled crossing facility that will need to accommodate pedestrians, cyclists and potentially equestrians, alongside recommended road danger reduction interventions.

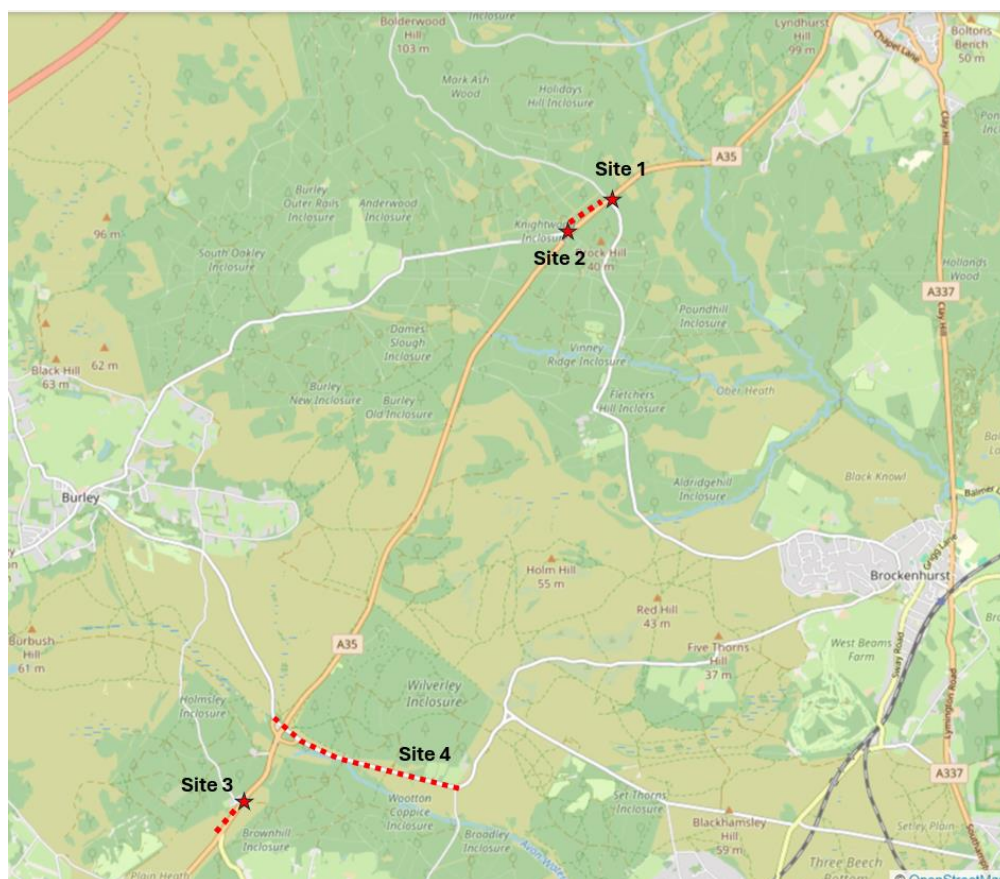
The study should also include an assessment of options/constraints associated with providing an off-road active travel route between Holmsley Passage and Holmsley Road B3058 alongside the A35.

The study will also need to consider options to improve conditions for cyclists and pedestrians, and reduce road danger at a fourth site, Old Railway.

Site 4: Section of road called Old Railway between the Old Station Tea Rooms and Brockenhurst Road – this element of the study needs to assess the following:

- If it is feasible to provide a safe and segregated shared path facility for pedestrians and cyclists along the length of this section of road including the area underneath the A35 Holmsley Bridge. Constraints such as the highway/verge dimensions, highway embankment and drainage structures, and ecological sensitivities should all be considered in the assessment. If it is considered feasible then provide a realistic costing.
- The type of traffic management and speed reduction interventions that can be introduced in accordance with Hampshire guidance to reduce road danger for active travel users on this section of road.

Image 2: Map showing the location of the 4 sites to be considered in study



Funding for the study is provided through the NFNPA as part of an award of Active Travel England (ATE) Capability funding. Delivery of the final design proposals for the identified crossings will be funded with approximately £1m available through HCC's safer roads funding award from the Department for Transport that has been specifically allocated to deliver safety improvements along the A35 in the New Forest. This overall aim of the scheme is to improve the connectivity of active

travel routes over the A35 to an acceptable standard such as those set out in LTN 1/20, however due to the rural nature of the crossings special consideration will need to be given to the types of crossing, connections, ecology and materials used, as well as the setting of the New Forest National Park.

The service

Undertake a feasibility study to consider the viability of active travel crossing improvements at three junctions on the A35 West of Lyndhurst plus active travel/safety improvements along Old Railway, that results in a shortlist of potential design options with recommendations and realistic costings for a preferred design option.

The work to be undertaken should include:

- ATE route/crossing check
- High level assessment of the walking and cycling connections at the locations along the A35.
- All identified options should be developed in accordance with the best practice design standards for rural road crossings where LTN 1/20 is not appropriate.
- The route should be checked against the ATE route check tool to establish if there are any current critical fails and then look to see how these could be resolved, if any are identified.
- Drainage issues resulting in pooling on these crossings should be given close focus.
- Produce high-level feasibility drawings for identified improvements. The partners should be contacted prior to developing full drawings for any identified improvements to be discussed.
- Work should include an initial RSA or Road Safety opinion on any recommended options.
- High level scheme costs to be provided.
- Consult NFNPA and HCC teams as required, such as Arboriculture, Landscape, Ecology, Archaeology, Traffic Management, Passenger Transport and Asset Management.
- Monthly progress meetings with the client.

Surveys to include

- Highway boundary search (HCC & NFNPA can provide information)
- Automatic Traffic Count data (including speed and traffic flows at all four sites)
- Site assessments and photographic surveys
- NMU needs and facilities design / pedestrian movements, cycling needs (all) (n/a)
- Accident data (HCC can provide this data)
- Arboriculture, landscape, archaeology and ecology assessment (A desk-based assessment drawn from advice from NPA and HCC staff)

- C2 (utilities and infrastructure) searches.

Challenges to note

- Consideration will need to be given to avoiding any impact on habitat (the entire area including highway verges has the highest environmental protections) and any existing trees or the need to relocate these.
- The surface of the connections to the crossings will need to be agreed with HCC Asset Management. They usually prefer tarmac but other surfaces may also be considered due to the location in the National Park. Any surface will need to be attractive to use in all weather conditions.

Key Deliverables

- An inception meeting to discuss programme and the task, including possible site visits
- A full set of high-level option drawings on OS based mapping (PDF and CAD)
- A feasibility report/technical note outlining the development of the scheme options
- A cost estimate including bill of quantities (where appropriate)
- High level quantitative risk register.

The Contract

The contract is to be completed by 31 March 2025, with a likely start date of late December 2024 or early January 2025.

The Supplier

We are seeking a supplier with:

- experience and understanding of the development, design and delivery of active travel infrastructure on roads in a rural / protected area context.
- an understanding of the New Forest National Park, roles and responsibilities of Forestry England, the New Forest National Park Authority, New Forest District Council, Verderers of the New Forest and Hampshire County Council.
- an understanding of the key issues and challenges within in the New Forest.
- An understanding of the highway technical design guidelines and transport policies of Hampshire County Council.
- strong track record in feasibility for active travel design and costing.

5. EVALUATION OF TENDERS

Suppliers must complete, in full, the Assessment Document which is attached below. This outlines the minimum information required from suppliers and will form the basis upon which your submission will be evaluated. It is envisaged that this scoring and evaluation exercise will take no longer than 5 working days after the ITT response deadline, which is **9am on Monday 9 December 2024**. It is envisaged that a decision will then be made **by Friday 13 December 2024**, with work starting later that month or early January.

No information contained in this ITT, or in any communication made between the Authority and you in connection with this ITT shall be relied upon as constituting a contract, agreement or representation that any contract shall be offered in accordance with this ITT. The Authority reserves the right, subject to the appropriate procurement regulations, to change without notice the basis of, or the procedures for, the competitive tendering process or to terminate the process at any time. Under no circumstances shall the Authority incur any liability in respect of this ITT or any supporting documentation.

Please answer all questions as accurately and concisely as possible in the same order as the questions are presented. Where a question is not relevant to your organisation, this should be indicated, with an explanation.

Completeness and Further Information

The information supplied will be checked for completeness and compliance with the instructions before responses are evaluated.

Failure to provide the required information, make a satisfactory response to any question, or supply documentation referred to in responses, within the specified timescale, may mean that you are not invited to participate further. In the event that none of the responses are deemed satisfactory, the Authority reserves the right to terminate the procurement and where appropriate re-advertise the procurement.

You should be explicit and comprehensive in your responses to this ITT as this will be the single source of information on which responses will be scored and ranked. You are advised neither to make any assumptions about any past or current supplier relationships with the Authority nor to assume that such prior business relationships will be taken into account in the evaluation procedure.

The ITT is provided on the same basis to all tenderers. Please note that to ensure fair and open competition, the responses to any questions raised by interested contractors will be made available to all other contractors, where appropriate. Any such clarifications will be posted on our In-tend portal and you will receive email notification to make you aware of this. If you wish to be updated with any tender clarifications but do not wish to register on our In-tend portal, then you must formally request to receive such clarifications via email, to the contact listed in Section 3 of this ITT. The deadline for receipt of clarifications relating to the specification or any other part of this ITT is 5pm Thursday 28 November 2024.

Please note that the spaces provided in the Assessment Document should not be viewed as an indication of the length and depth of responses we require for a particular section. Suppliers are encouraged to generate as much space as required to answer each section in full, ensuring that any additional pages used are clearly cross-referenced to the relevant section being addressed, where applicable.

It should be noted that whilst some sections of the Assessment Document are not directly scored (e.g. financial information), the Authority reserves the right to take into account supplier responses to these elements when evaluating and awarding the contract.

Supplier responses in the Assessment Document shall form part of the contract, where appropriate, thus the supplier will be legally obliged to comply with the responses provided therein. Should your company be successful and be awarded the contract, any variations to the proposals in the Assessment Document must receive prior written approval from the Authority.

The Authority expressly reserves the right to request you to provide additional information supplementing or clarifying any of the information provided in response to the requests set out in this ITT. The Authority may seek independent financial and market advice to validate information declared, or to assist in the evaluation.

Disqualification and selection

The Authority may disqualify you if you fail to:

1. Provide a satisfactory response to any questions in the ITT or inadequately or incorrectly complete any question or have not provided the required information; and/or
2. Submit the completed ITT before the stated deadline.

The potential providers who are not disqualified in accordance with the above grounds shall be evaluated on the qualification criteria which take into account the economic and financial standing and the technical or professional ability of each.

The Assessment Document is attached here:



Assessment
Document

The Contract will be awarded on the basis of the most economically advantageous tender to the Authority, based on the evaluation criteria of 30% price and 70% quality. Tenders will be evaluated and assessed using the scoring matrix below.

Criteria	Weighting
Price	30%
Quality	70%

Sub-weightings for the Quality Criteria are provided below :

Section	Quality Heading	Sub-Weighting
A	Company Information	0%
B	Your Approach	40%
C	Scope of Services	30%
D	Your Experience / References	30%

The following scoring mechanism will be used to allocate points available.

Scoring	Points
Response meets the required standard in all material respects and adds value in some or all of the major requirements	9 – 10
Response meets the required standard in all material respects	7 – 8
Response meets the required standard in most material respects, but is lacking or inconsistent in others	5 – 6
Proposal falls short of achieving expected standard in a number of identifiable respects	3 - 4
Response significantly fails to meet the required standard, contains significant shortcomings or is inconsistent with other responses	1 - 2
Completely fails to meet required standard or does not provide a response	0

Price – with regards to the price evaluation, the lowest accepted (i.e. reasonable) submitted price will be awarded the maximum price score of **30%**. Thereafter, each tender will be ranked and scored in accordance with how much more expensive their respective price is compared to the lowest price (e.g. – if it is 50% more expensive than the lowest price, it will be awarded 50% less price points in comparison to the lowest price tender).

Quality - weighted scores will be calculated by multiplying the score for each quality criteria by its weighting. The weighted scores will be totalled for each tender. The totals will be normalised so that the normalised highest total will attract the highest Quality score of **70%**.

There is an overall quality threshold of **6 points**. If the summation of the weighted scores under each quality heading is below this figure, then the tender will no longer be considered, regardless of price.

The Authority reserves the right to withdraw this contract opportunity at any point, without notice, and will not be liable for any costs incurred by suppliers during any stage of the process. Suppliers should also note that, in the event a tender is considered to be fundamentally unacceptable on a key issue, regardless of its other merits, that tender may be rejected.

6. INSTRUCTIONS TO TENDERERS

The proposed Tender timescales are as follows, however these are subject to change. In such an event, all Tenderers will be informed immediately via our In-tend supplier portal:

Tender Process	Deadline
Invitation to Tender (ITT) sent out	Tuesday 19 November 2024
Deadline for ITT clarifications / questions	9am Monday 2 December 2024
ITT response deadline	9am Monday 9 December 2024
Evaluation of ITT submissions	9 to 13 December 2024
Contract award notice	By Friday 13 December 2024
Standstill Period	13 to 23 December 2024
Contract commencement date	Late December 2024 or early January 2025

Tenders submitted after the stipulated time and date advised will be rejected, unless exceptional circumstances are proven, such as clear evidence of postal guarantee or record of successful submission through In-tend.

Tenderers must ensure that their completed Assessment Document has been returned, by 5pm Monday 9 December 2024 in order for their bids to be evaluated:

- a. If your submission is via our [In-tend supplier portal](#), then it must be completed by 9am Monday 9 December 2024. Please note that you will have to register on this portal before you can view the Invitation to Tender document and submit a tender
- b. If your submission is via email, please return it to: tender@newforestnpa.gov.uk - to arrive no later than 9am Monday 9 December 2024.
- c. If you wish to post a hard copy reply, it must be marked for the attention of Tom Knott, to arrive no later than 9am Monday 9 December 2024 and sent to:

FAO: Tom Knott, Finance and Sustainable Procurement Officer – [NFNPA 0057]
 New Forest National Park Authority
 Lymington Town Hall
 Avenue Road
 Lymington
 Hampshire
 SO41 9ZG.

Please note that you must ensure that the envelope used must bear **no mark to identify the sender**. Failure to comply with this may result in your tender being excluded from the evaluation process.

Please note that you may use either [in-tend](#) or post in submitting your responses, or both should you wish. Posted entries are sent at the risk of the supplier and confirmation of receipt will not be provided by the Authority, unless specifically requested by the supplier; the Authority will not be liable in any way for entries not received or delayed in the post. Furthermore the Authority is unable to return any documentation provided, whether the supplier is successful or not.

The Authority shall keep all tenders received unopened until after the ITT submission deadline of 9am Monday 9 December 2024. Any tenders received after this time shall not be considered for evaluation and shall be returned promptly to the tenderer.

7. CONDITIONS OF TENDER

The Terms and Conditions of Contract will be based on the Authority's General Standard Conditions of Contract, a copy of which can be found below:



NFNPA Standard
Terms Contract Aug.

The Authority reserves the right to withdraw this contract opportunity without notice and will not be liable for any costs incurred by suppliers during any stage of the process. Suppliers should also note that, in the event a tender is considered to be fundamentally unacceptable on a key issue, regardless of its other merits, that tender may be rejected.

Representations

A supplier may contact the Authority to obtain any further information about the requirements of the contract or the tendering procedures if these are not evident or clear from the documents supplied to suppliers.

No questions will be answered that provide a competitive advantage to any party interested in tendering.

Should questions arise during the tendering period, which in our judgment are of material significance, we will inform all suppliers to explain the nature of the question, and our formal reply. All suppliers should then take that reply into consideration when preparing their own bids and we will evaluate bids on the assumption that they have done so.

Specification

For the avoidance of doubt, the contract specification shall include all requirements explicit or implied within this Invitation to Tender.

The Authority reserves the right to withdraw this tender document and all funding contained within it without notice.

Conflicts of Interest

Tenderers must disclose in their Tender any circumstances, including personal, financial and business activities that will, or might, give rise to a conflict of interest by taking part in this

competition, or if awarded any contract as a result of this opportunity. This also applies to any sub-contractors that the Tenderer wishes to employ as part of any contract.

Where Tenderers identify such potential conflicts, they should immediately state these to the Authority and confirm how they intend to avoid such conflicts. The Authority reserves the right to reject any Tender which, in the opinion of the Authority gives rise, or could potentially give rise to, any conflict of interest.

Tenders Excluded

No tender will be considered for acceptance if the supplier has indulged or attempted to indulge in any corrupt practice or canvassed the tender with an employee of the Authority. If a supplier has indulged or attempted to indulge in such practices and the tender is accepted, then grounds shall exist for the termination of the contract and the claiming of damages from the successful suppliers.

It is unlikely that any tender will be accepted which (a) is incomplete or inaccurately or inadequately completed or which purports to impose conditions other than those provided in the contract documents and (b) is delivered out of time or in a manner other than specified in the specification.

Collusive Tendering

In submitting a tender against this contract, the supplier confirms that they have not fixed or adjusted the amount of the tender by or under or in accordance with any agreement or arrangement with any other person.

The supplier also certifies that at no time, before or following the submission of the tender, has the Supplier carried out any of the following acts:

- i) communicating to a person other than the person calling for the tenders the amount or approximate amount of the proposed tender, except where such disclosure is required for the purpose of obtaining insurance
- ii) entering into any agreement or arrangement with any person that he shall refrain from tendering or as to the amount of any tender to be submitted
- iii) offering or paying or giving or agreeing to give any sum of money or valuable consideration directly or indirectly to any person for doing or having done or causing or having caused to be done in relation to any other tender or proposed tender for the said work any act or thing of the sort described above. In the context of this clause the word 'person' includes any persons and any body or association, corporate or unincorporated; and 'any agreement or arrangement' includes any such transaction, formal or informal, and whether legally binding or not.

Freedom of Information

The National Park Authority is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 and therefore information in relation to this tender may be requested by third parties. Requests for information will be considered on a case-by-case basis and consideration will be given as to whether or not the information is exempt from disclosure under the legislation.

Suppliers should identify if any of the information supplied by them is confidential or commercially sensitive and provide details of why they feel release of the information would prejudice their interests. This will not guarantee that the information will not be disclosed but your views will be taken into account when considering a request.

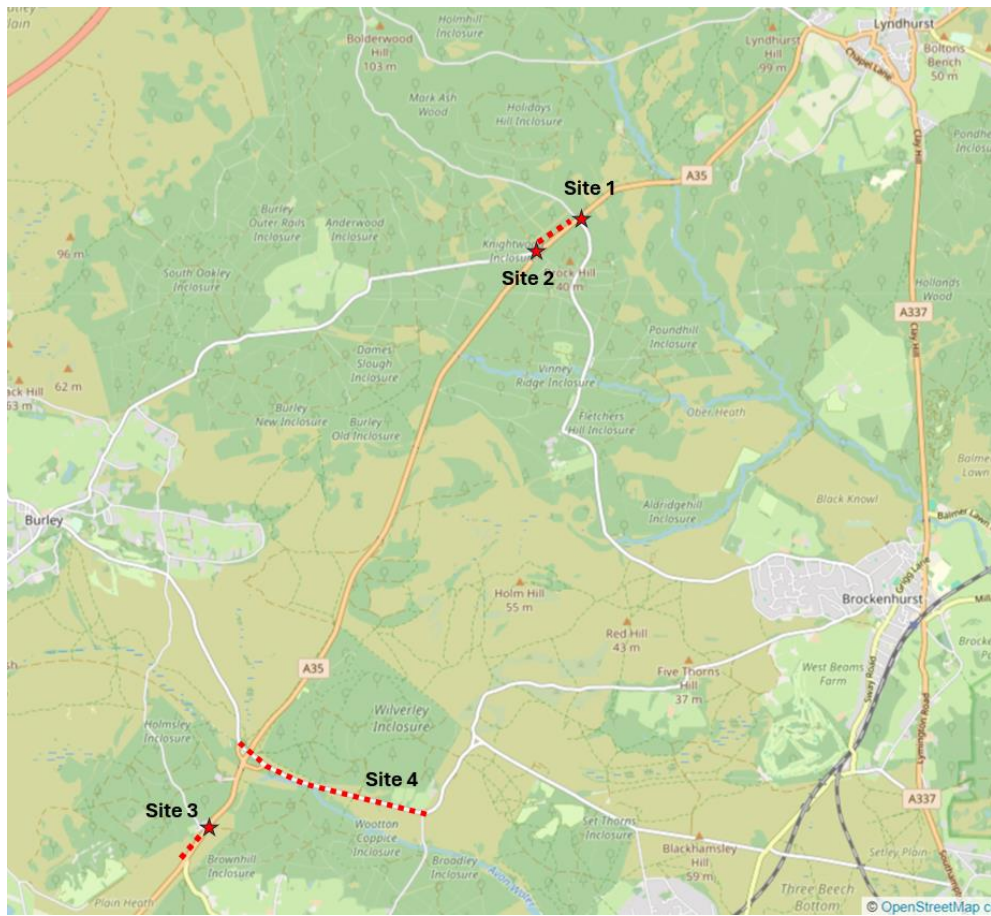
It is important to note that information may be commercially sensitive for a time (e.g. during a tender process) but afterwards it may not be. The timing of any request for information will be taken into account when determining whether or not the information is exempt, however suppliers should note that no information is likely to be regarded as exempt forever.

Confidentiality

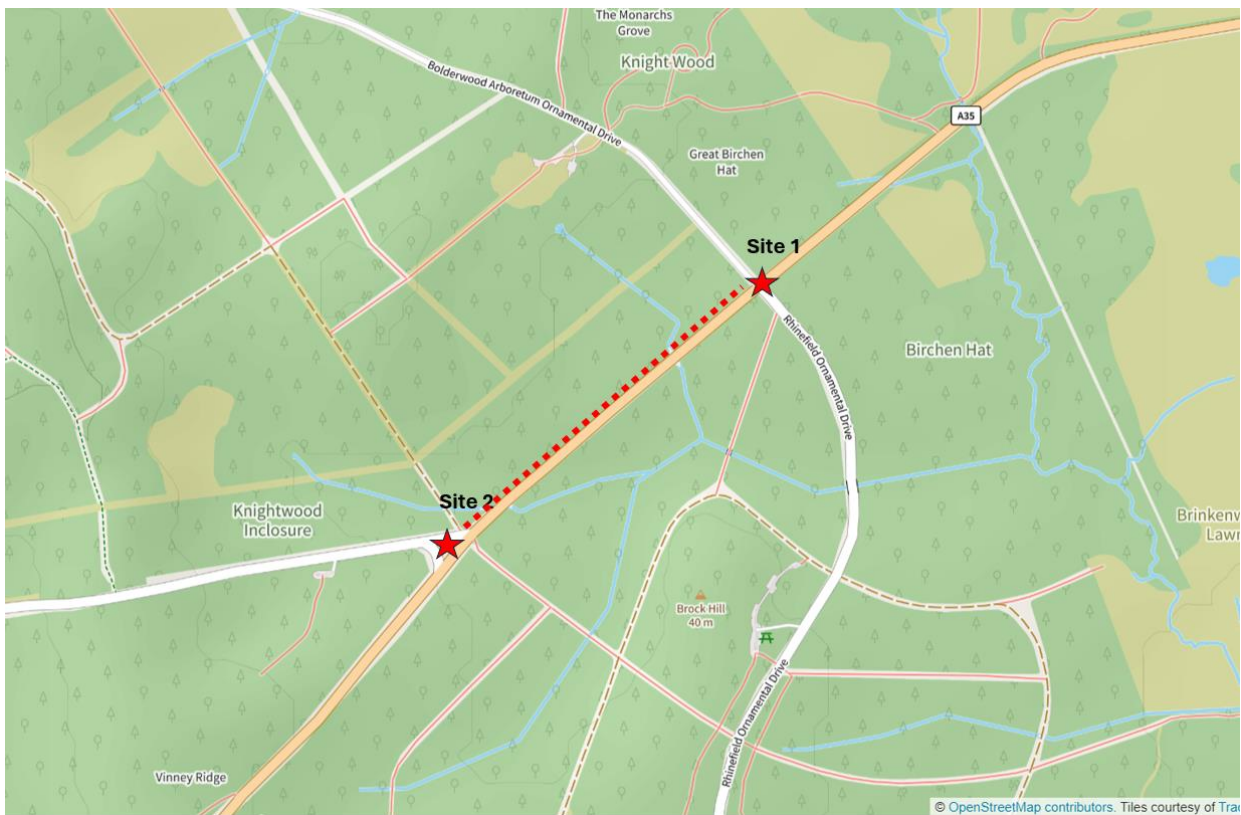
The Tenderer (whether this Tender is accepted or not) and all other recipients of the Specification and documents (whether they submit a tender or not) shall treat the details of the Specification and the documents attached hereto as private and confidential and shall not disclose the details to any party.

APPENDIX 1: Maps of study locations

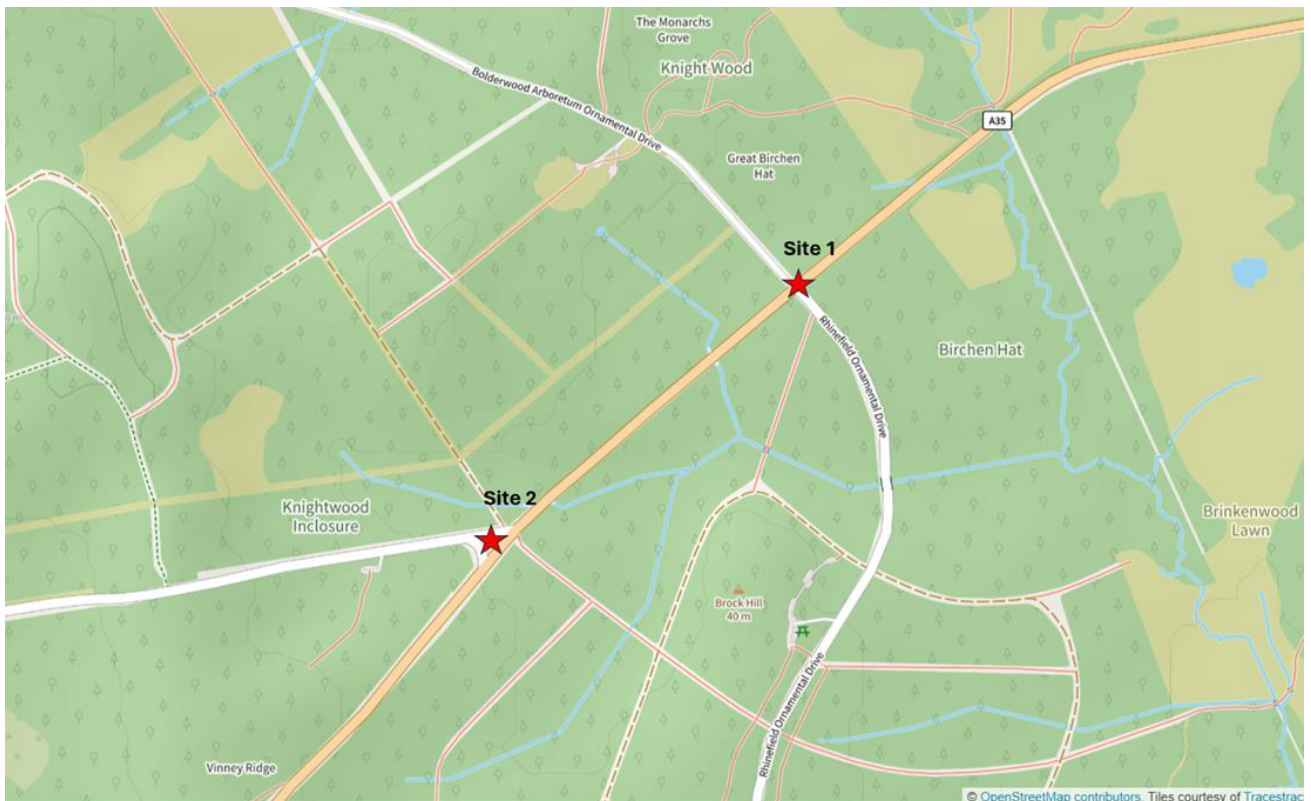
Map showing the location of the 4 sites to be considered in study



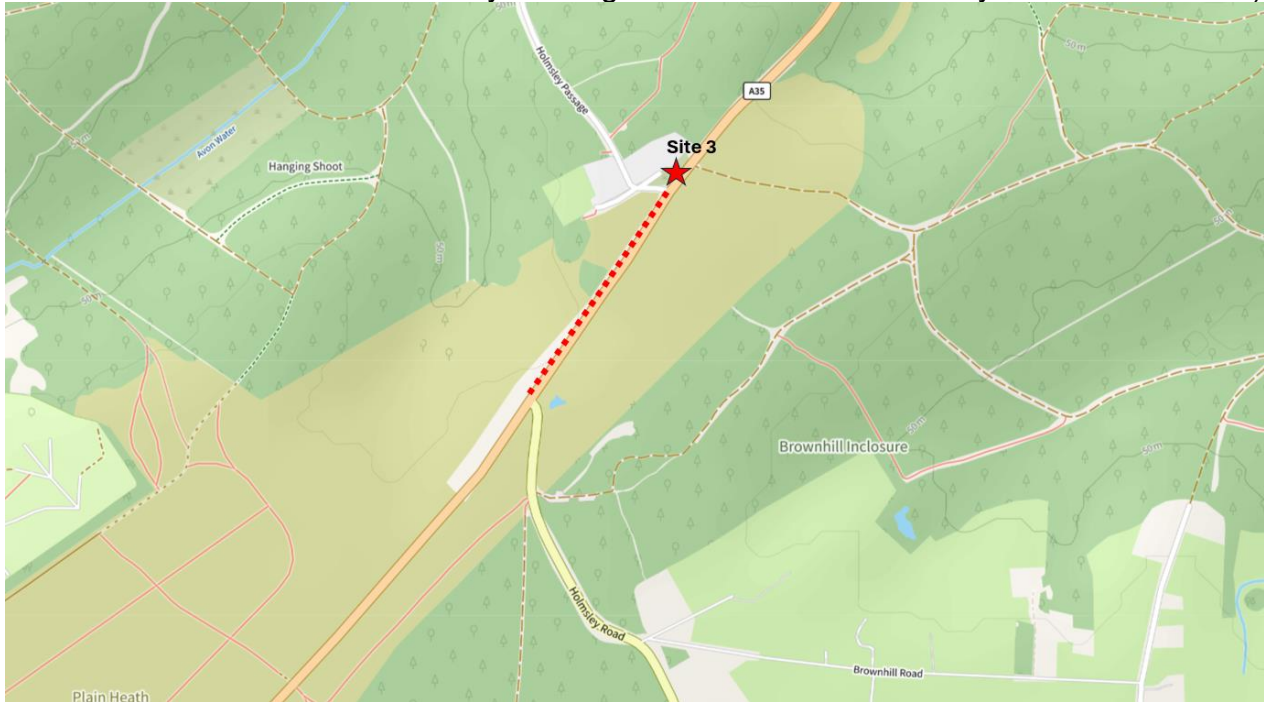
Site 1: A35 Junction with Rhinefield Ornamental Drive / Bolderwood Arboretum Drive
(dotted line shows alignment of potential off-road active travel link to Lyndhurst Road junction/Site 2)



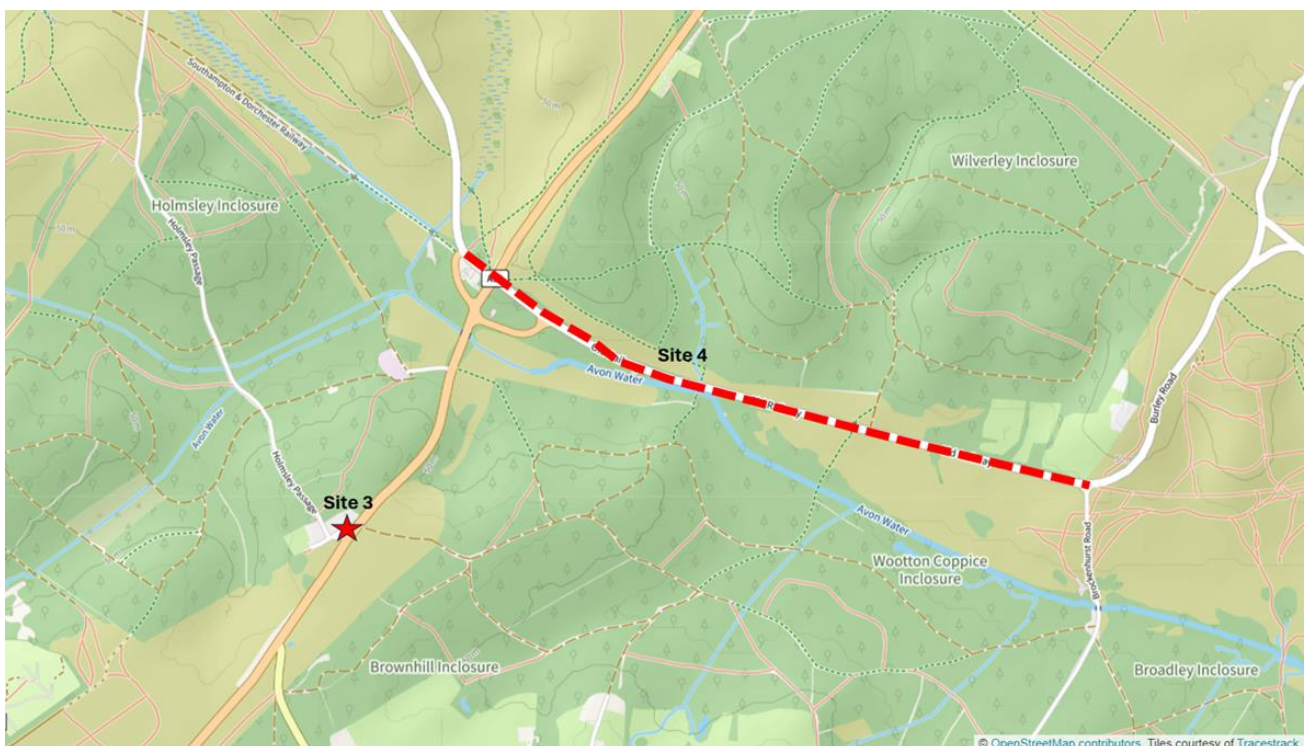
Site 2: A35 Junction with Lyndhurst Road



Site 3: A35 / Holmsley Passage and Wootton / Brownhills alignment / B3058 intersection as per Crossing 9B on NCN2 map at the (end showing the alignment of a potential off-road active travel link between Holmsley Passage and the B3058 Holmsley Road intersection)



Site 4: Holmsley Straight Mile (Old Station Tea Rooms to Brockenhurst Road)



[illegible]

The screenshot displays the Hampshire County Council Strategic Transport Planning tool. The map shows a network of roads in the New Forest National Park area, with a large black oval highlighting a specific route. The legend on the right indicates speed limits (Chalists) from 5 to 70 mph and administrative boundaries for Hampshire Districts. The map is titled 'Strategic Transport' and 'Hampshire County Council'.