Clarifications to Bidder’s Questions:  
Riparian Buffer Strip Tool and Methodology for project assessments

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| 1 | Is there are scope for extending the delivery date please? | The deadline stated in the project specification can be extended and a timeline that is reasonable for you which allows sufficient time for you to review the existing literature will not be viewed or scored negatively, however, Natural England does have a cut-off point of 29th September 2025. |
| 2 | In terms of a tool are you specifically looking for an excel based tool that would calculate the nutrient load reduction achieved based on the NN catchment/SAC, riparian buffer strip area and area influenced? (similar to the Nutrient Budget Calculators we produced) | NE is interested to see what opportunity there is in terms of tool design so the contactor will have flexibility to propose its preferred design and function for the tool. For example, if a GIS based tool would be best to quantify the nutrient reductions from a RBS in an NN catchment to account for the various environmental factors then NE would be open to this. NE would also consider an Excel based tool appropriate as these have been effective in the past to quantify nutrient inputs. |
| 3 | Would you require accessibility formatting? | The tool would need to be suitably accessible as per NE’s publication standards on accessibility. So we’d encourage accessibility formatting as part of the contract but if for some reason accessibility formatting is not possible then we may be able to not meet some of the accessibility criteria by providing alternative options. |
| 4 | Would the tool be used in house by NE only? | No, the tool would need to be published externally for mitigation scheme providers to use but NE needs to have access and control of the tool following the end of the contract. |
| 5 | For the GIS element, are you looking for a shapefile to help identify the area influenced by a riparian buffer strip? We could include functionality where you can add a line for the buffer strip and the pore points are automatically calculated which would show the area of run off that is influenced by the buffer strip. You would then input this area into the excel tool. | Yes, ideally there will be some GI function to the tool to inform the calculation and ensure the environmental factors that influence nutrient treatment rates within a RBS are accounted for. As mentioned in my answer to the first question, the contractor will have scope to propose a design and functionality for the tool that they think will deliver the most accurate nutrient reduction calculations whilst also ensuring the tool is user-friendly. |