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|  | **Clarification Questions** | **Answers** |
| 1 | Does the stated range of the contract (£40,000 to £49,999) include VAT? | No, the stated value of the contract excludes VAT. |
| 2 | Can a copy of the ‘think’ piece’ - Rural Focus, March 2023 (para 1.6) be provided in advance of the quotation submission? | No; whilst the ‘think piece’ has informed our approach to the contract in some respects, the specification sets out our requirements from this contract, reflecting progress in thinking and the Framework itself since March 2023. We would also welcome fresh thinking on the approach.  |
| 3 | Task 1 & 3 – would the appointed consultant be expected to digitise any ‘local data’ (para. 2.6) to enhance understanding of how local evidence can complement national data (para. 2.14) | No, there is not an expectation that the appointed consultant digitises local data. |
| 4 | Will the targets for Target 1 be required to be broken down to individual priority habitats? | No, Protected Landscapes’ contributions (or ‘local targets’) towards for Target 1 will not need to be broken down to individual priority habitats. However, the contractor may need to look at relevant habitats within the Protected Landscape to understand contributions (including habitats that may not be there presently, but might be restored/recreated in future).  |
| 5 | Task 2: How will the two protected landscapes be selected for testing the process? Will they be ones already engaged through the 30x30 contributions? | The two Protected Landscapes will be agreed with Natural England and the Project Steering Group at the inception meeting on 16 April. They will not necessarily be involved in the 30x30 case studies work. |
| 6 | Task 3: Will Natural England provide contact details for all the Protected Landscape (PL) teams? | Yes, Natural England will provide the appointed consultants with contact details for each Protected Landscape body. |
| 7 | Task 3: Can further clarity be provided on the expectations of providing guidance to the PLs eg would this include calculating the allocation of the targets for each PL? | Under Task 3, it may be possible (and would be welcomed) if the contractor is able to set out the Protected Landscape’s contributions to national targets. This is likely to depend on how progressed discussions are with local partners during the timeframe of the contract. However, we do not expect contributions to be agreed in each Protected Landscape by the end of the contract, given the need to negotiations with partners. Please see Section 2, para 2.14 of the Request for Quotation for further information.The more likely output will be a proposed step-by-step process for calculating these contributions, as mentioned in paras 2.8 and 2.19. The appointed contractor may wish to include any calculations undertaken during Task 2 (Testing the process) as examples in the guidance, with the Protected Landscape body’s permission. |
| 8 | Please confirm if there is a maximum word limit for the responses to the Technical questions (Q1-Q4) | No, there is no maximum word limit.  |
| 9 | Annex 3 highlights 3 targets/indicators that needs to be considered for the project: |  |
| 9a | Wildlife ‘outside protected sites’ – is this referring to nationally protected sites, or also locally protected sites? | The target ‘Restore or create more than 250,000 hectares of a range of wildlife-rich habitat within Protected Landscapes, outside protected sites by 2042 (from a 2022 baseline)’ just refers to nationally protected sites – please see [The Environmental Targets (Biodiversity) (England) Regulations 2023 (legislation.gov.uk)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2023/91/made) for definitions. |
| 9b | Peat – we understand the Natural England will be publishing an England Peat Map.  Will this be published before the start of the project? | The England Peat Map final model outputs are due to be published at the end of March 2025. It will therefore not be available before the start of this project. However, statistics will be available in April 2024 on the area of peat committed for restoration by March 2025 within Protected Landscapes, under the Nature for Climate Peatland Grant Scheme. |
| 9c | Tree canopy cover and woodland cover – these seem to be 2 different metrics.  Would you want us to consider both? | This relates to the Framework’s target of ‘Increase tree canopy and woodland cover (combined) by 3% of total land area in Protected Landscapes by 2050 (from 2022 baseline)’. The contract may need to concentrate on the categories derived from the National Forestry Inventory (the dataset that’s currently available to monitor this target’s indicator), which will be supplied to the contractor. However, we would also welcome consideration of tree canopy cover, as far as possible (e.g. if local data is available). |
| 10 | Protected landscapes don’t have local GIS data on habitats. Is there any expectation that this data would be collected locally, or would we rely on national mapping? | Some Protected Landscapes or their partners will have local habitat data, but some may not. The appointed consultants may therefore need to rely on national data for baseline habitat figures, where local data is unavailable. However, Protected Landscape bodies may have local data on where they wish to see habitats restored or created, or woodland/tree planting undertaken (e.g. through their Nature Recovery plans/ prospectuses/ strategies). |
| 11 | The RfQ requests the consultant to provide roadmaps with a method to agree interim targets for individual protected landscapes, or go further and help devise the road for implementation/achieving of those targets? | We envisage that the work will concentrate on the former, given the time available. However, if consultants can take this further, this would bring significant added value to the work and be of great benefit to the Protected Landscape bodies.  |
| 12 | The RfQ requests consultant input to include 1 days of consultancy support per National Park and 2 days per National Landscape. Is Natural England expecting the majority of the budget to be allocated to this task, or is there flexibility in the overall budget? | Yes, we envisage that a large proportion of the budget will be allocated to this task, as the Protected Landscape bodies will value the one-to-one support provided through the contract. However, we welcome tenderers’ proposals for how the project’s aims can be most effectively achieved within the overall budget. |