

Appendix 2

PRESS RELEASE

Wednesday 28th July

Firms readied for River Thames Scheme contractor search

The River Thames Scheme is starting the search for the firms which will build the £501m flood alleviation scheme, just weeks after the government gave the scheme the green light.

Today the project team started the market engagement for contractors, with a call for interested firms to express their interest. The value of the contracts on offer will be up to £275 million.

This is a huge opportunity not only for the civil engineering and construction sector, but also for small and medium businesses in Surrey and the surrounding area. Opportunities for new contracts, job opportunities and apprenticeships will support the sector and the area as they recover from the pandemic.

The work involves the construction of two new flood relief channels constructed at Runnymede and Spelthorne, together with capacity increases at Sunbury, Molesey and Teddington weirs and the Desborough Cut. The scheme's wider benefits will include new walking and cycle paths, parks and wildlife habitats.

The start of market engagement comes after it was announced in June that the government has approved the outline business case for the scheme. The approval means engineers are now working on the detailed design of the scheme and planning how to deliver it. Although construction is not expected to start until the mid 2020s, the process of getting firms in place is lengthy, from procurement to enabling them to have the right teams and resources in place.

River Thames Scheme project director David Bedlington said: "There is a real momentum building on the River Thames scheme as we start the important task of getting firms in place to get the scheme built. We're really hoping to see the best of the construction industry come forward for this opportunity – and not just the large firms, but SMEs and local firms too."

Surrey County Council Cabinet Member for the Environment Marisa Heath said: "When we talk about the brilliant legacy the River Thames Scheme will leave, we're not only talking about the flood risk reduction and new green spaces such as country parks, we're talking about a legacy of opportunity too, as the construction of the River Thames Schemes will see new jobs, training and skills."

The Find a Tender Prior Information Notice (PIN) can be found [here](#)

ENDS

Notes to editors

- The scheme's wider partners are Elmbridge Borough Council, London Borough of Richmond upon Thames, Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames, Runnymede Borough Council, Spelthorne Borough Council, Thames Regional Flood and Coastal Committee, Thames Water, Enterprise M3 Local Enterprise Partnership, Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership.

- The River Thames Scheme will reduce flood risk to people living and working near the Thames, enhance the resilience of nationally important infrastructure, contribute to a vibrant local economy and maximise the social and environmental value of the river.
- There have been serious floods in this area over the past 100 years, namely in 1947, 1968, 2003 and most recently between 2013/2014.
- We will build two new flood channels alongside the River Thames to reduce flood risk to 11,000 properties in communities in Hythe End, Egham, Staines, Chertsey, Shepperton, Weybridge, Sunbury, Molesey, Thames Ditton, Kingston and Teddington.
- There will be increased capacity of the Desborough Cut and weirs at Sunbury, Molesey and Teddington by installing additional weir gates.
- Detailed planning and design work is starting. The large scale of the project means the government has directed that it be treated as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP). NSIPs require a type of consent known as 'development consent order' (DCO). A DCO removes the need to obtain several separate consents, including planning permission and is designed to be a quicker process than applying for these separately. The DCO must be granted before full funding is approved and construction can begin.