Request for Quotation

Benfleet and Southend Marshes SPA Ornithological Surveys and Biotope Survey and Mapping

16/06/2025

Request for Quotation

Benfleet and Southend Marshes SPA Ornithological Surveys and Biotope Survey and Mapping

You are invited to submit a quotation for the requirement described in the specification, Section 2.

Please confirm by email, receipt of these documents and whether you intend to submit a quote or not.

Your response should be returned to the following email address by:

Email: Sajan.Sebastian**@naturalengland.org.uk**

Date: 18/07/2025

Time: 12:00

Ensure you include the name of the quotation and ‘Final Submission’ in the subject field to make it clear that it is your response.

Contact Details and Timetable

**Sajan Sebastian** will be your contact for any questions related to the content of the quote or the process. Please submit any clarification questions via email, and note that, unless commercially sensitive, both the question and the response will be circulated to all tenderers.

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| --- | --- |
| Action | Date |
| Date of issue of RFQ | 18/06/2025 |
| Deadline for clarifications questions | 10/07/2025 at 12:00 GMT |
| Deadline for receipt of Quotation | 18/07/2025 at 12:00 GMT |
| Intended date of Contract Award | 21/08/2025 |
| Intended Contract Start Date | 22/09/2025 |
| Intended Delivery Date / Contract Duration | 22/11/2025 to 28/03/2026 |

Section 1: General Information

Glossary

Unless the context otherwise requires, the following words and expressions used within this Request for Quotation shall have the following meanings (to be interpreted in the singular or plural as the context requires):

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| “Authority” | means Natural England who is the Contracting Authority. |
| “Contract” | means the contract to be entered into by the Authority and the successful supplier. |
| “Response” | means the information submitted by a supplier in response to the RFQ. |
| “RFQ” | means this Request for Quotation and all related documents published by the Authority and made available to suppliers. |

Conditions applying to the RFQ

You should examine your Response and related documents ensuring it is complete and in accordance with the stated instructions prior to submission.

Your Response must contain sufficient information to enable the Authority to evaluate it fairly and effectively. You should ensure that you have prepared your Response fully and accurately and that prices quoted are arithmetically correct for the units stated.

By submitting a Response, you, the supplier, are deemed to accept the terms and conditions provided in the RFQ. Confirmation of this is required in Annex 2.

Failure to comply with the instructions set out in the RFQ may result in the supplier’s exclusion from this quotation process.

Acceptance of Quotations

By issuing this RFQ the Authority does not bind itself to accept any quotation and reserves the right not to award a contract to any supplier who submits a quotation.

Costs

The Authority will not reimburse you for any costs and expenses which you incur preparing and submitting your quotation, even if the Authority amends or terminates the procurement process.

Self-Declaration and Mandatory Requirements

The RFQ includes a self-declaration response (Annex 1) which covers basic information about the supplier, as well as any grounds for exclusion. If you do not comply with them, your quotation will not be evaluated.

Any mandatory requirements will be set out in Section 2, Specification of Requirements and, if you do not comply with them, your quotation will not be evaluated.

Clarifications

Any request for clarification regarding the RFQ and supporting documentation must be submitted via email no later than the deadline for clarifications set out in the Timetable. The Authority shall be under no obligation to respond to queries raised after the clarification deadline.

The Authority will respond to all reasonable clarifications as soon as possible but cannot guarantee a minimum response time. The Authority will publish all clarifications and its responses to all suppliers via email unless deemed commercially sensitive.

If a supplier believes that a request for clarification is commercially sensitive, it should clearly state this when submitting the clarification request. However, if the Authority considers either that:

* the clarification and response are not commercially sensitive; and
* all suppliers may benefit from its disclosure,

then the Authority will notify the supplier (via email), and the supplier will have an opportunity to withdraw the request for clarification by sending a further message requesting the withdrawal of the clarification request. If not withdrawn by the supplier within 2 working days of the Authority’s notification, the Authority may publish the clarification request and its response to all suppliers and the Authority shall not be liable to the supplier for any consequences of such publication.

The Authority reserves the right to seek clarification of any aspect of a quotation and/or provide additional information during the evaluation phase to carry out a fair evaluation. Where the Authority seeks clarification on any aspect of the quotation, the supplier must respond within the timeframe requested by the Authority.

Amendments

The Authority may amend the RFQ at any time prior to the deadline for receipt. If it amends the RFQ the Authority will notify you via email.

Suppliers may modify their quotation prior to the deadline for Responses. No Responses may be modified after the deadline for Responses.

Suppliers may withdraw their quotations at any time by submitting a notice via the email to the named contact.

Conditions of Contract

The Authority’s Standard Good and Services Terms & Conditions (used for purchases under £50k) can be located on the [Natural England Website](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england/about/procurement) and will be applicable to any contract awarded as a result of this quotation process. The Authority will not accept any changes to these terms and conditions proposed by a supplier.

Suppliers should note that the quotation provided by the successful bidder will form part of the Contract.

Prices

Prices must be submitted in £ sterling, exclusive of VAT.

Disclosure

All Central Government Departments, their Executive Agencies and Non Departmental Public Bodies are subject to control and reporting within Government. In particular, they report to the Cabinet Office and HM Treasury for all expenditure. Further the Cabinet Office has a cross-Government role delivering overall Government policy on public procurement, including ensuring value for money and related aspects of good procurement practice. For these purposes, the Authority may disclose within Government any details contained in your quotation. The information will not be disclosed outside Government during the procurement.

In addition, the Authority is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004, which provide a public right of access to information held by public bodies. In accordance with these two statutes, the Authority may be required to disclose information contained in your quotation to any person who submits a request for information pursuant to those statutes.

Further to the Government’s transparency agenda, all UK Government organisations must advertise on Contract Finder in accordance with the following publication thresholds:

* Central Contracting Authority’s: £12,000
* Sub Central Contracting Authority’s and NHS Trusts: £30,000

For the purpose of this RFQ the Authority is classified as a Central Contracting Authority with a publication threshold of £12,000 inclusive of VAT.

If this opportunity is advertised via Contracts Finder, we are obliged to publish details of the awarded contract including who has won the contract, the contract value, and indicate whether the winning supplier is a small and medium-sized enterprise (“SMEs”) or voluntary organisation or charity. A copy of the contract must also be published with confidential information redacted.

By submitting a Response, you consent to these terms as part of the procurement.

Disclaimers

Whilst the information in this RFQ and any supporting information referred to herein or provided to you by the Authority have been prepared in good faith the Authority does not warrant that this information is comprehensive or that it has been independently verified.

The Authority does not:

* make any representation or warranty (express or implied) as to the accuracy, reasonableness or completeness of the RFQ;
* accept any liability for the information contained in the RFQ or for the fairness, accuracy or completeness of that information; or
* accept any liability for any loss or damage (other than in respect of fraudulent misrepresentation or any other liability which cannot lawfully be excluded) arising as a result of reliance on such information or any subsequent communication.

Any supplier considering entering into contractual relationships with the Authority following receipt of the RFQ should make its own investigations and independent assessment of the Authority and its requirements for the goods and/or services and should seek its own professional financial and legal advice.

Protection of Personal Data

In order to comply with the General Data Protection Regulations 2018 the supplier must agree to the following:

You must only process any personal data in strict accordance with instructions from the Authority.

* You must ensure that all the personal data that we disclose to you or you collect on our behalf under this agreement are kept confidential.
* You must take reasonable steps to ensure the reliability of employees who have access to personal data.
* Only employees who may be required to assist in meeting the obligations under this agreement may have access to the personal data.
* Any disclosure of personal data must be made in confidence and extend only so far as that which is specifically necessary for the purposes of this agreement.
* You must ensure that there are appropriate security measures in place to safeguard against any unauthorised access or unlawful processing or accidental loss, destruction or damage or disclosure of the personal data.
* On termination of this agreement, for whatever reason, the personal data must be returned to us promptly and safely, together with all copies in your possession or control.

General Data Protection Regulations 2018

For the purposes of the Regulations the Authority is the data processor.

The personal information that we have asked you provide on individuals (data subjects) that will be working for you on this contract will be used in compiling the tender list and in assessing your offer. If you are unsuccessful the information will be held and destroyed within two years of the award of contracts. If you are awarded a contract it will be retained for the duration of the contract and destroyed within seven years of the contract’s expiry.

We may monitor the performance of the individuals during the execution of the contract, and the results of our monitoring, together with the information that you have provided, will be used in determining what work is allocated under the contract, and in any renewal of the contract or in the award of future contracts of a similar nature. The information will not be disclosed to anyone outside the Authority without the consent of the data subject, unless the Authority is required by law to make such disclosures.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI)

The Client is striving to create a diverse and inclusive working environment where every individual has equality of opportunity to progress and to apply their unique insights to making the UK a great place for living. The Service Provider is expected to respect this commitment in all dealings with Natural England staff and service users.

Suppliers are expected to;

* support Defra group to achieve its Public Sector Equality Duty as defined by the Equality Act 2010, and to support delivery of [Defra group’s Equality & Diversity Strategy](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/defra-group-equality-diversity-and-inclusion-strategy-2020-to-2024/defra-group-equality-diversity-and-inclusion-strategy-2020-to-2024).
* meet the standards set out in the [Government’s Supplier Code of Conduct](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supplier-code-of-conduct)
* work with Defra group to ensure equality, diversity and inclusion impacts are addressed (positive and negative) in the goods, services and works we procure, barriers are removed and opportunities realised.

Sustainable Procurement

Addressing global sustainability impacts and realising additional community benefits within commercial activity is core to Defra group’s approach, working with its supply chain is key to achieving sustainable outcomes. In addition to supporting Defra group to meet its outcomes we look to understand and reduce negative sustainability impacts associated with our commercial activity and realise benefits.

The Client encourages its suppliers to share these values, work to address negative impacts and realise opportunities, measure performance and success.

Suppliers are expected to have an understanding of the Sustainable Development Goals, the interconnections between them and the relevance to the Goods, Services and works procured on the Client’s behalf.

Conflicts of Interest

The concept of a conflict of interest includes but is not limited to any situation where an Involved Person or Relevant Body has directly or indirectly, a financial, economic or other personal interest which might be perceived to compromise their impartiality and independence in the context of the procurement procedure and/or affect the integrity of the contract award.

We expect suppliers to mitigate appropriately against any real or perceived conflict of interest through their work with government. A supplier with a position of influence gained through a contract should not use that position to unfairly disadvantage any other supplier or reduce the potential for future competition

Where the supplier is aware of any circumstances giving rise to a conflict of interest or has any indication that a conflict of interest exists or may arise you should inform the Authority of this as soon as possible (whether before or after they have submitted a quotation). Tenderers should remain alert to the possibility of conflicts of interest arising at all stages of the procurement and should update the Authority if any new circumstances or information arises, or there are any changes to information already provided to the Authority. Failure to do so, and/or to properly manage any conflicts of interest may result in a quotation being rejected.

Provided that it has been carried out in an open, fair and transparent manner, routine pre-market engagement carried out by the Authority should not represent a conflict of interest for the supplier.

Section 2: The Invitation

Specification of Requirements

1. Background to Natural England

The Authority is Natural England. The Authority’s priorities are to secure a healthy natural environment; a sustainable, low-carbon economy; a thriving farming sector and a sustainable, healthy and secure food supply. Further information about the Authority can be found at: Natural England

The Benfleet and Southend Marshes SPA Ornithological Surveys and Biotope Survey and Mapping - Part A is underway, and Natural England are now seeking a supplier to carry out the remaining tasks under Part B.

2. Background to the specific work area relevant to this purchase

Benfleet and Southend Marshes SPA is situated in south-east Essex, on the northern bank of the Thames Estuary. It holds significance in terms of connectivity and adjacent designations for Natural England and other stakeholders involved in nature recovery and transformation. It qualifies under Article 4.2 of the Birds Directive by supporting internationally important populations of regularly occurring migratory species and an internationally important assemblage of waterfowl.

Much of the site lies below national sea level and comprises several intertidal, subtidal, and terrestrial habitat types that birds depend on for loafing, roosting, and foraging. In many locations, the presence of a seawall separates the terrestrial parts of the site (such as freshwater and coastal grazing marsh) from the intertidal and marine zones (mixed and coarse sediments, saltmarsh, sand and mud flats, shell banks, and seagrass beds).

Given the high flood risk in the Thames Estuary basin due to rising sea levels and erosion, coastal squeeze and intertidal habitat loss are concerns within this site. Most of the intertidal habitat is muddy in character, featuring extensive areas of saltmarsh and saltmarsh basins, inlets, seagrass beds, and lagoons in the low-lying regions. The significant saltmarsh roost areas at Two Tree and Canvey Point in the SPA are regarded as being in unfavourable condition when assessed through their component SSSI units; the remaining inner creek saltmarsh has shown no deterioration or improvement in unfavourable condition and is generally viewed as recovering.

Extensive condition improvements have occurred in the adjacent grassland SPA and SSSI habitats. The SPA grassland is primarily coastal grazing marsh with ditches and includes the seawall with borrowdykes, which collectively provide supportive habitat for overwintering waterfowl. The entire area, including the adjoining SSSI grassland downs, supports notable botanical and invertebrate assemblages characteristic of the Thames terrace and marshes. Public access is available to virtually all the sea walls around the site, and in several areas, there is an insufficient buffer of mud or sand flats between the feeding/roosting birds and the shoreline, resulting in high disturbance rates. Additionally, significant watercraft activity occurs in and adjacent to the SPA, and the area is vulnerable to further potential disturbances (including noise from fireworks during winter months) due to the development of coastal infrastructure.

Natural England has identified a need to assess the abundance and distribution of the SPA designated features within the Benfleet and Southend Marshes SPA and the areas of supporting habitat on which they rely, in order to enhance the quality of our site condition assessments and local evidence base, ensuring that any advice provided concerning the site is robust.

3. Requirement

The aim of this project is to undertake a comprehensive survey in the Benfleet and Southend marshes SPA to assess the extent and condition of intertidal sedimentary assets to enhance our understanding of ecosystem services. This will involve enhanced analysis for bird food resource availability and dependency of SPA features on the sedimentary assets and will be used to map ecosystem assets and flows, develop bird food resource models, and provide evidence to support Natural England's condition assessment and conservation advice for the SPA.

**Part of this project has been initiated and requires completion ( Phased work). The full details of the work required are provided below. As some initial work for phase 1 and phase 2 has begun, we refer to this project as phased work, consisting of Parts A and B. Part A is nearing completion, while Part B represents the scope of work outlined in this tender.**

Natural England wishes to commission Phase I and Phase II intertidal survey work during the winter of 2025 (November to February) to gather robust evidence on the distribution and extent of intertidal habitats and features of intertidal habitats (sediments, Pacific oyster beds, mussel beds or biogenic reefs). This project will deliver a detailed map of SPA features and their food sources at a range of species biotopes; and will interrogate and analyse the detailed evidence collected to inform Condition Assessment, the formulation of Conservation Advice and the construction of an Ecosystem Asset baseline for the area in question.

The information gathered must be of sufficient quality to provide a comparison with previous surveys (where possible) relating to intertidal habitats according to methodologies outlined in JNCC common standards guidance (JNCC, 2004).

In brief, Natural England is seeking potential contractors to pay particular attention to survey design so that quantitatively robust data is acquired, which will permit rigorous statistical analysis and support robust condition assessment judgments of the SPA site.

The survey design for this tender should produce high-quality biological data of suitable resolution to allow key attributes of condition to be assessed according to [Common Standards Monitoring guidance](https://jncc.gov.uk/our-work/common-standards-monitoring-guidance/) and to assess the quality of ecosystem assets. This will be delivered through a combined approach of Phase I and Phase II.

We would expect the contractor to liaise closely with key partners such as the KEIFCA (in terms of shellfish monitoring) and with NMBAQC-accredited labs to (Infaunal analysis) achieve this aim as and when required.

Natural England is seeking a contractor to carry out four tasks; Some parts of the work have been carried out previously and need completion.

The key aims and overall objective of the survey are to:

Undertake Phase I and Phase II surveys of the Benfleet and Southend marshes SPA to gather robust evidence on the distribution and extent of sedimentary intertidal habitats and features based on the KEIFCA bird sectors and surrounding areas;

Identify and map the extent and distribution of intertidal sedimentary habitats and biotopes of the Benfleet and Southend marshes SPA according to the JNCC Marine Habitat Classification for Britain and Ireland

Provide the bird prey biomass assessment and data collection for future modelling; and

Low tide counts of non-breeding birds within the intertidal habitats of Benfleet and Southend Marshes SPA

The evidence collected will be utilised by Natural England to enhance the understanding of the abundance and distribution of the SPA designated features within the Benfleet and Southend Marshes SPA, as well as the supporting habitats on which they rely, in order to improve the quality of our site condition assessment. This will also deepen the understanding of the ecosystem services within the Benfleet and Southend Marshes SPA, facilitating the mapping of ecosystem assets and flows, and informing the development of a Natural Capital Account for the Benfleet and Southend Marshes SPA.

Ideally, the survey methodology and analysis will be designed to be compatible with previous monitoring (2000) to allow a temporal comparison of the extent and distribution of intertidal habitats.

3.1 Phase I and Phase II surveys (Continuation of 2024-2025 Phased work)

In collaboration with Natural England, plan, undertake and report on Phase I and Phase II intertidal surveys covering the entire suite of features (where Phase II is informed and guided by Phase I). This will inform our understanding of ecosystems asset quality and quantity to assess ecosystem service flows and feature condition of the Benfleet and Southend marshes SPA.

Overall outputs of the combined approach:

Identify and map the extent and distribution of biotopes and biotope communities according to the JNCC Marine Habitat Classification for Britain and Ireland. Where feasible provide quantitative information on species composition across the range of sedimentary habitat biotopes and biotope complexes identified. Low tide counts of non-breeding birds of Benfleet and Southend Marshes SPA and dependency of SPA features on the biotopes and habitats. (sector based on previous BTO guidelines)

A map of a river

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

**Figure 1. Benfleet and Southend Marshes SPA WeBS sectors** (10 sectors in the north of the Thames)

Under this specification contractors must:

- Develop, agree and implement, in collaboration with Natural England a survey plan to collect data suitable for undertaking assessment of the direction of ecological change within the communities/habitats identified under this specification, wherever possible, integrating and interrogating previously obtained relevant data in the analysis.

- In agreement with Natural England, implement a statistically robust survey design to enable future collection of compatible data, permitting quantitative long-term analysis. This should, where possible, enable temporal comparisons to be made with previous datasets, but the overall objective is to provide an ecosystem asset map comprising the location and quality of intertidal habitats.

- Ensure anthropogenic influences, potentially impacting the feature, are identified, and where possible quantified, allowing analysis to focus on investigation of the potential impacts of these pressures (e.g. bait digging, fishing activities, coastal defence works, and recreational damaging activities including fireworks-related noise pollution during winter). These should be mapped where possible in accordance with the methods outlined in the CCW Phase I [Biotope Handbook](http://www.ccgc.gov.uk/landscape--wildlife/managing-land-and-sea/idoc.ashx?docid=a393937a-b057-4fec-9eba-e534ec627599&version=-1) and should include damaging or potentially damaging activities.

Please note: Infaunal core sample and PSA analysis can be undertaken by a third-party contractor under a separate subcontract subject to NE Consulting. An NE/EA framework is also an option for the winning contractors to seek advice from NE However, in this case, Sample analysis cost would also be required in the total costing.

- Prepare samples for transport to the laboratory (e.g. complete OCR forms, sieve and fix samples in formaldehyde, package ready for transport in similar pots used by the Environment Agency’s National Laboratory Service, and arrange courier). The contractor is expected to liaise with the sample contractor and ensure samples are couriered to them for analysis. Samples may need to be stored by the contractor in a safe refrigerated facility prior to postage. This should all be included in the costing.

- Provide a preliminary assessment of the condition of the features from the field data and observations you have collected, clearly stating out how the assessment is supported by the analysis/interpretation of data collected. Note: this is not the formal condition assessment that will be undertaken by Natural England using all relevant data. This preliminary assessment should pay particular attention to noting any differentiation in observed condition between similar communities which are subject to varying degrees of anthropogenic pressures in order to focus analysis on investigating particular impacts.

- Provide fully detailed “standard operating protocols” for the work undertaken to ensure that methods can be repeated in the future.

- Produce a concise, evidence-based technical report detailing the work undertaken, reporting the survey and analytical findings, and discussing these in the light of any previous data.

- In discussions around the findings of this work, observations made regarding condition, drawing upon “expert judgement” in addition to the collected and analysed data, must be clearly identified and presented separately from the core results of this survey work.

3.2 Identify and map the extent and distribution of intertidal sedimentary habitats and biotopes of the Benfleet and Southend marshes SPA (Continuation of 2024-2025 Phased work)

- Report the detailed findings of the project in succinct and clear final reports, including appropriate GIS, Marine Recorder and MEDIN outputs. For the majority of the report biotope codes and maps need to be provided in MNCR (04/05) classification, however underlying GI layers should also hold EUNIS classification results to the highest possible level. The final report should include mapping outputs at the SAC sub-feature or MCZ BSH level (broadly speaking EUNIS level 4)

- Provide all data to the relevant standards set out in section on reporting below

- A MESH data confidence assessment for each habitat map should be calculated and provided in a ‘MESH confidence scoresheet’ \*.XLS file. The confidence assessment process is described and a template provided in the following MESH resources: [The MESH Confidence Assessment Scheme](http://www.emodnet-seabedhabitats.eu/default.aspx?page=1693).

- Note the presence and location of any habitats or species that would qualify MCZ FOCI, (as defined by the [Ecological Network Guidance)](https://data.jncc.gov.uk/data/94f961af-0bfc-4787-92d7-0c3bcf0fd083/MCZ-Ecological-Network-Guidance-2010.pdf), and/or species/habitats of interest that are listed in OSPAR List Threatened/Declining, UK BAP Priority species etc. where they are not covered within SAC BSH definitions. This should also be highlighted in the reporting stage.

- A sampling design needs to be developed for this work. This should seek to build on any previous work listed and, where possible, enable temporal comparisons to be made with previous datasets.

- In developing an appropriate sampling strategy contractors should not be bound to simply repeat the previous methodology undertaken; rather they should seek to implement an improved approach which enables a comparison with existing data but at the same time delivers Natural England’s requirements for a more statistically robust approach outlined above.

3.3 Bird prey biomass assessments

**Field survey and sampling**

NE envisages that the Phase I survey will cover 100% of the site wherever possible, following the bird counter sectors (see Map). Where the site is large, or access complex then we would expect the contractor to present an appropriate strategy for the Phase I element that will cover as much of the site as possible. This will facilitate interpolation across non surveyed areas, to optimise the design by balancing desk-based, Phase I and Phase II elements. This broad-scale “walkover” style survey is to be supported by stratified targeted in-situ survey stations distributed across the site. In-situ sampling at these stations is intended to quantify the species assemblages and corroborate biotope assessment made during the Phase I survey, which will also provide in-situ granulometry and faunal descriptions. This survey should be planned in accordance with the methods detailed in the CSM guidance, JNCC Marine Monitoring Handbook (Davies et al., 2001) and the CCW Handbook for Marine Intertidal Phase I Survey and Mapping (Wyn et al., 2000).

A robust sampling strategy for Phase II infaunal sampling of target habitats, such as biogenic reefs (including *Sabellaria* or oyster habitats), specific shellfish species (e.g., *Cerastoderma*), and seagrass (e.g., Zostera), should be implemented. While we are not specifying exact locations for the Phase II survey, we expect samples to be collected from over 100 stations within the Benfleet and Southend Marshes SPA locations; these stations should be agreed upon with Natural England. It is important to justify the chosen transects or random sampling grids before collecting the samples. The Phase II survey plan must be developed based on the results of the Phase I survey to ensure that samples are taken from across representative and target habitats in alignment with the overall aims and objectives.

Sample locations should be:

Geographically spread throughout the site; Representative of the range of sediments of interest; Proportionate in their split to the overall coverage of the sediment of interest; Randomly located within the broad sediment types identified through Phase I; Distributed across the site as transects with stations at mid and low shore (where appropriate) and If appropriate sampling can be stratified using the sectors described below.

A series of single cores should be taken from each station across the site, with a subset of stations where triplicate samples are taken (0.01m2 core, 0.5mm mesh sieve) for infaunal sampling (abundance) and stored separately (be mindful of previous Water Environment Regulations (WER) samples in the WB and number of triplicates needed for WER monitoring requirements). However, unlike WER methodology, these triplicate samples should be treated as individual samples and not combined. A further 0.01m2 core will be collected for PSA analysis at each station. Each station should also have a redox and an interstitial salinity measurement.

Faunal sampling should conform to standard methodology [ISO 16665:2014](https://www.iso.org/obp/ui/#iso:std:iso:16665:ed-2:v1:en), and identification should be carried out in accordance to the [NMBAQC quality control guidelines following Standard Operation Procedure ES-04](http://www.nmbaqcs.org/qa-standards/).

Natural England envisages that the required survey work under this specification should scheduled to be completed by the end of November - December 2025 for the winter survey, however potential contractors should provide contingency dates should the planned survey be affected e.g. by weather downtime.

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| **Indicative purpose only**:  Phase 2 sampling: ~100 macrofaunal cores, 15 cm deep (Includes no of triplicate cores; -------number of single cores based on Phase 1 information);  Sediment/ PSA cores, 15 cm deep;  Bird food resource cores, 30 cm deep; |

\*Details of the indicative species list size classes to be measured during survey and subsequent infaunal analysis.

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| Species | Size fractions |
| Hediste diversicolor, Arenicola marina + other polychaetes | <25mm, 25-50mm, 50-75mm, 75-100mm, >100mm  (‘relaxed’ length). |
| Corophium volutator + other corophiid species | <3mm, >3mm |
| Peringia ulvae | <3mm, 3-5mm, >5mm |
| Mytilus edilus | <5mm, 5-10mm, 10-15mm, 15-20mm, 20-30mm, >30mm |
| Cerastoderma edule | <5mm, 5-10mm, 10-15mm, 15-20mm, 20-30mm, >30mm |
| Macoma balthica | <9mm, 9-15mm, 15-20mm, >20mm |
| Other bivalve species | < 5mm, 5-10mm, 10-15mm, 15-20mm……… |
| Crangon crangon | <15mm, 15-30mm, >30mm |
| Carcinus maenas | <10mm, 10-20mm, 20-30mm, 30-40mm, 40-50mm, >50mm |
| Littorina spp. |  |

Bird prey biomass should be assessed to indicate the value of substrate to SPA features. The total weight of several species (mussels, cockles, littorinids) per quadrat should be recorded for a subset of samples. Prey biomass and size, and range of cockles and mussels should also be recorded for a subset of quadrats. These results can then be used to obtain average biomass values for prey samples relating to bird feeding activity as per the previous survey series. Annelid spp. will also need to be weighed (not weighed during previous ) following standard practices and recorded if possible.

3.4 Low tide bird count survey

To deliver a programme of 4 (four) once monthly (November 2025 – February 2026) standardised shore-based surveys of the abundance and distribution of the SPA designated features; with consultation with BTO for smooth collection of data collection and coordinated days of operation.

● Dark-bellied brent goose (Branta bernicla bernicla), Non-breeding

● Dunlin (Calidris alpina alpina), Non-breeding

● Grey plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*), Non-breeding

● Knot (Calidris canutus), Non-breeding

● Ringed plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*), Non-breeding and

● The waterbirds assemblage count needs to be included.

These will be carried out in accordance with the BTO/RSPB/JNCC Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) Low Tide Counts (LTC) scheme methodology (https://www.bto.org/our-science/projects/wetland-bird-survey/taking-part/low-tide-counts-methods) and use the BTO Low Tide Count Sectors (Annex A)

The standard LTC scheme recording from is also available online at: https://www.bto.org/sites/default/files/u18/downloads/counter\_resources/lowtidecountform.pdf

Each of the sites is subdivided into several, pre-established and clearly defined low tide count sectors (Area map) which must be adhered to when surveying in this project.

Counts for task 1 should be undertaken once monthly from November 2025 – February 2026, over as few days as possible each month and on similar tides where feasible.

For all counts, birds should be identified to species (see list above)

All count data should be submitted to the WeBS LTC organiser (lowtide@bto.org) at the BTO through a standard spreadsheet (with metadata on count sector, date, time, etc) which should be obtained from the WeBS LTC organiser.

Full details of logistic considerations for survey work should be provided in the tender e.g. operational restrictions, or other factors that may justify excluding coverage of certain areas and how these restrictions will be addressed.

There are various risks that may constrain the ability to complete the survey and data processing within the required timescales, considering factors such as weather, access restrictions etc. Bidders should describe the potential risks and provide details of relevant contingency measures.

To enable the successful delivery of the bird surveys, the successful Contractor is expected to:

1. Plan the delivery of the low tide counts across all sites/months and submit these plans at the tendering stage.

2. Conduct the surveys, including organisation and positioning of surveyors and equipment, and ensuring that all health and safety requirements are met.

3. Submit brief survey completion reports following the completion of each of the four, once monthly surveys.

Contractors must clearly state their availability and capability to carry both this single contract and any other projects they may consider bidding for in combination within the given timescales.

It’s important that the bird surveys cover WeBS core count period of tide (usually 2 hours either side of high tide focusing on roosts) and WeBS Low Tide Counts (2 hours either side of low tide) to cover the notable designated site period September – end March, at least (with at least one visit per month on or close to BTO WeBS advertised dates). If there is a WeBS Core Count recorder already (Neil Fuller -personal confirmation- there won’t be a Low Tide Count in 2025.) it would make sense for the surveyors to contact via BTO and co-ordinate dates so that complementary & supplementary data is obtained to increase the available dataset. Ideally, understanding how the birds move with the tide would be helpful, which will be linked to the availability of roosts and sediment exposure duration.

Surveys will be carried out in accordance with the technical specification provided above (e.g. according to [BTO WeBS protocol](https://www.bto.org/our-science/projects/wetland-bird-survey/taking-part/core-counts-methods)). Alternative approaches will be considered if they meet the aims and objectives of the contract, demonstrate efficiencies and are agreed with NE prior to survey commencing.

3.5 Pre-survey deskwork

Before the survey is carried out the contractor will discuss any pre-survey work with the Nominated Officer, including:

Clarification of roles, responsibilities and expectations

Acquisition and checking of sources of relevant information and gathering of local advice in preparation of a project plan

Review existing information provided by Natural England or any datasets known to the contractor.

Ways of working and close collaboration with NE in developing project plan, particularly selection of survey sites, and finalising survey design and methodologies. For example intertidal surveys will need to consider the use of hovercrafts and/or quad bikes to conduct surveys, which will require a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA).

Ensure that up to date charts are used to position sample sites away from cables, pipelines or any other coastal infrastructure. Should any coastal infrastructure exist within an area to be sampled then a buffer should be used to ensure that sampling activity does not cause damage and this should be clearly displayed within the survey plan. Should coastal infrastructure be found during fieldwork then any sample sites should be relocated and the Nominated Officer informed.

4 Site Access

The Nominated Officer should be contacted prior to commencement of any fieldwork.

Natural England will work with the contractor to obtain permission from seabed owners or leaseholders for survey work on the seabed and will supply a copy of these permissions. Each member of the survey team must carry a letter from Natural England to confirm that they are doing this work on the behalf of Natural England. Survey work will not be able to begin until access permissions have been obtained by Natural England.

Contractors should allow for the inclusion of Natural England staff on surveys wherever feasible. The Nominated Officer will liaise with the contractor regarding the availability of Natural England staff to join the survey, where available.

Where contractors intend to use either a vessel or hovercraft to access sites this requirement should be made clear in the tender submission and any use of these vehicles will be subject to SSSI consent and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). This should be discussed from the outset with the Nominated Officer and site leads.

The removal of sediment samples from the seabed meets the terms of a marine licence exemption set out in Article 17 of the Marine Licence (Exempted Activities) Order 2011 (as amended) , and a marine licence is therefore not required. The MMO require notification of any exempted activities occurring. Natural England will be responsible for submitting the relevant information to the MMO for this.

### 5 Data Analysis

Sample analysis will be undertaken by a third-party contractor or an independent party (please see above)

### 6 Invasive Non-Native Species

Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) are considered to be one of the top five pressures directly driving biodiversity loss globally. Prevention is the key focus, particularly in marine environments. The contractor shall be aware of and work in accordance with standard good practice biosecurity measures to avoid spread of INNS:

Equipment, clothes and boots should be clean before carrying out any work on site

When on or near water it is important that equipment is drained after use and as far as possible dried

Hovercrafts / Boats to be used in survey work should have their hulls cleaned on a regular basis. Best practice guidelines should be followed as outlined by [The Green Blue](http://www.thegreenblue.org.uk/boat_users/antifoul_and_invasive_species/boaters_best_practice_invasive.aspx)

INNS species previously recorded in this region and/or to particularly look out for during this survey. See [GB non-native species secretariat](http://www.nonnativespecies.org/).

The contractor must report any records of INNS observed on site on Marine Recorder and to the Natural England project officer as part of the survey report. Any species currently listed as ‘alert’ species should be flagged immediately to the GB Non-Native Species Secretariat <http://www.nonnativespecies.org/alerts/index.cfm>. More information and guidance including ID guides can be found at [www.nonnativespecies.org](http://www.nonnativespecies.org/) and the [Marine Aliens Project](http://www.marlin.ac.uk/marine_aliens/).

7 Health & Safety Requirements

All risk assessments need to be seen and signed off by the Nominated Officer (ideally when presented with then project plan), as part of the contract management process. Risk assessments need to be provided by the contractor. Surveys will be done out of season, risks around reduced daylight and poor weather etc. need to be highlighted.

### 8 Weather downtime & contingency

Survey windows should be allocated in accordance with the best tides available. Contractors will be expected to check weather regularly (daily) prior to agreed survey windows.  If contractors have 48 hours' notice of impending poor weather then they will be expected to make alternative arrangements for the duration of the poor weather and reschedule survey work to be completed at a later date.  If contractors have not yet mobilised then Natural England does not expect to be charged for any weather downtime.  It is the responsibility of the contractor to contact Natural England in the event that impending poor weather is putting the survey at risk.

Natural England does not envisage paying for downtime or contingency time for intertidal contracts, but in the event of unforeseeable weather events, a maximum of 1 day may be paid.

In the event of uncertainty or other unforeseen events that impact upon the ability of the contractor to undertake the survey, the Natural England Nominated Officer should be contacted immediately.

9. Outputs – Products and Timescales

This contract shall be managed on behalf of the Authority by Alex Baker.

The project outputs will follow the objectives set out in this tender (Section 12) and refer to available guidance for writing Natural England Technical publications.

Suppliers are to fill in the costing template below in application for the RFQ/ITT.

10 Reporting and analysis

Draft reports should be provided in electronic MS Office Word \*.DOCX format for comment. A template and guidance exists for writing Natural England commissioned reports and will be sent to the contractor upon award of the tender. All reports should retain a clear suggested citation stating that it is a ‘Report to Natural England’. Following Natural England guidance and using the Natural England Microsoft Word template (Available from: [Natural England publishing standards for commissioned reports - NECR000](https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5790636781600768)).

Data must be interpreted, analysed and presented in light of the overarching hypotheses stated above. Contractors should pay particular consideration to the data and GIS required formats for information compatibility including MEDIN metadata standards and Marine Recorder provision. All datasets must have associated metadata and meet appropriate organisational metadata standards. Relevant metadata standards are a requirement for data which we publish externally.

All interpreted products following data analysis should accompany the draft report; these will include:

All GIS datasets need to be provided in ESRI ArcGIS format compatible with ArcGIS 10.2 and have attached metadata.

All GIS files containing habitat data for each individual survey need to be produced to the [MESH translated habitat Data Exchange Format (DEF)](http://www.emodnet-seabedhabitats.eu/default.aspx?page=1636) to the most detailed EUNIS habitat level possible. MNCR ([v15.03](http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/MarineHabitatClassification)) data should be added to the ORIG\_HAB column. The GUI provided by Natural England for each survey will be used, and as much information as possible (e.g. survey name, originally assigned feature/habitat name etc.) from the original dataset, as well as any documentation provided (where available) should be included in the resulting datasets to maintain a useful audit trail. As specified in the [MESH DEF](http://www.emodnet-seabedhabitats.eu/default.aspx?page=2067), data files must be provided as ESRI Shapefiles or as a feature class data within a geodatabase using the WGS1984 geographic coordinate system and (lat/long coordinates. If not included in the GIS data layers listed above all sampling locations, vessels tracks, and links to data obtained should also be included as a single GI layer.

A MESH data confidence assessment for each habitat map should be calculated and provided in a ‘MESH confidence scoresheet’ \*.XLS file. The confidence assessment process is described and a template provided in the following MESH resources [The MESH Confidence Assessment Scheme](http://www.emodnet-seabedhabitats.eu/default.aspx?page=1693).

Accompanying metadata for the data set must meet the [MEDIN metadata discovery standard](http://www.oceannet.org/marine_data_standards/medin_disc_stnd.html). Metadata derived as part of this project must be submitted to Natural England in an XML file which Natural England will archive through Data Archive Centres (DACs). Guidance ‘MEDIN Evidence for Contractors’ will be provided to the winning contractor.

Copies of the original data spreadsheets or databases are to be provided in the appropriate Microsoft Office format

Stills photographs to be provided in their raw format on CD/DVD or USB compliant external hard drives.

All sample data (e.g. grab / core / Quadrat sample analyses, video/still photography analyses, PSA analysis and biotope lists, biological taxon data) need to be entered into [Marine Recorder](https://www.esdm.co.uk/marine-recorder) NBNdata and an exported snapshot file of the data should be provided for QA. Natural England will provide licence keys for Marine Recorder. Natural England will supply a ‘Marine Recorder guidance for contractors’ document to successful contractors.

The contractor must report any records of Invasive and Non Native Species observed on site on Marine Recorder and to the Natural England project officer as part of the survey report. Any species currently listed as ‘alert’ species should be flagged immediately to the GB Non Native Species Secretariat [Species alerts](http://www.nonnativespecies.org/alerts/index.cfm). More information and guidance including ID guides can be found at [GB non-native species secretariat](http://www.nonnativespecies.org/).

Copies of the original data spreadsheets or databases are to be provided in the appropriate Microsoft Office format. However please be aware that using MEDIN marine biodiversity data guideline spreadsheets (available online under the marine biodiversity tab at [MEDIN data guidelines](http://www.oceannet.org/marine_data_standards/medin_data_guidelines.html)) will ensure that biological taxon data is prepared correctly for entry into Marine Recorder and will facilitate the efficient entry of data into this system and the data archiving process in general. Natural England welcomes and supports the provision of raw data spreadsheets in the MEDIN format and expects that all raw datasheets will contain the mandatory fields in the MEDIN guidelines, regardless of their format.

Standard survey imagery (stills and video) is to be provided in their raw format electronically or on USB compliant external hard drives (to be provided by the contractor).

High quality imagery which has been selected to form part of the image reference collection for the survey need to be labelled appropriately, including the habitat/species which is represented. These should be provided as a separate folder on the storage device to the standard survey imagery.

All data products and electronic files must be appropriately named so they sufficiently describe the contents and are not purely a numerical value. All products should be named appropriately so that they can be clearly linked to the report/project.

Any species lists submitted will be compliant with current taxonomic names and synonyms (e.g. [Marine Species of the British Isles and Adjacent Seas (MSBIAS)](http://www.marinespecies.org/msbias/), World Register of Marine Species (WoRMS))

Video and still camera filenames must include the recording start date and time. Position data must be included within the overlay information.

We will raise purchase orders to cover the cost of the services and will issue to the awarded supplier following contract award. Upon completion of the Phase I and Phase II autumn surveys the first payment will be made, second and final payment will be made after completion of Bird counts surveys, reports and completion of all project deliverables.

Bird count data should be reported in a manner that is consistent with BTO standards where possible in order to allow for the submission of data to the BTO (guidance available on the [BTO WeBS website](https://www.bto.org/our-science/projects/wetland-bird-survey/taking-part/core-counts-methods)).

11 Sustainability

Natural England 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.

12 Outputs and Contract Management

12.1 Project deliverables

On award of the contract, the supplier will be required to deliver the following:

12.1.1 Ground-based survey work

A protocol agreed with the supplier of the aerial surveys setting out the means of coordination of the ground-based and aerial-based survey(s) of the specific sub-set of sites / low tide count sectors to be surveyed as part of the validation study to maximise synchronicity of data collection.

Four brief survey completion reports (one within 7 days of completion of each of the standard monthly low tide counts) in Microsoft Word format detailing pertinent information regarding the survey (dates, time, weather, disturbance, any other issues affecting data quality etc).

A brief survey completion report (within 7 days of completion of the validation study survey) in Microsoft Word format detailing pertinent information regarding the survey (dates, time, weather, disturbance, any other issues affecting data quality etc).

12.1.2 Analyses

Numbers (e.g. means, peaks, variation) for each species for each count sector for each LTC site in each survey month (Task 1) and for each repeat count conducted of each species on each day within each of the count sectors (and any agreed subdivisions of those) (Task 2).

A single final technical report

Following Natural England guidance and using the Natural England Microsoft Word template (Available from: [Natural England publishing standards for commissioned reports - NECR000](https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5790636781600768)). The report should provide the following:

an executive summary,

an introduction and background to the work,

a methods section detailing the adopted surveying approach for each of Tasks 1 & 2,

a results section providing tables of count data for all species in each WeBS LTC scheme count sector on each survey of each site surveyed as part of Task 1,

a results section providing tables of all repeat count data for all species in each WeBS LTC scheme count sector (and/or agreed subdivisions of these) surveyed as part of Task 2, i.e. the validation study,

a discussion of the findings from the ground-based surveys needed to inform the validation study, outlining any caveats concerning the use of and limitations to the count data presented and recommendations regarding its best use in the subsequent validation analyses (to be completed under a separate contract).

12.1.3 Accompanying datasets

Quality assured datasets of validated observations for all species recorded – so that pre-agreed data standards are met e.g. compliance with requirements for entry into the WeBS LTC scheme database.

Where relevant, datasets should include a sheet with meta-data and field name explanations.

All data provided must (where appropriate) comply with Natural England metadata and GIS standards (see Annex 3).

All count data should also be submitted to the WeBS LTC organiser (lowtide@bto.org) at the BTO through a standard spreadsheet which should be obtained from the organiser.

Following agreement from Natural England, all relevant datafiles and associated metadata records may be required to be submitted by the contractor to a pre-agreed public repository within a pre-agreed period following completion of the surveys.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Reference | Deliverable | Responsible Party | Date of completion |
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Project Management

Whilst the final timetable can be agreed between Natural England and the successful Contractor, we anticipate the project working along the following timeline;

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Milestone | Responsible Party | Date of completion |
| Project inception meeting/ teleconference between contractor/sub-contractor and Natural England | Natural England, Contractor | W/C 15th September 2025 |
| Contractor agrees survey methodology and timetable with Natural England | Contractor | By 26th September 2025 |
| Contractor submits brief survey completion report following first low tide count (task 3) | Contractor | End of October 2025 |
| Contractor submits brief survey completion report following second low tide count (task 3) | Contractor | End of November 2025 |
| Teleconference between Natural England and contractor to discuss progress and any issues arising | Natural England, Contractor | End of November 2025 |
| Contractor submits brief survey completion report following third low tide count (task 3) | Contractor | End of December 2025 |
| Contractor submits brief survey completion report following biotope mapping survey (task 1) | Contractor | End of January 2025 |
| Contractor submits brief survey completion report following fourth low tide count (task 3) | Contractor | End of January 2025 |
| Teleconference between Natural England and contractor to discuss progress with analyses and any issues arising | Natural England and Contractor | End of January 2025 |
| Contractor submits draft final technical report to NE | Contractor | 13th March 2026 |
| Natural England/BTO provide feedback on draft final technical report | Natural England and BTO | 20 st March 2026 |
| Teleconference between Natural England and contractor to discuss feedback on draft final technical report | Natural England and contractor | 23rd March 2026 |
| Contractor submits final technical report addressing Natural England comments on draft report to satisfaction on NE project officer | Contractor | 27th March 2026 |
| Submission of ArcGIS layers, other associated datasets and metadata to agreed standards. | Contractor | 27th March 2026 |
| Wash-up meeting | Natural England, BTO and Contractor | 27th March 2026 |
| Contract to be completed | Natural England and Contractor | 30th March 2026 |

Payment

The Authority will raise purchase orders to cover the cost of the services and will issue to the awarded supplier following contract award.

The Authority’s preference is for all invoices to be sent electronically, quoting a valid Purchase Order number after the completion of the project or at agreed milestones.

It is anticipated that this contract will be awarded for a period of 28 weeks to end no later than 28/03/2026. 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 writing in advance of any work commencing and may be subject to further competition.

Evaluation Methodology

We will award this contract in line with the most economically advantageous tender (MEAT) as set out in the following award criteria:

Technical – 60%

Commercial – 40%

**Evaluation criteria**

Evaluation weightings are 60% technical and 40% commercial, the winning tenderer will be the highest scoring combined score.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Award Criteria | Weighting (%) | Evaluation Topic & Weighting | Sub-Criteria | Weighted Question |
| Technical | 60% | Project Proposal | Methodology | 2 Questions  Q1.1 15% Provide details and approaches for carrying out the biotope survey and mapping tasks set out above.  Q1.2 15% Provide details and approaches for carrying out the over-wintering bird surveys as set out above. |
| Key personnel | 1 Question  Q2 5% What are the skills and experience of the team carrying out this work? |
| Quality Assurance measures | 2 Questions  Q3.1 10% What QA measures will be taken during the survey work  Q3.2 5% What QA processes are in place for the data handling and reporting stages of the project? |
| Management of sustainability and social value | 1 Question  Q4 5% What sustainability measures are proposed and how will environmental impacts be managed? |
| Health & Safety | 1 Question  Q5 5% Please outline how you intend to manage health and safety during the project. |
| Commercial | 40% | Whole life cost of the proposed Contract | Commercial Model | 1 Question  Q4 40% What is your total expected cost for this project (inc. VAT) |

Technical (60%)

Technical evaluations will be based on responses to specific questions covering key criteria which are outlined below. Scores for questions will be based on the following:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Description | Score | Definition |
| Very good | 100 | Addresses all the Authority’s requirements with all the relevant supporting information set out in the RFQ. There are no weaknesses and therefore the tender response gives the Authority complete confidence that all the requirements will be met to a high standard. |
| Good | 70 | Addresses all the Authority’s requirements with all the relevant supporting information set out in the RFQ. The response contains minor weaknesses and therefore the tender response gives the Authority confidence that all the requirements will be met to a good standard. |
| Moderate | 50 | Addresses most of the requirements with most of the relevant supporting information set out in the RFQ. The response contains moderate weaknesses and therefore the tender response gives the Authority confidence that most of the requirements will be met to a suitable standard. |
| Weak | 20 | Substantially addresses the requirements but not all and provides supporting information that is of limited or no relevance or a methodology containing significant weaknesses and therefore raises concerns for the Authority that the requirements may not all be met. |
| Unacceptable | 0 | No response or provides a response that gives the Authority no confidence that the requirement will be met. |

Technical evaluation is assessed using the evaluation topics and sub-criteria stated in the Evaluation Criteria section above.

Separate submissions for each technical question should be provided and will be evaluated in isolation. Tenderers should provide answers that meet the criteria of each technical question.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Methodology | Detailed Evaluation Criteria |
| Q1.1 15% Provide details and approaches for carrying out the biotope survey and mapping tasks set out above.  Q1.2 15% Provide details and approaches for carrying out the over-wintering bird surveys as set out above.  Responses should not exceed four sides of A4, and use Arial font, size 11. | Your response should:  1) Demonstrate a clear understanding of the nature of the requirements.  2) Be a clear, practical, achievable, and cost-effective methodology to deliver these requirements.  3) Have information in sufficient detail to allow a full appraisal of the suitability of the approach to deliver for the project. |

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| Key Personnel | Detailed Evaluation Criteria |
| Q2 5% What are the skills and experience of the team carrying out this work? | 1. Provide brief overview of team experience and any relevant specialisms. |

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| --- | --- |
| Quality Assurance Measures | Detailed Evaluation Criteria |
| Q3.1 10% What QA measures will be taken during the survey work | 1. Demonstrate sufficient procedures are in place to ensure that survey work is carried out to a high standard and that results are robust |
| Q3.2 5% What QA processes are in place for the data handling and reporting stages of the project? | 1. Demonstrate an understanding of Natural England’s evidence requirements 2. Ensure that the final report and project outputs are of sufficient quality and the findings are robust. |

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| Management of sustainability and Social Value | Detailed Evaluation Criteria |
| Q4 5% What sustainability measures are proposed and how will environmental impacts be managed? | 1. Demonstrate how environmental impacts will be avoided/mitigated |

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| Health and Safety | Detailed Evaluation Criteria |
| Q5 5% Please outline how you intend to manage health and safety during the project. | 1. Demonstrate robust safety standards and set out how risks will be managed/avoided. |

Commercial (40%)

The Contract is to be awarded as a fixed price which will be paid according to the completion of the deliverables stated in the Specification of Requirements.

Suppliers are required to submit a total cost to provide the deliverables stated in the Specification of Requirements. In addition to this the Commercial Response template must be completed to provide a breakdown of the whole life costs against each deliverable used in the delivery of this requirement.

Calculation Method

The method for calculating the weighted scores is as follows:

* Commercial

Score = (Lowest Quotation Price / Supplier’s Quotation Price ) x 40% (Maximum available marks)

* Technical

Score = (Bidder’s Total Technical Score / Highest Technical Score) x 60% (Maximum available marks)

The total score (weighted) (TWS) is then calculated by adding the total weighted commercial score (WC) to the total weighted technical score (WT): WC + WT = TWS.

Information to be returned

Please note, the following information requested must be provided. Incomplete tender submissions may be discounted.

Please complete and return the following information:

* completed Commercial Response template
* separate response submission for each technical question (in accordance with the response instructions)
* completed Mandatory Requirements (Annex 1)
* completed Acceptance of Terms and Conditions (Annex 2)

Award

Once the evaluation of the Response(s) is complete all suppliers will be notified of the outcome via email. The successful supplier will be issued the contract, incorporating their Response, for signature. The Authority will then counter sign.

Annex 1 Mandatory Requirements

Part 1 Potential Supplier Information

Please answer the following self-declaration questions in full and include this Annex in your quotation response.

Part 1.1 Potential Supplier Information:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Question no. | Question | Response |
| 1.1(a) | Full name of the potential supplier submitting the information |  |
| 1.1(b) | Registered office address (if applicable) |  |
| 1.1(c) | Company registration number (if applicable) |  |
| 1.1(d) | Charity registration number (if applicable) |  |
| 1.1(e) | Head office DUNS number (if applicable) |  |
| 1.1(f) | Registered VAT number |  |
| 1.1(g) | Are you a Small, Medium or Micro Enterprise (SME)? | (Yes / No) |

Note: See EU definition of SME <https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/business-friendly-environment/sme-definition_en>

Part 1.2 Contact details and declaration

By submitting a quotation to this RFQ I declare that to the best of my knowledge the answers submitted and information contained in this document are correct and accurate.

I declare that, upon request and without delay you will provide the certificates or documentary evidence referred to in this document.

I understand that the information will be used in the selection process to assess my organisation’s suitability to be invited to participate further in this procurement.

I understand that the authority may reject this submission in its entirety if there is a failure to answer all the relevant questions fully, or if false/misleading information or content is provided in any section.

I am aware of the consequences of serious misrepresentation.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Question no. | Question | Response |
| 1.2(a) | Contact name |  |
| 1.2(b) | Name of organisation |  |
| 1.2(c) | Role in organisation |  |
| 1.2(d) | Phone number |  |
| 1.2(e) | E-mail address |  |
| 1.2(f) | Postal address |  |
| 1.2(g) | Signature (electronic is acceptable) |  |
| 1.2(h) | Date |  |

Part 2 Exclusion Grounds

Part 2.1 Grounds for mandatory exclusion

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Question no. | Question | Response |
| 2.1(a) | Please indicate if, within the past five years you, your organisation or any other person who has powers of representation, decision or control in the organisation been convicted anywhere in the world of any of the offences within the summary below. | |
|  | Participation in a criminal organisation. | (Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
|  | Corruption. | ((Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
|  | Fraud. | (Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
|  | Terrorist offences or offences linked to terrorist activities | (Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
|  | Money laundering or terrorist financing | (Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
|  | Child labour and other forms of trafficking in human beings | (Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
| 2.1(b) | If you have answered yes to question 2.1(a), please provide further details.  Date of conviction, specify which of the grounds listed the conviction was for, and the reasons for conviction.  Identity of who has been convicted  If the relevant documentation is available electronically please provide the web address, issuing authority, precise reference of the documents. |  |
| 2.1 (c) | If you have answered Yes to any of the points above have measures been taken to demonstrate the reliability of the organisation despite the existence of a relevant ground for exclusion? (i.e. Self-Cleaning) | (Yes / No) |
| 2.1(d) | Has it been established, for your organisation by a judicial or administrative decision having final and binding effect in accordance with the legal provisions of any part of the United Kingdom or the legal provisions of the country in which the organisation is established (if outside the UK), that the organisation is in breach of obligations related to the payment of tax or social security contributions? | (Yes / No) |
| 2.1(e) | If you have answered yes to question 2.3(a), please provide further details. Please also confirm you have paid or have entered into a binding arrangement with a view to paying, the outstanding sum including where applicable any accrued interest and/or fines. |  |

Part 2.2 Grounds for discretionary exclusion

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Question no. | Question | Response |
| 2.2(a) | The detailed grounds for discretionary exclusion of an organisation are set out on this [webpage](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/551130/List_of_Mandatory_and_Discretionary_Exclusions.pdf), which should be referred to before completing these questions.  Please indicate if, within the past three years, anywhere in the world any of the following situations have applied to you, your organisation or any other person who has powers of representation, decision or control in the organisation | |
| 2.2(b) | Breach of environmental obligations? | (Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.2 (f) |
| 2.2(c) | Breach of social obligations? | (Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.2 (f) |
| 2.2(d) | Breach of labour law obligations? | (Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.2 (f) |
| 2.2(e) | Shown significant or persistent deficiencies in the performance of a substantive requirement under a prior public contract, a prior contract with a contracting entity, or a prior concession contract, which led to early termination of that prior contract, damages or other comparable sanctions? | (Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.2 (f) |
| 2.2 (f) | If you have answered Yes to any of the above, explain what measures been taken to demonstrate the reliability of the organisation despite the existence of a relevant ground for exclusion? (Self Cleaning) |  |

Annex 2 Acceptance of Terms and Conditions

I/We accept in full the terms and conditions appended to this Request for Quote document.

Company \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

