Background to the Environment Agency

The Environment Agency (EA) work to create better places for people and wildlife and support sustainable development. The EA is an executive non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA). Within England the EA is responsible for managing the risk of flooding from main rivers, reservoirs, estuaries, and the sea.

The Environment Agency is currently undertaking a flood defence project in Avonmouth & the Severnside Enterprise Area (ASEA) which will see the construction and upgrade of the flood defences along a 17km section of the Severn Estuary.

Background to the specific work area relevant to this purchase

The ASEA project has built a 1km section of earth embankment along Chittening Wharf in Avonmouth that requires reinstatement to Organic Status. The Environment Agency is seeking a contractor to carry out the Organic Conversion over the next 2 years on behalf of the project.

The new embankment has been built on land that previously held Organic Status and was farmed organically. The embankment has been completed and partially seeded and as part of the ASEA scheme, the land is to be handed back to the landowner with Organic Status, as approved by Natural England.

The contractor will be responsible for ensuring conversion of the embankment back to Organic Conversion from April 2024

Requirement

The ASEA project requires a landscaping contractor who are capable and have experience of undertaking Organic Land conversion. As specified by DEFRA, organic conversion usually takes two years to complete before being handed back to the landowner as land intended for ruminant grazing and annual crops.

In order to get organic certification, there are set rules that must be followed, and only organic farming methods must be used. The contractor must:

* only control weeds, pests and diseases where necessary, using organic farming techniques and approved materials
* maintain soil fertility using crop rotation and other organic farming methods.
* only process organic food where necessary, using limited approved products and substances

You must avoid using artificial fertilisers, pesticides, and products for cleaning and disinfection. Where they are needed, you must only use:

* fertilisers listed in the organics regulations.
* pesticides listed in the organics regulations.
* products for cleaning and disinfection listed in the organics regulations.

The contractor will be responsible for the application and certification of Organic Status to an approved UK organic control body once the works are complete.

Sustainability

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

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

Outputs and Contract Management

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Reference | Deliverable | Responsible Party | Date of completion |
| 1.0 | Contract Award | Environment Agency | March 2024 |
| 2.0 | Commencement of works on Site | Contractor | April 2024 |
| 2.1 | Organic Management of Site throughout works | Contractor | April 2026 |
| 2.2 | Application for Organic Status to approved UK organic control body | Contractor | April 2026 |

Appendix 1

Attached to the scope are the as built drawings of the embankment at Chittening Wharf.

ENVIMSW002194-BMM-XX-A32-DR-C-0202836-C02

ENVIMSW002194-BMM-XX-A32-DR-C-0202837-C02

ENVIMSW002194-BMM-XX-A32-DR-C-0202484-C02

ENVIMSW002194-BMM-XX-A32-DR-C-0202485-C02

The approximate length of section that requires Organic Reinstatement is 950m (Chainage 8500 to Chainage 9450 on drawings) with an average width of 27 metres & the embankment slope is at an average of 1:4 gradient.