

Outer Dowsing Offshore Wind Preliminary Environmental Information Report

Volume 1, Chapter 6: Consultation Process

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Abbreviations

Acronym	Expanded name
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BEIS	Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (now the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ))
CLG	Community Liaison Group
DCO	Development Consent Order
DESNZ	Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, formerly Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), which was previously Department of Energy & Climate Change (DECC)
EEA	European Economic Area
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EPP	Evidence Plan Process
ES	Environmental Statement
ETG	Expert Topic Group
FLO	Fisheries Liaison Officer
GT R4 Ltd	The Applicant. The special project vehicle created in partnership between Corio Generation (a wholly owned Green Investment Group portfolio company), Gulf Energy Development and TotalEnergies
HND	Holistic Network Design
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment
IDB	Internal Drainage Board
LCC	Lincolnshire County Council
LPA	Local Planning Authority
MCA	Maritime Coastguard Agency
MMO	Marine Management Organisation
NPS	National Policy Statement
NSIP	Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project
ODOW	Outer Dowsing Offshore Wind
OTNR	Offshore Transmission Network Review
PEIR	Preliminary Environmental Information Report
The Inspectorate	Planning Inspectorate
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
SoS	Secretary of State
SoCC	Statement of Community Consultation
TCE	The Crown Estate
THLS	Trinity House Lighthouse Services
WTG	Wind Turbine Generator

Terminology

Term	Definition
Array area	The area offshore within the PEIR Boundary within which the generating stations (including wind turbine generators (WTG) and inter array cables), offshore accommodation platforms, offshore transformer substations and associated cabling are positioned.
Development Consent Order (DCO)	An order made under the Planning Act 2008 granting development consent for a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) from the Secretary of State (SoS) for Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ).
Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)	A statutory process by which certain planned projects must be assessed before a formal decision to proceed can be made. It involves the collection and consideration of environmental information, which fulfils the assessment requirements of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations, including the publication of an Environmental Statement (ES).
EIA Regulations	Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017.
Environmental Statement (ES)	The suite of documents that detail the processes and results of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).
Evidence Plan	A voluntary process of stakeholder consultation with appropriate Expert Topic Groups (ETGs) that discusses and, where possible, agrees the detailed approach to the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and information to support Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) for those relevant topics included in the process, undertaken during the pre-application period.
Impact	An impact to the receiving environment is defined as any change to its baseline condition, either adverse or beneficial.
Landfall	The location at the land-sea interface where the offshore export cable will come ashore.
Mitigation	Mitigation measures, or commitments, are commitments made by the Project to reduce and/or eliminate the potential for significant effects to arise as a result of the Project. Mitigation measures can be embedded (part of the project design) or secondarily added to reduce impacts in the case of potentially significant effects.
National Policy Statement (NPS)	A document setting out national policy against which proposals for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) will be assessed and decided upon.
Non-statutory consultee	Organisations that the Applicant may be required to (under Section 42 of the 2008 Act) or may otherwise choose to engage during the pre-application phases (if, for example, there are planning policy reasons to do so) who are not designated in law but are likely to have an interest in a proposed development.

Term		Definition
Offshore Cable (ECC)	Export Corridor	The Offshore Export Cable Corridor (Offshore ECC) is the area within the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) Boundary within which the export cable running from the array to landfall will be situated.
Onshore Cable (ECC)	Export Corridor	The Onshore Export Cable Corridor (Onshore ECC) is the area within which the export cable running from the landfall to the onshore substation will be situated.
Onshore Infrastructure		The combined name for all onshore infrastructure associated with the Project from landfall to grid connection.
Outer Offshore (ODOW)	Dowsing Wind	The Project.
Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR)		The PEIR is written in the style of a draft Environmental Statement (ES) and provides information to support and inform the statutory consultation process in the pre-application phase. Following that consultation, the PEIR documentation will be updated to produce the Project's ES that will accompany the application for the Development Consent Order (DCO)
PEIR Boundary		The PEIR Boundary is outlined in Figure 3.1 of Volume 1, Chapter 3: Project Description and comprises the extent of the land and/or seabed for which the PEIR assessments are based upon.
Receptor		A distinct part of the environment on which effects could occur and can be the subject of specific assessments. Examples of receptors include species (or groups) of animals or plants, people (often categorised further such as 'residential' or those using areas for amenity or recreation), watercourses etc.
Statutory consultee		Organisations that are required to be consulted by the Applicant, the Local Planning Authorities and/or The Inspectorate during the pre-application and/or examination phases, and who also have a statutory responsibility in some form that may be relevant to the Project and the DCO application. This includes those bodies and interests prescribed under Section 42 of the Planning Act 2008. Not all prescribed bodies and interests will be statutory consultees (see non-statutory consultee definition).
The Applicant		GT R4 Ltd. The Applicant making the application for a DCO. The Applicant is GT R4 Limited (a joint venture between Corio Generation, TotalEnergies and Gulf Energy Development (GULF)), trading as Outer Dowsing Offshore Wind. The project is being developed by Corio Generation (a wholly owned Green Investment Group portfolio company), TotalEnergies and GULF.
The Project		Outer Dowsing Offshore Wind including the proposed onshore and offshore infrastructure
Transboundary impacts		Transboundary effects arise when impacts from the development within one European Economic Area (EEA) state affects the environment of another EEA state(s)

6 Consultation Process

6.1 Introduction

Background

- 6.1.1 This chapter of the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) presents the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) consultation process for the potential impacts of Outer Dowsing Offshore Wind (the Project).
- 6.1.2 GT R4 Limited (trading as Outer Dowsing Offshore Wind) hereafter referred to as the 'Applicant', is proposing to develop the Project. The Project will be located approximately 54km from the Lincolnshire coastline in the southern North Sea. The Project will include both offshore and onshore infrastructure including an offshore generating station (wind farm), export cables to landfall, onshore cables, and connection to the electricity transmission network, and ancillary and associated development (see Volume 1, Chapter 3: Project Description for full details).
- 6.1.3 Throughout the pre-application period consultation has been, and continues to be, an ongoing process. The Project intends to continue to engage with and consult all relevant stakeholders and interested parties in developing the EIA and the wider form of the Project and in preparing the final DCO application.

6.2 Statutory and Policy Context

The Planning Act

- 6.2.1 As detailed in Volume 1, Chapter 2: Need, Policy and Legislative Context, the Project is defined under sections 14 and 15 of the Planning Act 2008 (2008 Act) as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP). Therefore, the Project must undertake pre-application consultation in accordance with the requirements of the 2008 Act. Due to the Project being an EIA development, it must also comply with the consultation requirements under the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (EIA Regulations).

The relevant sections of Part 5, Chapter 2 of the 2008 Act are:

- Section 42 – Duty to consult;
- Section 43 – Local authorities for the purpose of section 42(1)(b);
- Section 44 – Categories for purposes of section 42(1)(d);
- Section 45 – Timetable for consultation under section 42;
- Section 46 – Duty to notify the Secretary of State of proposed application;
- Section 47 – Duty to consult local community;
- Section 48 – Duty to publicise; and
- Section 49 – Duty to take account of responses to consultation and publicity.

National Policy Statement

- 6.2.2 The relevant National Policy Statements (NPS) which form the primary national guidance documents for NSIPs are listed below. These documents encourage applicants to carry out pre-application consultation with a range of stakeholders.
- EN-1 - Overarching NPS for Energy;
 - EN-3 - Renewable Energy Infrastructure; and
 - EN-5 - Electricity Networks, which covers the electrical infrastructure in conjunction with EN-1.

EIA Regulations

- 6.2.3 The Project has notified the Secretary of State (SoS) under Regulation 8(1)(b) of the EIA Regulations that it proposes to provide an Environmental Statement (ES) in respect of the Proposed Development. Therefore, in accordance with Regulation 6(2)(a) of the EIA Regulations, the Proposed Development is an EIA development. An ES presenting the findings of the EIA will be submitted with the DCO application.
- 6.2.4 An EIA Scoping Report was submitted to the Inspectorate on 29th July 2022 and can be viewed at:
- <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/ipc/uploads/projects/EN010130/EN010130-000037-EN010130-Scoping-Report.pdf>
- 6.2.5 The Scoping Report was reviewed and consulted on by the Inspectorate, allowing them to publish a Scoping Opinion on 9th September 2022 which can be viewed at:
- <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/ipc/uploads/projects/EN010130/EN010130-000035-EN010130-Scoping-Opinion.pdf>
- 6.2.6 The comments from the Inspectorate given within the Scoping Opinion and comments provided by statutory consultees are acknowledged and noted within each technical chapter of this PEIR.
- 6.2.7 Consultation between the Project and the Inspectorate and other relevant statutory stakeholders in relation to the scope of EIA is an ongoing process in order to ensure the EIA is proportionate and meets the requirements of the EIA Regulations. The PEIR is being carried out in accordance with a scope agreed with the relevant statutory stakeholders, consultation will be ongoing as the Project progresses.

The Inspectorate's Advice Notes

- 6.2.8 As outlined in The Inspectorate's Advice Note Three (EIA Consultation and Notification) (The Inspectorate, 2017a), it is the Applicant's responsibility to *"ensure that their pre-application consultation fully accords with the requirements of the Planning Act 2008, including associated regulations, and that they have regard to relevant guidance"*.
- 6.2.9 The Project's approach to consultation has been informed by considering a number of the Inspectorate's Advice Notes, with particular reference to:

- Advice Note Three: EIA consultation and notification (The Inspectorate, 2017a);
- Advice Note Seven: Environmental Impact Assessment: Process, Preliminary Environmental Information and Environmental Statements (The Inspectorate, 2020a);
- Advice Note Ten: Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) relevant to Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (The Inspectorate, 2022);
- Advice Note Eleven: Working with public bodies in the infrastructure planning process (The Inspectorate, 2017b)
- Advice Note Fourteen: Compiling the Consultation Report (The Inspectorate, 2021).

6.3 Consultation Requirements

- 6.3.1 The 2008 Act requires applicants to undertake a statutory consultation process during the pre-application phase with a variety of interested parties and with local communities, referred to as section 42 and section 47 consultation respectively (and in addition to publish a notice under 48 of the 2008 Act publicising the proposed application).
- 6.3.2 The consultation undertaken to date by the Applicant, including with technical consultees, local communities, landowners and other stakeholders and interested parties is summarised in the Consultation Summary Report (document 5.1) submitted alongside the PEIR. Details of the Project's Pre- Application Consultation will ultimately be recorded in a Consultation Report which will accompany the Development Consent Order (DCO) application. In complying with Section 49 of the 2008 Act, the Project will have due regard to the relevant responses received during the statutory consultation process required under the 2008 Act.
- 6.3.3 Specifically of relevance to this PEIR, the EIA regulations require that a PEIR be provided for public consultation as part of the Section 47 community consultation process.
- 6.3.4 In addition, the 2008 Act requires Applicants to consult a variety of prescribed bodies and interested parties under Section 42, providing these consultees with a set of consultation documents, of which this PEIR forms a part.
- 6.3.5 The format and level of detail included in the PEIR is required to be sufficient to enable communities and consultation bodies to make an informed decision on the likely significant environmental effects of the project and this PEIR is intended (along with the other consultation documents) to provide such detail to the extent possible at the time of the consultation. The findings of the surveys and assessments undertaken to date are incorporated into this PEIR; offshore assessments are presented in Volume 1, Chapter 7 to Chapter 18 and onshore assessments are presented in Volume 1, Chapter 19 to Chapter 28.
- 6.3.6 Following the completion of the Project's consultation phases, the Applicant will have due regard to the comments received and will develop the final application accordingly. The EIA will similarly be developed taking account of the comments received and the final EIA will be reported in the Environmental Statement (ES). A summary of the consultation responses received during the Project's consultation phases, and how these comments were considered, will be presented in the Consultation Report, which will accompany the DCO application. A Consultation Summary Report has been developed to support the PEIR (Document Reference 5.1).

Statement of Community Consultation

- 6.3.7 Under Section 47 of the 2008 Act, the Project has a duty to prepare a Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) setting out how the applicant proposes to consult on the proposed application with people living in the vicinity of the project's proposal. The Project must conduct its consultations in accordance with the proposals set out in the final SoCC.
- 6.3.8 For the full information on the Project's SoCC and Consultation process draft SoCC please see Document 5.1: Consultation Summary Report. Appendix 5.1.1 includes the feedback on the draft SoCC as well as copies of the final versions.

Crown Estate Leasing Process Requirements

- 6.3.9 To avoid and/or mitigate the potential impacts arising from the Project, consideration was given at an early stage to the location of the Project's array area. The Applicant identified the potential Project's array area within The Crown Estate's Eastern Bidding Region as part of the Round 4 leasing process. The Project's array area was identified following a detailed evaluation of environmental, technical, and commercial factors. The boundary of the Project's 500km² array area was defined using an iterative process which involved the consideration of a variety of environmental and technical factors (see Volume 1, Chapter 4: Site Selection and Consideration of Alternatives).
- 6.3.10 Under the terms of The Crown Estate leasing process there is a requirement for the Applicant to reduce the Project array area from the current 500km² on which this PEIR has been based, down to 300km² (expressed in The Crown Estate leasing as a generating capacity density metric – moving from 3MW/km² to 5MW/km²)
- 6.3.11 Whilst The Crown Estate requirements do not explicitly set out the process to be followed in making this revision, it is the Applicant's current intention to undertake this reduction prior to developing the final DCO Application, taking account of key environmental and technical constraints and in consultation with relevant stakeholders. The completed EIA will therefore consider this revised array area and the ES will report the results of this revised assessment.

6.4 Technical Consultation to Date

Introduction

- 6.4.1 The Applicant commenced engagement with a range of stakeholders following the award of Preferred Bidder status of the Project in February 2021 and has continued this engagement at appropriate milestones throughout the development of the EIA process to date. The following sections summarise some of the main areas of consultation undertaken to date. Consultation relevant to the technical onshore and offshore chapters of this PEIR is detailed with Volume 1, Chapters 7 to 31.

The Evidence Plan Process (EPP)

- 6.4.2 Since September 2012, prospective applicants for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) located in England and Wales, have been able to request and agree 'Evidence Plans' with relevant stakeholders as a means to manage and record informal consultation during the pre-application phase.

- 6.4.3 The Evidence Plan Process (EPP) for the Project was initiated in November 2021 with the first steering group meeting, followed by the first expert topic groups (ETG) meetings being held in January 2022. Post-Scoping ETGs were carried out in September and October 2022, with pre-PEIR ETGs being completed between late November 2022 and January 2023. It is expected that the EPP meetings will continue through the pre-application phase until the point of the DCO application.
- 6.4.4 The aim is to submit the outcomes of the EPP, once complete, alongside the ES as part of the DCO application, incorporated into the Consultation Report, and as a record of the ongoing discussions, agreements and disagreements on certain of the key topic areas within the EIA and HRA processes.
- 6.4.5 The primary objective of the EPP is for the Applicant to seek agreement (or otherwise to identify specific disagreements) with the key, relevant stakeholders on the information (the evidence) that forms the basis of the EIA for those topics being considered in the process and that will ultimately be reported in the ES. The EPP will also encompass matters relevant to the Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) that will accompany the DCO (taking into account the guidance in the Inspectorate's Advice Note 10) (Habitat Regulations Assessment).
- 6.4.6 The EPP is voluntary and informal, enabling disagreements and agreements between the Project and those stakeholders involved to be recorded and to subsequently help inform the Statement of Common Grounds (SoCG) such as may be required by the Inspectorate during Examination of the Project.
- 6.4.7 The EPP Steering Group (which is chaired by an independent chair, appointed by the Applicant) for the Project consists of the following organisations:
- The Applicant;
 - The Inspectorate;
 - Natural England;
 - Marine Management Organisation (MMO);
 - Lincolnshire County Council;
 - Environment Agency;
 - East Lindsey District; and
 - Historic England.
- 6.4.8 The purpose of the ETGs is to seek agreement on matters such as:
- The realistic worst case parameters (Rochdale Envelope) for the EIA;
 - The methodologies for surveys and data analysis;
 - How relevant, suitable and adequate the data is for a specific survey and determine whether to continue or stop specific survey work and/or analysis);
 - The methods for assessment (including, where possible, interpretation of impact, levels of significance and potential mitigation measures); and

- Whether, and when, to change survey requirements and collect additional evidence, including how this should be collected and analysed.
- 6.4.9 The process is iterative and each ETG seeks to agree as much as possible during the pre-Application period. Any remaining outstanding areas of disagreement will be clearly documented ahead of the DCO Application being submitted.
- 6.4.10 It is expected that discussions with those members of the ETGs on outstanding issues will then continue throughout the Examination process, and as directed by the Examining Authority, with a view to agree on as many topics as possible prior to the close of the Examination.
- 6.4.11 The structure of the ETGs is shown in Figure 6.1 and attendees are summarised in Table 6.1. The ETG structure has refined from the scoping phase structure, with the Derogation and Compensation topics being discussed concurrently with the Marine Ecology and Coastal Processes and Offshore Ornithology topics.

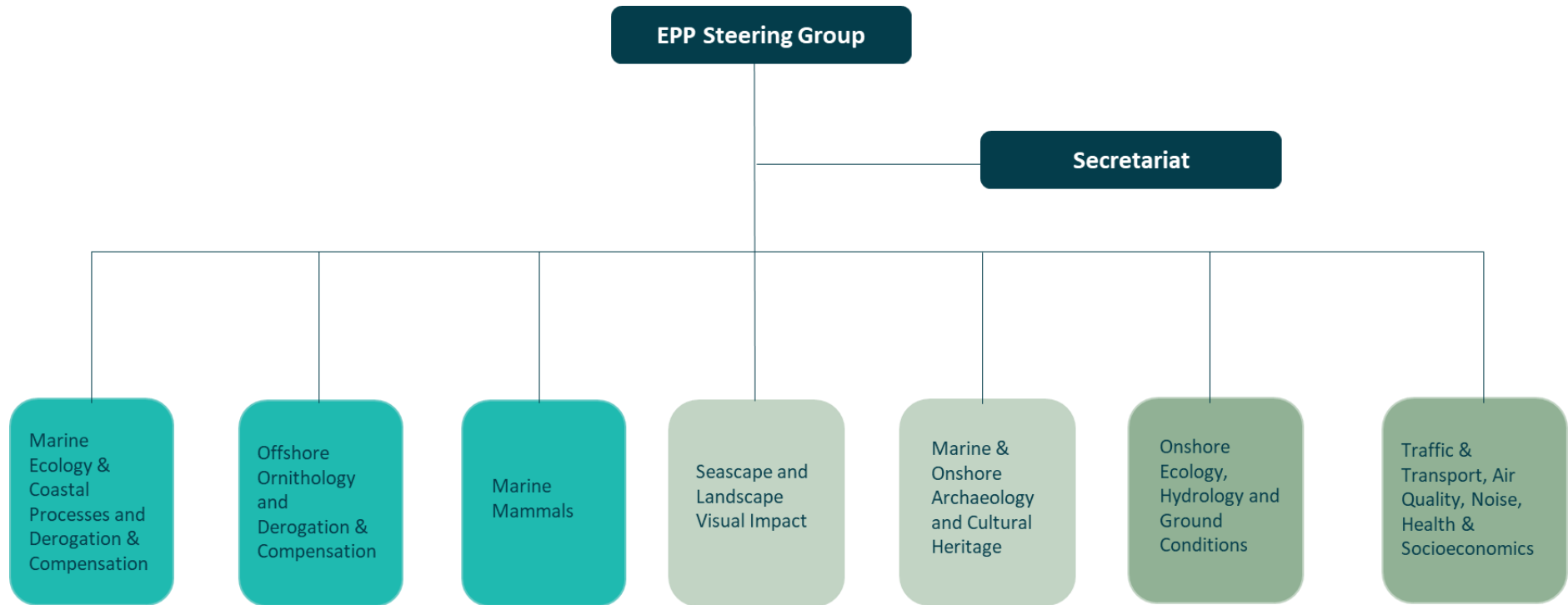


Figure 6.1: The Project Evidence Plan Process Overview

Table 6.1: ETG Members

ETG	Members
Marine Ecology, Coastal Processes and Derogation and Compensation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Marine Management Organisation (MMO) ▪ Natural England ▪ Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust ▪ Environment Agency ▪ Cefas
Offshore Ornithology and Derogation and Compensation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MMO ▪ Natural England ▪ Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) ▪ Cefas
Marine Mammals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MMO ▪ Natural England ▪ Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust ▪ Cefas
Seascape and Landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MMO ▪ Natural England ▪ South & East Lincolnshire District Council Partnership ▪ Lincolnshire County Council
Archaeology and Cultural Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MMO ▪ Historic England ▪ South & East Lincolnshire District Council Partnership ▪ Lincolnshire County Council
Onshore Ecology, Hydrology and Ground Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Natural England ▪ Environment Agency ▪ Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust ▪ RSPB ▪ Lindsey Marsh IDB ▪ Witham Fourth IDB ▪ Black Sluice IDB ▪ Welland and Deepings IDB ▪ South Holland IDB (Water Management Alliance) ▪ South & East Lincolnshire Council Partnership ▪ Lincolnshire County Council
Traffic and Transport, Air Quality, Noise, Health and Socio-Economics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Highways England ▪ South & East Lincolnshire Council Partnership ▪ Lincolnshire County Council

Non-EPP Consultation

Commercial Fisheries

- 6.4.12 A Fisheries Liaison Officer (FLO) has been appointed to ensure consultation with the fishing industry. The FLO is primarily responsible for maintaining effective communication and relationships between the Applicant, its consultants, and the fishing industry with regard to the Project. They work with the fishing industry to gain an understanding of the interactions and potential impacts of the Project for the industry and help gather data to accurately create a fisheries stakeholder database containing information on vessel operations. The FLO also provides information, notices, and project updates to fishing stakeholders and distribute information relating to safe operation of the fishing activity on the Project site. The FLO has been in regular contact with representatives of the fishing industry, including those fishermen operating in the Project area, including for example, when the Project has organised surveys in the area that have necessitated a relocation of fishing gear.
- 6.4.13 In addition, a commercial fisheries expert has engaged directly with the fishing industry to gather data on fishing activity in the Project area to inform the assessment of potential impacts on the fishing industry as set out in this PEIR (see Volume 1, Chapter 14: Commercial Fisheries).

Shipping and Navigation

- 6.4.14 Relevant shipping and navigation stakeholders (including statutory bodies such as the MCA and THLS and shipping operators) have been invited to meetings as a forum to discuss the potential effects on shipping and navigation receptors. As part of the work undertaken to inform this PEIR, a Hazard workshop was conducted on 10th November 2022.
- 6.4.15 Periodical meetings will continue until DCO submission, allowing for continued consultation on the potential impacts arising from the Project. If deemed necessary, further Hazard workshops may be carried out prior to the submission of the DCO application. Full details of the relevant consultation undertaken to date is discussed in more detail in PEIR Volume 1, Chapter 15: Shipping and Navigation.

Aviation and Civil and Military Radar

- 6.4.16 For civil and military radar, relevant stakeholders have been invited to meetings as a forum to discuss the potential effects on aviation and radar in the area. These will continue until the submission of the DCO application, allowing for further consultation on the potential impacts arising from the Project. This is discussed in more detail PEIR Volume 1, Chapter 16: Aviation, Radar, and Military and Communication.

Other Offshore Owners and Operators of Infrastructure in the Vicinity of the Project

- 6.4.17 Within the vicinity of the Project array area and the offshore export cable corridor (ECC) a range of other offshore users and commercial interests have been identified including oil and gas operators, pipeline and cable operators, marine aggregate dredging operators, and adjacent existing and proposed offshore wind farms. This will continue throughout the remaining pre-application period up to the submission of the DCO application. The consultation undertaken to date is summarised in PEIR Volume 1, Chapter 18: Marine Infrastructure and Other Marine Users (IOMU).

Consultation Relevant to the National Grid Connection Point

- 6.4.18 The Offshore Transmission Network Review (OTNR) was initiated by Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) (now DESNZ) to investigate the way that the offshore transmission network is designed and delivered, consistent with the UK's ambition to deliver net zero emissions by 2050.
- 6.4.19 The Project has engaged with National Grid ESO (NGESO) in relation to the OTNR process, and the pathway to 2030 Holistic Network Design (HND). Following the preliminary conclusions as published in the HND Report (July 2022, NGESO) which identified two grid connection options for the Project as assessed in the PEIR (Lincolnshire Node and Weston Marsh), the Project have continued to engagement with NGESO and a final grid connection point for the Project is expected to be confirmed in Q3 2023.
- 6.4.20 In parallel, the Project has been engaging with key stakeholders in developing and identifying Offshore ECCs and landfalls (this also in response to the requirements of The Crown Estate process for agreeing the Agreement for Lease for the cable route). Meetings were held with Natural England, the Marine Management Organisation and Cefas in March 2022 to discuss the offshore areas of search and potential landfall locations.
- 6.4.21 Similarly, discussions on the location of the cable landfall, the Onshore ECC and potential OnSS locations have been ongoing and the PEIR Boundary identified has been defined in consultation with the relevant stakeholders (See PEIR Volume 1, Chapter 4 Site Selection and Consideration of Alternatives).

Land Interests

- 6.4.22 The Project has sought to engage actively throughout the pre-application consultation process to date with affected persons with an interest in land. The Project has appointed land agents to act on its behalf and who have both identified and engaged with relevant landowners affected by the proposed landfalls, onshore ECC and potential OnSS locations as described in the PEIR. All landowners and parties with an interest in the land (as defined under Section 44 of the 2008 Act) will be specifically consulted under the statutory section 42 consultation process. Please see Document 5.1 Consultation Summary Report for details on the Project's Consultation regarding Land Interests to date. Further consultation and engagement will continue up to the making of the DCO application.

Community Engagement

- 6.4.23 The Project has sought to engage actively and openly throughout the pre-application consultation process to date with the community. The Project has, in compliance with its SoCC, undergone two phases of Public Consultation to date which have both included Public Information Days, webinars, virtual exhibitions and many other forms of engagement. The project has also established four Community Liaison Groups, of which three rounds of meetings have been undertaken to date. For further details on community engagement and the SoCC, please see Document 5.1 Consultation Summary Report.

6.5 Transboundary Consultation

- 6.5.1 Transboundary effects arise when impacts from a development within one European Economic area (EEA) state effects the environment in other EEA state(s). The need to consider transboundary effects has been embodied by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Convention on EIA in a Transboundary Context (commonly referred to as the 'Espoo Convention'). The Convention requires that assessments are extended across borders between Parties of the Convention when a planned activity may cause significant adverse transboundary effects. The approximate distances of the Project from the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) boundaries of other EEA states are shown in Table 1.2 of Volume 1, Chapter 5: EIA Methodology
- 6.5.2 The consultation requirements for transboundary effects have followed the Espoo Convention that has been implemented in the UK for the purposes of NSIPs by the Infrastructure Planning (EIA) Regulations 2017. Regulation 32 of the EIA Regulations sets out a prescribed process for the Secretary of State to notify and consult EEA States that maybe affected by a development that is likely to have significant transboundary effects.
- 6.5.3 The Project have followed the Inspectorate's Advice Note Twelve: Transboundary Impacts and Processes (The Inspectorate, 2020b) which sets out the procedures for consultation in association with an application for a DCO where such a development may have significant transboundary effects, noting the Applicant's responsibility to provide relevant information on potential transboundary effects as part of the DCO application.
- 6.5.4 Transboundary effects have been largely scoped out for many receptors given the location of the Project. However, each of the technical chapters include details of the potential transboundary effects (see PEIR Chapters 7 through to 30).
- 6.5.5 Where consultation has been undertaken to inform the transboundary assessment, these have been recorded and will be summarised in the Project's Consultation Report that will be submitted as part of the DCO application.

6.6 Summary

- 6.6.1 The Project has had regular engagement with a wide range of stakeholders from the early stages of the Project. The Project design has had due consideration of all responses and feedback received from the Scoping Opinion, EPP, public consultations and other stakeholder meetings. The PEIR has considered these where appropriate. Responses more specific to topic areas have also been considered and set out in the relevant technical chapters (See PEIR Chapters 7 through to 30).
- 6.6.2 The Project will continue to engage with stakeholders on the Project's proposals and responses to the Project's consultations will be considered in the development of the final DCO Application. Further information on the consultation activities undertaken and how consultation responses have influenced the Project design and the preparation of the DCO application, will be reported within the final Consultation Report.

6.7 References

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