**Somerset biodiversity net gain market analysis and Nature Recovery Project case study project**

# Background to Natural England

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

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

Natural England is working with the Local Planning Authorities in Somerset (District Councils and County Council) to help them gain a greater understanding of what is required to deliver biodiversity net gain (BNG). This piece of work will make an important contribution to advancing the understanding of the scale of BNG needed in Somerset, and how it can be delivered.

This piece of work is funded through the Somerset Wetlands Nature Recovery Project (NRP). This is a landscape scale project, focusing on recovering nature across 60,000 hectares of wetland on the Somerset Levels and Moors. A portion of Natural England’s BNG funding has been allocated to Nature Recovery Projects, to allow them to be a vehicle for developing BNG within a local area.

This piece of work aims to develop the understanding of BNG in Somerset through the completion of the following work items:

1. Carrying out a market analysis of the number of BNG units required to deliver the known and forecast development needs for the whole of the Somerset County area.
2. Producing a case study selected from a smaller area within the Nature Recovery Project that demonstrates how BNG units can be delivered within the Nature Recovery Project, how these units would integrate with other finance initiatives such as carbon credits and nutrient credits, and the role played by the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.
3. Delivering a workshop for developers in Somerset to share the results of this work and start early stage discussions on the implementation of BNG in Somerset.

These work items will achieve the following aims:

1. The scale of BNG required within Somerset will be better understood.
2. The way in which BNG can be used to deliver the Nature Recovery Projects outcomes will be better understood, including how these integrate with other tools such as carbon credits, nutrient and the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.
3. Key developers will have improved connections and a better understanding of BNG and the NRP.

# Requirements

Three separate items of work will be delivered within this contract:

1. A market analysis of the number (and type if possible) of BNG units will be completed for the entire Somerset County area. This will be broken down into an estimate of the amount of onsite and offsite units. This will incorporate known housing allocations, housing targets and mineral and waste sites. The Project Steering Group will be able to provide the information required in order to carry out this analysis and provide guidance on the methodology and assumptions to be used.
2. A sub-section of the NRP area will be used to produce a case study of how BNG units could be created within the NRP. This piece of work focuses on the creation of off-site BNG units, including how these integrate with other tools such as carbon credits and nutrient neutrality; and the role to be played by the Local Nature Recovery Strategy. The precise location of this case study is yet to be determined but it will be between 1000-2000 hectares in size and will be supplied by the Project Steering Group, in discussion with the successful contractor.
3. A workshop will be held with key developers and the local planning authorities and County Council to present the results of this work and to facilitate early stage discussions around BNG in Somerset.

# Outputs and timescales

The main outputs for this project will be:

1. A report presenting the results of the BNG unit market analysis.
2. A report presenting the results of the Nature Recovery Project BNG unit creation case study.
3. A workshop for developers and the local planning authorities and County Council to present the results of outputs 1 and 2 and facilitate discussion around BNG implementation in Somerset.

Key timescales:

* + Project start 01/10/2022
  + First week of project – Inception meeting between the project steering group and the contractor
  + 01/02/2023 – Draft reports for outputs 1 and 2 due to project steering group in digital format via e-mail for comments on drafts
  + 28/02/2023 – Final reports due to project steering group in response to draft comments in digital format via e-mail
  + March 2023 – Developer workshop delivered during this month, specific date to be agreed with the project steering group
  + Contract completion by 31/03/2023

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

**Project management**

# The contractor will appoint a project leader who must have sufficient experience, authority to act on behalf of the contractor and time allocated to manage the project effectively. The contractor’s project leader (CPL) will be responsible for the management and delivery of the project and will act as the liaison point, particularly liaison between members of any consortium, with the Natural England project manager (NEPM) and the Project Steering Group. The Project Steering Group will be made up of staff from Natural England, District Councils, County Council and Somerset Wildlife Trust. The form and frequency of updates required by the Project Steering Group will be agreed with the CPL at the project inception meeting.

# Supporting Documentation

The following supporting documentation should be provided:

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

# Sustainability

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

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

# Key Contacts

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