

Outer Dowsing Offshore Wind Planning Statement

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Abbreviations

Acronym	Expanded name
AEZ	Archaeological Exclusion Zone
AfL	Agreement for Lease
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
APFP	APFP Regulations
ASCOBANS	Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic and North Seas
BEIS	Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (now the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ))
BNG	Biodiversity Net Gain
CBRA	Cable Burial Risk Assessment
CCC	UK Committee on Climate Change
CCGT	Combined Cycle Gas Turbines
CD	Chart datum
Cefas	Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science
CfD	Contracts for Difference
CTMP	Construction Traffic Management Plan
COP	Conference of Parties
CNP	Critical National Priority
CRM	Collision Risk Modelling
DCMS	Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
DCO	Development Consent Order
Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DECC	Department of Energy & Climate Change, now the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ)
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)
ECC	Export Cable Corridor
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EMF	Electromagnetic field
EPP	Evidence Plan Process
EPS	European Protected Species
ES	Environmental Statement
FRA	Flood Risk Assessment
GLA	General Lighthouse Authority
GES	Good Environmental Status
GIG	Green Investment Group
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
GW	Gigawatt
HGV	Heavy Goods Vehicle

Acronym	Expanded name
HPMA	Highly Protected Marine Areas
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment
IDB	Internal Drainage Board
LDP	Local Development Plan
LEDPP	Landscape and Ecology Design Principles Plan
LLFA	Lead Local Flood Authority
LSE	Likely Significant Effect
MGN	Marine Guidance Note
MCA	Maritime Coastguard Agency
MCAA	Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009
MCZ	Marine Conservation Zone
MDS	Maximum Design Scenario
MMO	Marine Management Organisation
MPS	Marine Policy Statement
MSFD	Marine Strategy Framework Directive
Mtoe	Million tonnes of oil equivalent
MW	Megawatt
NRA	Navigational Risk Assessment
NERC	NGET
NIC	National Infrastructure Commission
NPSE	Noise Policy Statement for England
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
NPS	National Policy Statement
NSIP	Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project
O&M	Operation and maintenance
OLEMS	Outline Landscape and Ecology Mitigation Strategy
OnSS	Onshore substation
OREI	Offshore Renewable Energy Infrastructure
ORPAD	Offshore Renewables Protocol for Archaeological Discoveries
OTNR	Offshore Transmission Network Review
OWF	Offshore Windfarm
PA2008	Planning Act 2008
PEIR	Preliminary Environmental Information Report
PTS	Permanent Threshold Shift
RBMP	River Basin Management Plan
RIAA	Report to Inform Appropriate Assessment
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SMP	Shoreline Management Plan
SoS	Secretary of State
SPA	Special Protection Area
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
SUDS	Sustainable Drainage System

Acronym	Expanded name
SVIA	Seascape Visual Impact Assessment
TA	Transport Assessment
TCE	The Crown Estate
TLHS	Trinity Light House Service
TTS	Temporary Threshold Shift
TWh	Terawatt hour
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
WCA	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
WFD	Water Framework Directive
WTG	Wind turbine generator
ZTV	Zone of theoretical visibility

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.
Baseline	The status of the environment at the time of assessment without the development in place.
Biodiversity Net Gain	An approach to development that leaves biodiversity in a measurably improved state than it was previously. Where a development has an impact on biodiversity, developers are encouraged to provide an increase in appropriate natural habitat and ecological features over and above that being affected, to ensure that the current loss of biodiversity through development will be halted and ecological networks can be restored.
Cumulative Effects	The combined effect of the Project acting cumulatively with the effects of a number of different projects, on the same single receptor/resource.
Cumulative Impacts	Impacts that result from changes caused by other past, present or reasonably foreseeable actions together with the Project.
Deemed Marine Licence (dML)	A licence administered under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. The licence set out within a Schedule within the Development Consent Order (DCO).
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 the Department of Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) (formerly Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS)).
Effect	Term used to express the consequence of an impact. The significance of an effect is determined by correlating the magnitude of an impact

Term	Definition
	with the sensitivity of a receptor, in accordance with defined significance criteria.
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 Directive	European Union 2011/92/EU of 13 December 2011 (as amended in 2014 by Directive 2014/52/EU)
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.
Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)	Habitats Regulations Assessment. A process which helps determine likely significant effects and (where appropriate) assesses adverse impacts on the integrity of European conservation sites and Ramsar sites. The process consists of up to four stages of assessment: screening, appropriate assessment, assessment of alternative solutions and assessment of imperative reasons of over-riding public interest (IROPI) and compensatory measures.
Impact	An impact to the receiving environment is defined as any change to its baseline condition, either adverse or beneficial.
Inter-array cables	Cable which connects the wind turbines to each other and to the offshore substation(s).
Landfall	The location at the land-sea interface where the offshore export cable will come ashore.
Maximum Design Scenario	The maximum design parameters of the combined project assets that result in the greatest potential for change in relation to each impact assessed
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.

Term	Definition
Offshore Export Cable Corridor (ECC)	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.
Offshore Reactive Compensation Station (ORCP)	Platforms located outside the array area which house electrical equipment and control and instrumentation systems. They also provide access facilities for work boats.
Onshore Export Cable Corridor (ECC)	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.
Onshore substation (OnSS)	The Project's onshore substation, containing electrical equipment to enable connection to the National Grid.
Outer Dowsing Offshore Wind (ODOW)	The Project.
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.
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).
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	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.
study area	Area(s) within which environmental impact may occur – to be defined on a receptor-by-receptor basis by the relevant technical specialist.
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.

Term	Definition
The Planning Inspectorate	The agency responsible for operating the planning process for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs).
The Project	Outer Dowsing Offshore Wind including 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).

1 Planning Statement

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 The Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of Outer Dowsing Offshore Wind (hereafter referred to as ‘the Project’). The Planning Statement is submitted as part of the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) submission. It is intended that the Planning Statement will be updated for submission as part of the Development Consent Order (‘DCO’) application.
- 1.1.2 GT R4 Limited (“the Applicant”) is proposing to develop the Project. The Project will include both offshore and onshore infrastructure including an offshore generating station (windfarm), export cables to landfall, and connection to the electricity transmission network (see Volume 1, Chapter 3: Project Description). The array area will be located approximately 54km from the Lincolnshire coastline in the southern North Sea.
- 1.1.3 This Planning Statement is one of a series of documents that is submitted to the Secretary of State (SoS) in respect of a forthcoming DCO (‘the Application’) which will be submitted in accordance with Section 37 of Planning Act 2008 (PA2008) and Regulations 5 and 6 of the Infrastructure Planning (Application: Prescribed Forms and Procedures) Regulations 2009 (the ‘APFP Regulations’). The APFP Regulations do not require a Planning Statement as part of PEIR or to support applications for a DCO; however, to assist consultees and the SoS to determine the application, it is considered helpful to bring all the principal matters together into one statement in order to consider them in the context of relevant policy.
- 1.1.4 The Project is currently subject to formal Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) procedures, the outcomes of which will be reported in the Environmental Statement (ES) that will accompany the DCO application. The Project is also subject to Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) to determine its potential effects on European Designated Sites and Species.
- 1.1.5 Aspects concerning the need for the Project (see Section 5), the site selection process (see Section 6.2), and alternative design and technologies considered by the Applicant during the design development process are explained fully in Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) Volume 1, Chapter 4: Site Selection and Consideration of Alternatives and presented in summary form within this Planning Statement. The full legislative and policy context relating to renewable energy within which the Project would be progressed is presented in PEIR Volume 1, Chapter 2: Need, Policy, and Legislative Context.
- 1.1.6 The outcomes of the EIA and Report to Inform Appropriate Assessment (RIAA) (Document Reference 7.1) will inform the final content of this Planning Statement, specifically in relation to assisting the determination of accordance of the Project with the relevant National Policy Statements (NPSs) and English national policy.
- This Planning Statement is structured as follows:
 - Section 2: Background/context;
 - Section 3: Project description and location:
 - This section summarises the project description (as discussed in detail within

Volume 1, Chapter 3: Project Description), including all of the main offshore project components necessary to deliver the Project and connect the Project to the National Grid Transmission System. Please note that this Section is not intended to replace Volume 1, Chapter 3: Project Description, which remains the main reference point for the detailed project description.

- Section 4: Relevant legislation and decision-making framework:
 - This section details the legislation and policy context for the Project, where it is considered to be relevant to the determination of the application.
- Section 5: The need for the scheme:
 - This section sets out the need case for the Project, in the context of national, European, and international policy and legislation.
- Section 6: Planning assessment:
 - This section considers the relationship of the Project with the topic-specific planning policies set out in NPSs EN-1, EN-3, and EN-5. Consideration of other planning policy including, where relevant, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and local planning policy (as identified and confirmed in Section 4), are described under 'Other Policy' for each topic.

1.1.7 At the time of writing this Planning Statement, the aforementioned NPSs have been revised following consultation in 2021. The draft revised NPSs are currently undergoing a second consultation which closes on 25 May 2023. The current consultation is more focused and clarifies that offshore wind is to be a critical national priority, including the related onshore and offshore network infrastructure. This document refers primarily to the extant NPSs, as these currently remain the primary policy tests of relevance. The draft NPSs are however referred to in specific cases where the contents are pertinent to the Project. Each technical PEIR Chapter provides a comprehensive review of draft NPS provisions of relevance to the technical topic (see Volume 1, Chapters 7 to 31). References to the NPSs will be updated for the final DCO application as appropriate.

2 Background and Context for Development

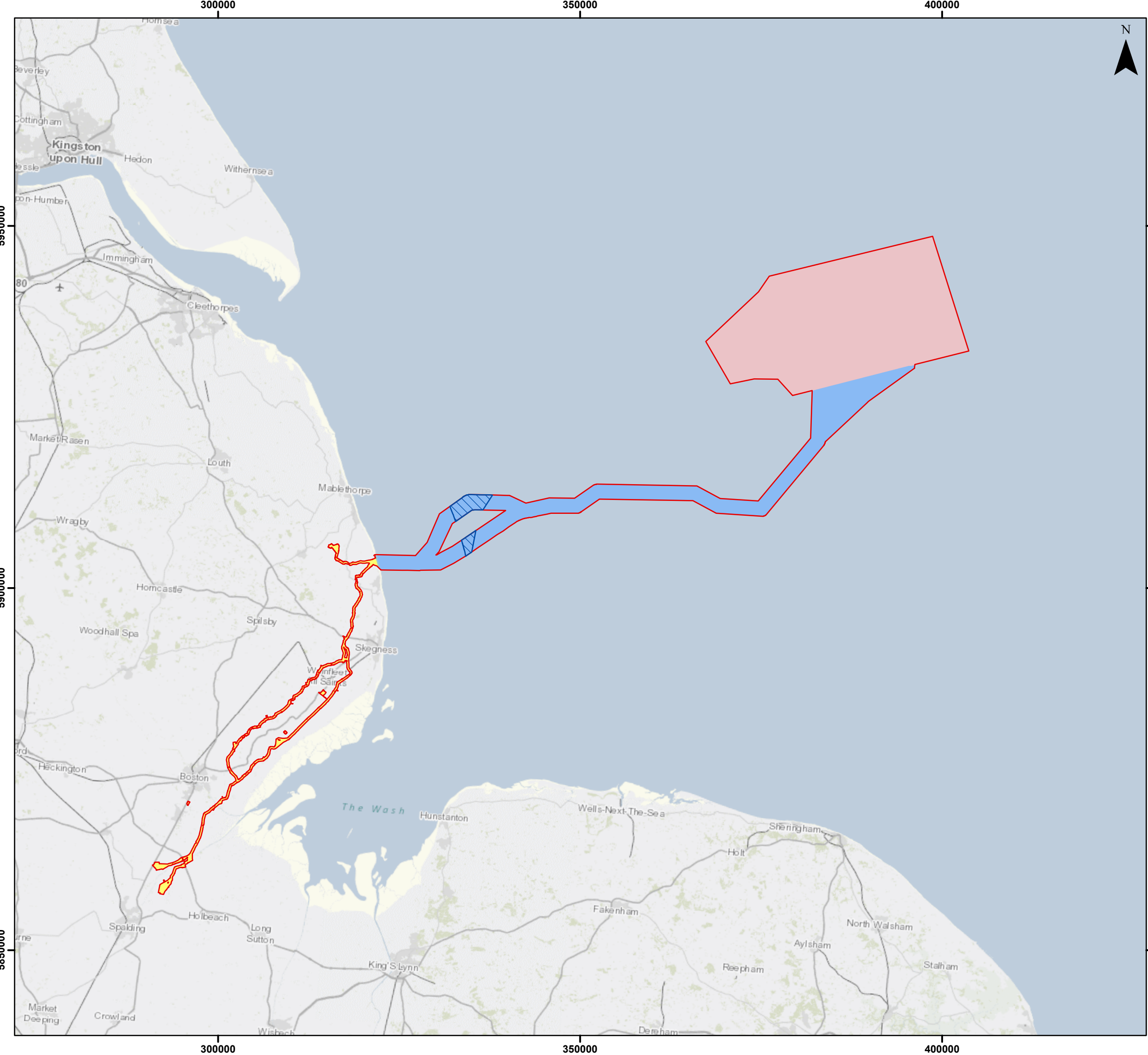
2.1 The Applicant

- 2.1.1 The Applicant is GT R4 Limited (a joint venture between Corio Generation, TotalEnergies and Gulf Energy Development), trading as Outer Dowsing Offshore Wind (ODOW).
- 2.1.2 TotalEnergies, a global multi-energy company, has expertise in offshore operations and maintenance thanks to its historical activities. TotalEnergies is already developing and building offshore wind projects with a cumulative capacity of approximately six gigawatts (GW), including three floating offshore wind projects in Europe and Asia. As part of its ambition to get to net zero by 2050, TotalEnergies is building a portfolio of activities in renewables and electricity that should account for up to 40% of its sales by 2050. At the end of 2020, TotalEnergies' gross power generation capacity worldwide was around 12GW, including 7GW of renewable energy. TotalEnergies will continue to expand this business to reach 35GW of gross production capacity from renewable sources by 2025, and then 100GW by 2030 with the objective of being among the world's top five in renewable energies.
- 2.1.3 Corio Generation is a specialist offshore wind business, dedicated to harnessing the world's greatest energy supply. With a unique blend of sector-leading expertise and deep access to long-term capital, Corio applies a long-term partnership approach to the creation and management of projects, taking them from origination, through development and construction, and into operations. Corio's 15GW pipeline is one of the largest in the world, spanning established and emerging markets, as well as floating and traditional fixed-bottom technologies. These next generation offshore wind projects will help form the backbone of the net-zero global energy system while meeting the energy needs of communities and corporate off takers sustainably, reliably, safely and responsibly. Corio Generation is a Green Investment Group (GIG) portfolio company, operating on a standalone basis. GIG is a specialist green investor within Macquarie Asset Management, part of Macquarie Group.
- 2.1.4 Gulf Energy Development (GULF) is a holding company that invests in a global portfolio of energy, infrastructure, and digital and telecommunications businesses. GULF brings close to three decades of experience in energy project management and operation, with a mission to invest in businesses related to renewable energy and climate management, in accordance with the global target to achieve net zero emissions by 2050. GULF produces over 20 GW of gas-fired and renewable capacity and is committed to supporting the energy transition with onshore and offshore wind projects, solar projects, and other contributions to energy security across various regions to create sustainable shared value in all spheres where it operates.

3 Application Location and Project Description

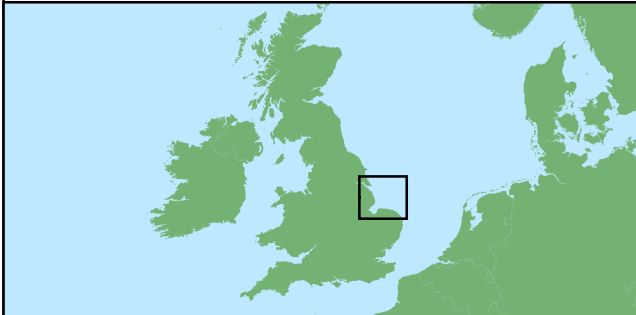
3.1 Project Location

- 3.1.1 In September 2019, The Crown Estate (TCE), as manager of the seabed, initiated a new leasing round process, known as Leasing Round 4, to make new areas of the seabed available for offshore wind development. It aimed to identify at least 7GW of new offshore wind projects in English and Welsh waters, with the potential to deliver electricity for more than six million homes. The Offshore Wind Leasing Round 4 tender process concluded in February 2021, selecting six proposed new offshore wind projects in the waters around England and Wales.
- 3.1.2 The Project is a proposed offshore windfarm located approximately 54km off the coast of Lincolnshire, England, comprising of an offshore generating station and covering an area of seabed, at this stage, of 500km² with export cables making landfall to the south of Anderby Creak.
- 3.1.3 As required by TCE leasing process for Round 4, the Applicant intends to reduce the size of the array area from the current 500km² to an area of up to 300km² prior to DCO application.
- 3.1.4 The windfarm array (the generating station) will be connected to the National Grid Electricity Transmission System (NGET) by offshore and onshore export cables. The offshore export cables will run from the offshore substation and will be located within an offshore export cable corridor (ECC) running from the array area to the coast. The offshore ECC will be approximately 75km in length (see Figure 3.2)
- 3.1.1 The onshore Export Cable Corridor (ECC) will run from the chosen landfall to an onshore substation (OnSS) located in the vicinity of the grid connection (see also Volume 1, Chapter 4: Site Selection and Consideration of Alternatives for details on the grid connection options and associated Offshore Transmission Network Review (OTNR) process).
- 3.1.5 The provisional outcomes of the OTNR process include two possible grid connection options for the Project, both of which are considered in the PEIR; a location known as 'Lincolnshire Node' which is situated close to the coast at Anderby in Lincolnshire, and a connection at the junction of the existing overhead lines at Weston Marsh, to the south of Boston, Lincolnshire (see Figure 3.1 and Figure 3.2). Associated with the onshore grid connection options, the Project has determined onshore ECCs from the export cable landfall location at Wolla Bank to each of the two current grid connection options noted above (as also shown in Figure 3.3). It is expected that a final grid connection location will be confirmed prior to the making of the DCO application.



Legend

- Onshore and Offshore PEIR Boundary
- Array Boundary
- Offshore Export Cable Corridor
- Onshore ECC Corridor and Substations
- ORCP Search Area



Coordinate System: WGS 1984 UTM Zone 31N
 0 10 20 km
 Scale: 1:500,000

Preliminary Environmental Information Report
 Offshore and Onshore PEIR Boundary

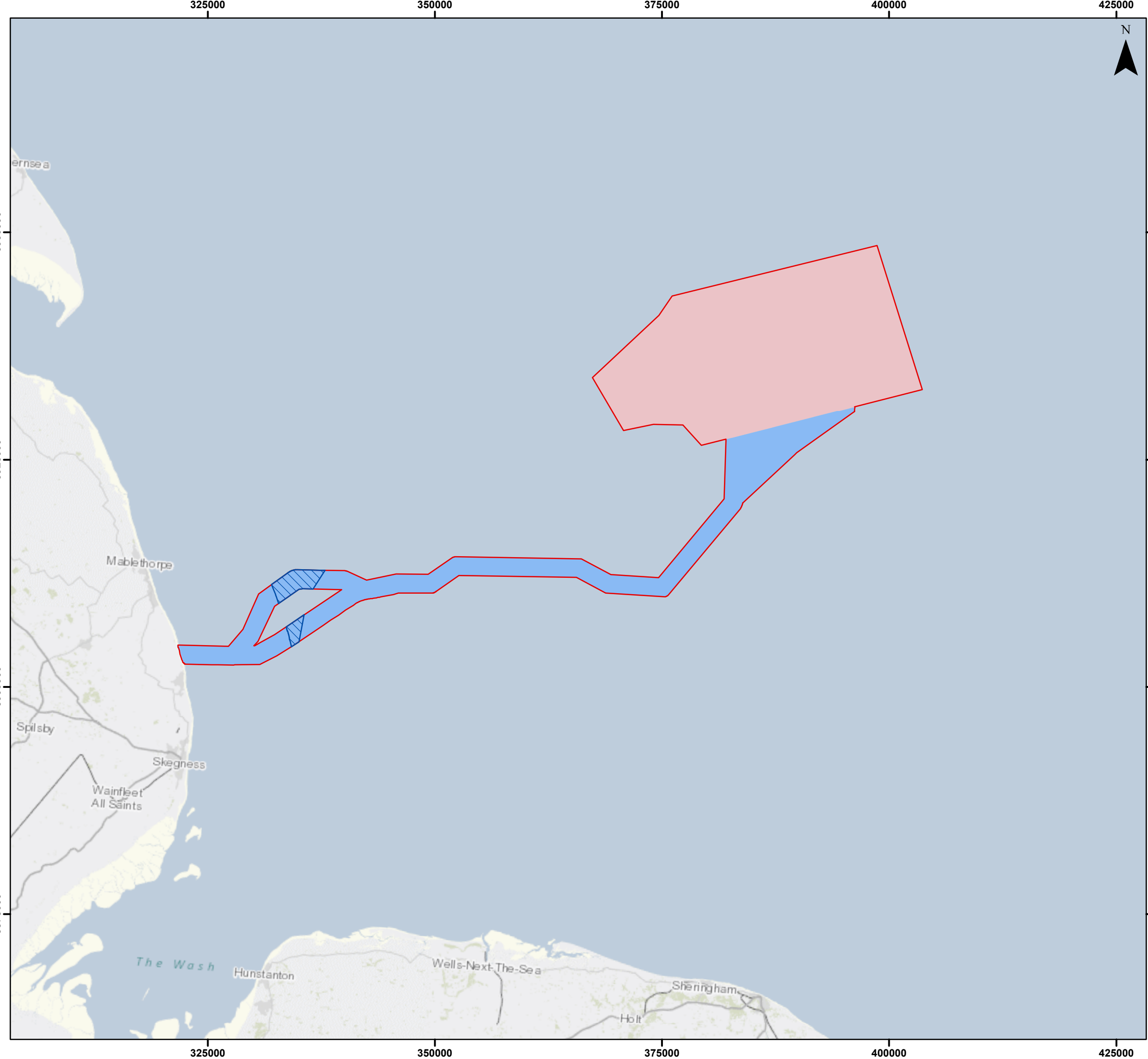
Figure 3.1



Date: 04/05/2023
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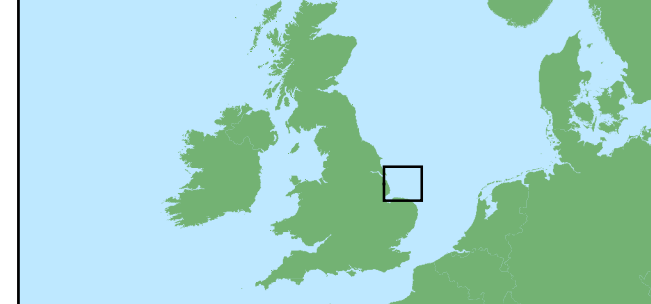
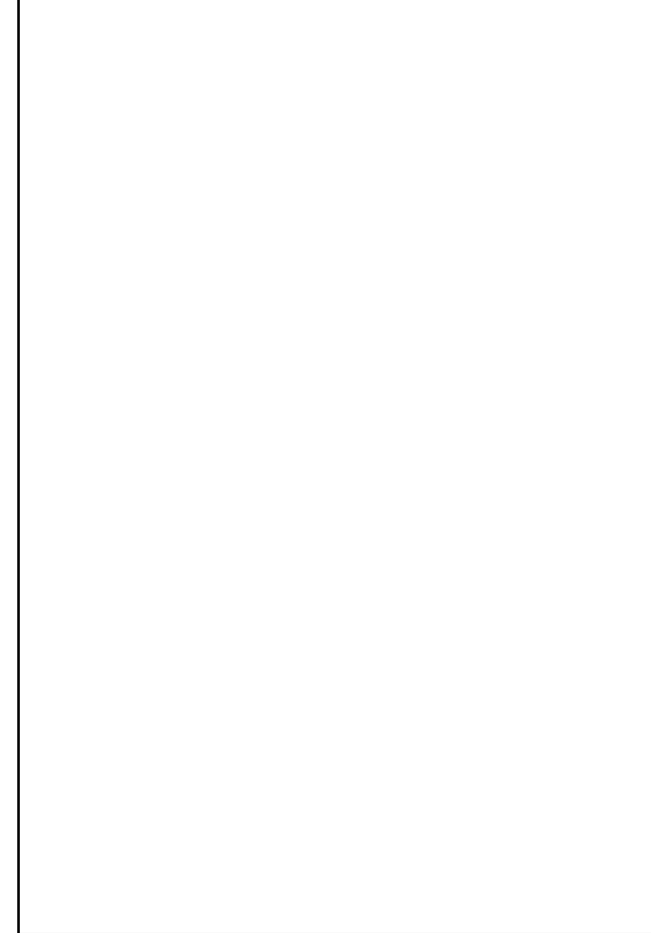
Contains ESRI Basemapping;
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Legend

- Offshore PEIR Boundary
- Array Area
- Offshore Export Cable Corridor
- ORCP Search Area



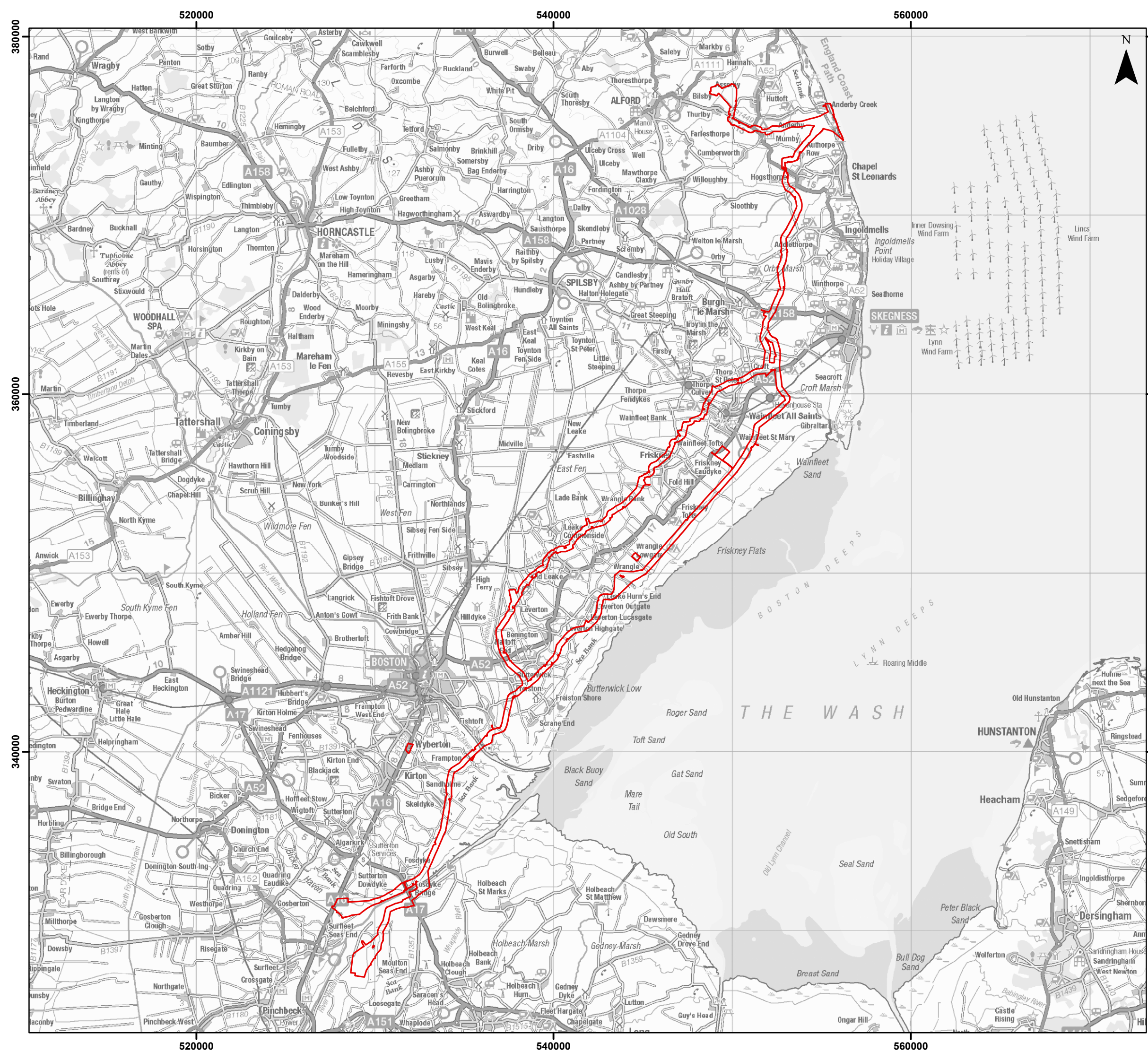
Preliminary Environmental Information Report
 Offshore PEIR Boundary
 Figure 3.2



Date: 04/05/2023
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 Revision: 0.1

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Legend

Onshore PEIR Boundary



Coordinate System: British National Grid

0 5 10 km

Scale: 1:200,000

Preliminary Environmental Information Report

Onshore PEIR Boundary

Figure 3.3

OUTER DOWSING OFFSHORE WIND

Gobe

Date: 04/05/2023
 Produced By: BPHB
 Revision: 0.1

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4 Relevant Legislation and Policy

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 This section outlines the legislative and policy framework for determining applications for development consent under the PA2008, the matters to which the SoS must have regard and the weight which should be ascribed to those matters in the decision-making process in accordance with the relevant policy.
- 4.1.2 To fully assess the Project, the following factors have been reviewed and will form part of the decision-making process:
- International Obligations and National Climate Change legislation for energy;
 - National Policy Statements (NPSs) relating to energy;
 - The Infrastructure Planning (Decisions) Regulations 2010; and
 - Any other relevant matters that the decision-maker has deemed significant and relevant towards their decision.
- 4.1.3 In addition to this, the following sub-sections discuss the national, regional, and local policy positions with regards to supporting the provision of renewable energy. These have also been discussed in relation to the Project and its compliance with specific policies and policy objectives including environmental protection. Section 6 of this Planning Statement details an initial examination of the development's compliance with such policies based on the findings of the PEIR and draft RIAA (Document Reference 7.1). A full examination will be reported in the final Planning Statement.

International obligations on climate change and National climate change and energy legislation

- 4.1.4 Volume 1 Chapter 2: Need, Policy and Legislative Context of the PEIR references international and national climate change legislation, and whilst this wider need is not reproduced in full in this Planning Statement, key legislation is detailed for discussion below.

International Obligations

- 4.1.5 The United Nations Convention on Climate Change supreme decision-making body is termed the Conference of Parties (COP) which reviews the implementation of the Convention and any other legal instruments that the COP adopts and takes decisions necessary to promote the effective implementation of the Convention, including institutional and administrative arrangements. In 2022, the 27th COP (COP27) was held in Egypt to pursue efforts to limit the global temperature increase to within 2°C of the pre-industrial average temperature, to continue the aspiration for an improved limit of 1.5°C building on the negotiated global agreement at the COP26 conference.
- 4.1.6 This was a development of the Paris Agreement for a binding and universal agreement on climate from all the parties. The agreement was reached by 196 parties, seeking to prevent a “*climate catastrophe*” by keeping temperature rises within 1.5°C.

4.1.7 Table 4.1 summarises some of the relevant and most recent policies and legislation that relates to the mitigation of climate change and the development of renewable energy, specifically discussing offshore windfarm (OWF) developments such as the Project.

Table 4.1: Summary of Relevant Policy Legislation Relating to the Mitigation of Climate Change and the Development of Renewable Energy

Policy Legislation	Summary of Requirements
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (Paris climate agreement)	The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) met in Paris 2015 and set out an international agreement by all parties to limit global temperature increase to below 2°C, while pursuing efforts to limit the increase to 1.5°C.
The Climate Change Act 2008	The Climate Change Act 2008 (HM Government, 2008) commits the UK to a net reduction in greenhouse gas emissions against the 1990 baseline by 2050, including a 34% reduction by 2022 and an 80% reduction by 2050.
Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019	Amending the Climate Change Act 2008 to implement a target of a net reduction in greenhouse gas emissions of at least 100% against the 1990 baseline (superseding the 80% target in the Climate Change Act 2008).
The Energy Act 2013	The Energy Act 2013 makes provisions to incentivise investment in low carbon electricity generation, ensure security of supply, and help the UK meet its emissions reduction and renewables targets; it included the framework for Contracts for Difference (CfD) as well as introducing requirements to enable a statutory 2030 decarbonisation target range for the UK's electricity sector.
Clean Growth Strategy 2017	The Clean Growth Strategy (2017) promoted 'clean growth' as growing national income while cutting greenhouse gas emissions. It aimed to promote further growth of offshore wind by holding auctions of CfDs, working with the industry to develop a Sector Deal for offshore wind, and to provide further funding for innovation in offshore wind.
National Infrastructure Assessment 2018	The first National Infrastructure Assessment by the National Infrastructure Commission (NIC, 2018) recommended that half of the UK's power is provided by renewables by 2030.
Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener 2021 (Presented to Parliament pursuant to Section 14 of the Climate Change Act 2008)	The Net Zero Strategy is a long-term plan for a transition that will take place over the next three decades and sets out key targets and delivery pathway of reaching net zero emissions by 2050 and 40 GW of offshore wind by 2030.
Energy White Paper: Powering our Net Zero Future	Increase in operating capacity to 40 GW by 2030, as part of the plan for the green industrial revolution. The 2020 white paper puts net zero and the effort to fight climate change at its core.
Sixth Carbon Budget	Published in 2020, the CCC recommended that offshore wind should become the backbone of the whole UK energy system, growing from 40 GW of capacity in 2030 to 100 GW or more by 2050.

Policy Legislation	Summary of Requirements
British Energy Security Strategy	UK Government created the British Energy Security Strategy in 2022, where investing in offshore wind generation has been listed as one of the UK Government's '10 Point Plan', contributing to a carbon net zero by 2050.
Powering up Britain	Plans published in March 2023 setting out how the UK government will enhance Britain's energy security and deliver net zero commitments. Offshore wind is identified as a key aspect of the energy transition proposals set out in the strategy. The plans include a goal to develop up to 50GW of offshore wind by 2030.

4.2 Legislation

Requirement for Development Consent

- 4.2.1 The requirement for a DCO relates to the provisions of the PA2008 which includes development that is, or comprises part of, a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP). The PA2008 defines the thresholds above which the specific types of infrastructure development are considered to be NSIPs and therefore require a DCO.
- 4.2.2 This proposal relates to an offshore energy generation project with a projected energy generating capacity of up to 1500MW.
- 4.2.3 The Project exceeds the threshold defined under section 15(3)(b) of the PA2008 and therefore constitutes an offshore generating station NSIP. Under section 31 of the PA2008 this Project requires a development consent, for which an application will be submitted by the Applicant in respect of the proposed Project and in the prescribed form.
- 4.2.4 Section 104 of the PA2008 provides that any application for an order granting development consent must be determined in accordance with any relevant NPS (being a NPS which has effect in relation to development of the description to which the application relates) unless one of the following exceptions apply:

'104 Decisions in cases where national policy statement has effect

(3) The [SoS] must decide the application in accordance with any relevant national policy statement, except to the extent that one or more of subsections (4) to (8) applies.

(4) This subsection applies if the [SoS] is satisfied that deciding the application in accordance with any relevant national policy statement would lead to the United Kingdom being in breach of any of its international obligations.

(5) This subsection applies if the [SoS] is satisfied that deciding the application in accordance with any relevant national policy statement would lead to the [SoS] being in breach of any duty imposed on the [SoS] by or under any enactment.

(6) This subsection applies if the [SoS] is satisfied that deciding the application in accordance with any relevant national policy statement would be unlawful by virtue of any enactment.

(7) This subsection applies if the [SoS] is satisfied that the adverse impact of the Project would outweigh its benefits.

(8) This subsection applies if the [SoS] is satisfied that any condition prescribed for deciding an application otherwise than in accordance with a national policy statement is met.

(9) For the avoidance of doubt, the fact that any relevant national policy statement identifies a location as suitable (or potentially suitable) for a particular description of development does not prevent one or more of subsections (4) to (8) from applying.'

4.2.5 Additionally, S104 of the PA2008 lists the other relevant policies that the SoS must take into account when determining an NSIP which includes:

- Appropriate Marine Policy Statements (MPS);
- Local Impact Reports;
- Any matters prescribed in relation to the development; and
- Any matters the SoS considers important and relevant.

4.2.6 Once the DCO Application is submitted and has undergone examination by the Planning Inspectorate (the Inspectorate), a recommendation is provided. The SoS for DESNZ (formerly BEIS) will then take the decision on the granting of the DCO for the Project.

4.2.7 Therefore, compliance with the policies set out in the relevant NPSs and the identification of any specified exceptions is considered a key test within the DCO process. This also allows for the application to be considered in the context of NPS policies relating to the deliverability of renewable energy and in relation to any identified adverse impacts. The project's relevance to MPS and other national policies is considered in sections 5 and 6, and within the technical assessment sections (Section 6.4 to 6.15) following consideration of the NPS tests.

4.2.8 This Planning Statement discusses the likely accordance of all aspects of the Project with the relevant NPS policies and other policy and legislative requirements. Volume 1, Chapter 1: Introduction lists the suite of documents submitted as part of the PEIR. This includes a draft DCO which identifies requirements that may be applied to the Project, and also incorporates deemed marine licences that would otherwise be required under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, and which identify conditions that may be applied to the Project.

4.2.9 Additionally, the DCO Application will include provisions to allow construction and operation of the Project as well as the implementation of landscape and ecological mitigation using the following:

- Powers to compulsorily acquire land or rights;
- Powers to remove and reinstate important hedgerows;
- Powers to undertake works in streets;
- Powers to create or alter accesses to highways;
- Powers to create drainage; and
- Powers to divert or stop up public rights of way.

4.3 Policy and Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 4.3.1 The NPPF was originally implemented in 2012, with the most recent revision being 2019 and an update in 2021. The NPPF sets out the UK Government’s planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.
- 4.3.2 The NPPF does not contain specific policies for NSIPs (for which particular considerations apply, determined in accordance with the decision-making framework set out in the Planning Act 2008 and relevant NPSs) but may be considered as a relevant consideration (see Table 4.2).
- 4.3.3 The NPPF provides principles that cover both the natural and built environment and promotes sustainable growth and development.

Table 4.2: Summary of National Planning Policy Framework Considerations

Principle	Summary of NPPF consideration
Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change	The planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change. It should help to shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure. Additionally, development should be directed away from areas of highest flood risk (present or future) (paragraph 152/159).
Making Effective Use of Land	Planning decisions and policies should promote effective use of land while safeguarding and improving the environment. Such relevant policy includes taking opportunities to achieve net gains (i.e., improve public access to the countryside, or development that enable new habitat creations) (paragraph 119/120).
Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment	The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils; recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside; and minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity (paragraph 174).

National Policy Statements (NPS)

- 4.3.4 NPSs are produced by the UK Government and set out the Government’s policy for the delivery of energy infrastructure and provide the legal framework for planning decisions for major infrastructure projects. A DCO application for the Project will be assessed and decided on by the Inspectorate in the context of the policy set out within the NPSs.
- 4.3.5 The three NPSs currently in place and of relevance to the Project are:
- EN-1 Overarching Energy (DECC, 2011a);
 - EN-3 Renewable Energy Infrastructure (DECC, 2011b), which covers nationally

significant renewable energy infrastructure (including offshore generating stations in excess of 100 MW); and

- EN-5 Electricity Networks Infrastructure (DECC, 2011c), which covers the electrical infrastructure associated with an NSIP.

4.3.6 The process of updating these NPSs is currently underway. Public consultation on the revised NPSs EN1 to EN5 was initially held in 2021 by BEIS (as of February 2023, DESNZ), with a re-consultation opened in March 2023 running currently until the 25 May 2023. The current consultation is more focused and clarifies that offshore wind is now a Critical National Priority (CNP), including the related onshore and offshore network infrastructure.

4.3.7 The 2023 draft NPS (draft EN-1, paragraph 1.6.2) specifically notes that for any application accepted for examination before designation of the 2023 amendments, the 2011 suite of NPSs should have effect in accordance with the terms of those NPS. Given the uncertainty around the timescales for the formal implementation of the 2023 draft NPS, the Project has been developed with the flexibility to adhere to the 2023 requirements. Paragraph 1.6.3 then goes on to note that any emerging draft NPSs (or those designated but not having effect) are potentially capable of being important and relevant considerations in the decision-making process. The extent to which they are relevant is a matter for the relevant SoS to consider within the framework of the Planning Act and with regard to the specific circumstances of each DCO application.

4.3.8 In several cases, notably with the revised ambitious targets for renewable energy, the draft NPSs are considered at the time of drafting this Planning Statement to be likely to be important and relevant considerations in the decision-making process.

4.3.9 The three draft NPSs subject to consultation and which are of relevance are:

- Draft Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1 2023)
- Draft National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN- 3 2023)
- Draft National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (EN-5 2023)

4.3.10 This Planning Statement makes primary reference to the extant NPSs of relevance, whilst also acknowledging that the draft NPSs may be important and apply the policy test for the Project. Additionally, each technical PEIR Chapter presents the 2023 draft NPS text as relevant to the particular topic being considered and indicates where the Project has met the necessary policy tests.

4.3.11 Table 4.3 summarises the requirements of EN-1, EN-3 and EN-5 and their 2023 revised drafts that are relevant to the Project.

Table 4.3: Relevant National Policy Statements to the Project

National Policy Statement	Summary of Requirements
Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1)	Para 3.4.5 highlights the urgency for new renewable electricity projects by recognising that in order to achieve the target of sourcing 15% of energy from renewable sources by 2020 and to largely decarbonise the power sector by 2030, it is necessary to bring forward new renewable electricity generating projects as soon as possible.

National Policy Statement	Summary of Requirements
Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1)	<p>Para 3.7.1 deals with the need for new electricity network infrastructure and acknowledges that much of the new electricity infrastructure needed will be located in places where there is no existing network infrastructure, or where there may be technical reasons why existing network infrastructure is not suitable for connecting the new generation infrastructure.</p> <p>Para 3.7.10 acknowledges that there is an urgent need for new electricity transmission and distribution infrastructure to be provided. Decision makers should consider that the need for any given proposed new connection or reinforcement has been demonstrated if it represents an efficient and economical means of connecting a new generating station to the transmission or distribution network.</p>
National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3)	This NPS, together with the Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1), provides the primary basis for decisions on applications for nationally significant renewable energy infrastructure which are defined as energy from biomass and/ or waste (>50 MW), offshore wind (>100 MW) or onshore wind (>50 MW).
National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (EN-5)	Provides the primary basis for decisions on applications for electricity networks infrastructure defined as above-ground electricity lines of 132 kV and above, or other infrastructure for electricity networks that is associated with an NSIP.
Draft Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1)	Para 3.3.60 acknowledges the urgent need for CNP Infrastructure to achieving the UKs energy objectives, together with the national security, economic, commercial, and net zero benefits, will in general outweigh any other residual impacts not capable of being addressed by application of the mitigation hierarchy. Adding that the government strongly supports the delivery of CNP Infrastructure, and it should be progressed as quickly as possible.
Draft National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3)	This NPS, together with the Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1), provides the primary policy for decisions on applications for nationally significant renewable energy infrastructure, defined as energy from biomass and/ or waste (>50 MW in England and >350 MW in Wales), pumped hydro storage (>50 MW in England and >350 MW in Wales), solar photovoltaic (PV) (>50 MW in England and >350 MW in Wales), offshore wind (>100 MW in England and >350 MW in Wales) or tidal stream (>100 MW in England and >350 MW in Wales).
Draft National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (EN-5)	Provides the primary basis for decisions on applications for electricity networks infrastructure defined as above-ground electricity lines of 132 kV and above, or other infrastructure for electricity networks that is associated with an NSIP.

4.3.12 The final EIA and DCO application will take account of the requirements of the revised NPSs

whether they are at that stage still in draft or formally adopted.

Marine Policy

- 4.3.13 The Marine and Coastal Access Act (MCAA) 2009 introduced new planning and management systems for overseeing the marine environment, most notably through the requirement to obtain marine licences for works at sea (including the deposition or removal of any substance or object from the sea below Mean High Water). The MCAA 2009 created a strategic marine planning system that seeks to promote the efficient, sustainable use and protection of the marine environment, guided by the Marine Policy Statement (MPS) and a series of Marine Plans. The MCAA 2009 provides the framework for a marine licensing system, which is administered by the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) for activities in English waters, a statutory consultee within the DCO application process. The MCAA 2009 also amended certain provisions of the Planning Act 2008.
- 4.3.14 The MCAA 2009 also enabled the designation of Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) and Highly Protected Marine Areas (HPMAs). MCZs and HPMAs are types of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in England, Wales and UK offshore waters, which seek to protect a range of nationally important marine wildlife, habitats, geology and geomorphology. A MCZ assessment will be undertaken as part of the application.

Marine Planning Policy

- 4.3.15 The MPS adopted by all UK administrations in March 2011 provides the policy framework for the preparation of marine plans and establishes how decisions affecting the marine area should be made in order to enable sustainable development. The marine plans and MPS have been considered in developing the application for consents for the Project, which lies within the East Inshore & Offshore Marine Plan Areas.

Deemed Marine Licensing

- 4.3.16 The relevant marine activities that require a licence include the construction and maritime works located in the sea or on the seabed, as well as the deposition of any substance or object in the sea or on/under the seabed (such as the disposal of dredged material), as well as the operational maintenance activities associated with the Project.
- 4.3.17 Two deemed marine Licences for the Project pursuant to the provisions of the MCAA 2009 are included within the draft DCO, through provisions in Section 149A of PA2008, ensuring that the MMO act as a statutory consultee to the DCO process.

Regional and Local Context

- 4.3.18 Owing to the structure of UK policy, there is some relevance to existing and emerging local-level planning policy and guidance which may be a relevant consideration in the consideration of the application for development consent, according to the stage of preparation, and the degree of consistency of the relevant policies. Nevertheless, it is the NPSs that provide national policy for a DCO application and provide the primary basis for decision-making under the Act.
- 4.3.19 Local Development Plans (LDPs) set out Local Authorities' objectives for use and development of land within their administrative areas, and general policies for their implementation. If a point of contention arises between the LDP scale policies and NPS

policies, the NPS will supersede local policy.

4.3.20 The onshore development area is in East Lindsey, South Holland and Boston within Lincolnshire. The Local Plan for East Lindsey comprises the Core Strategy 2018 and the Settlement Proposals Document 2018. The South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011-2036 is a joint strategic partnership covering Boston Borough and South Holland District.

4.3.21 Table 4.4 presents the relevant policies from East Lindsey Core Strategy 2018.

Table 4.4: Relevant Policies from the East Lindsey Core Strategy 2018

Policy	Relevance to Project
Vision and Objective 1	Seeks a network of thriving, safer and healthy sustainable communities, where people can enjoy a high quality of life and an increased sense of well-being and where new development simultaneously addresses the needs of the economy, communities and the environment.
Vision and Objective 3	Seeks a growing and diversified economy that not only builds on and extends the important agriculture and tourism base but supports the creation of all types of employment.
Vision and Objective 6	Seeks a commitment to tackling the causes and effects of global climate change through local action.
Para 1.11	Seeks to achieve the vision of a commitment to tackling the causes and effects of global climate change through local action, Support is provided for new development to ensure it does not cause flood risk to existing properties and encourage new development to reduce flood risk to existing properties.
Para 1.11	Supports the use of renewable energy but balanced against the protection of the District's distinct landscapes.
Strategic policy 10 (sp10) – Design	Development around water sources will only be supported if it contains adequate protection preventing pollution from entering into the water source.
Strategic policy 11 (sp11) – Historic Environment	The Council will support proposals that secure the continued protection and enhancement of heritage assets in East Lindsey, contribute to the wider vitality and regeneration of the areas in which they are located and reinforce a strong sense of place.
Strategic policy 13 (sp13) – Inland Employment	The Council will support growth and diversification of the local economy by: Strengthening the rural economy by supporting in the large, medium and small villages: Development where it can provide local employment.
Strategic policy 16 (sp16) – Inland Flood Risk	The Council will support development that demonstrates an integrated approach to sustainable drainage that has positive gains to the natural environment. The Council will support development for business, leisure and commercial uses in areas of inland flood risk where it can be demonstrated that accommodating the development on a sequentially safer site would undermine the overall commercial integrity of the existing area. Such developments must incorporate flood mitigation measures in their design.

Policy	Relevance to Project
Strategic policy 17 (sp17) – Coastal East Lindsey	All relevant development will need to provide adequate flood mitigation. The council will support improvements to flood defences, infrastructure associated with emergency planning and the development and replacement community buildings. Development must also demonstrate that it satisfies the Sequential and Exception Test and will need to provide adequate flood mitigation.
Strategic policy 21 (sp21) – Coastal Employment	The Council will support the rural coastal economy by supporting development in the large, medium and small villages where it: Provides local employment and help support local services.
Strategic policy 23 (sp23) – Landscape	The District’s landscapes will be protected, enhanced, used and managed to provide an attractive and healthy working and living environment. Development will be guided by the District’s Landscape Character Assessment and landscapes defined as highly sensitive will be afforded the greatest protection.
Strategic Policy 24 (SP24) - Biodiversity and Geodiversity	Development proposals should seek to protect and enhance the biodiversity and geodiversity value of land and buildings and minimise fragmentation and maximise opportunities for connection between natural habitats.
Strategic Policy 25 (SP25) – Green Infrastructure	In the case of sites not identified on the Inset Maps, development will only be permitted on open spaces provided unacceptable harm will not be caused to their appearance, character or role.
Strategic Policy 27 (SP27) – Renewable and Low Carbon Energy	Large-scale renewable and low carbon energy development, development for the transmission and interconnection of electricity, and infrastructure required to support such development, will be supported where their individual or cumulative impact is, when weighed against the benefits, considered to be acceptable in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) residential amenity; b) surrounding landscape, townscape and historic landscape character, and visual qualities; c) the significance (including the setting) of a historic garden, park, battlefield, building, conservation area, archaeological site or other heritage asset; d) sites or features of biodiversity or geodiversity importance, or protected species; e) the local economy; f) highway safety; and g) water environment and water quality
Strategic Policy 28 (SP28) – Infrastructure and S106 Obligations	Infrastructure schemes will be supported provided they are essential in the national interest; contribute to sustainable development, and respect the distinctive character of the district.

South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011-2036

- 4.3.22 Table 4.5 presents the relevant policies from the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011-2036.
- 4.3.23 The South East Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee is a partnership of Boston Borough, South Holland District and Lincolnshire County Councils who are working together to plan the future of South Holland District and Boston Borough.

Table 4.5: Relevant Policies from the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011-2036

Policy	Summary
Policy 2: Development Management	<p>Proposals requiring planning permission for development will be permitted provided that sustainable development considerations are met, specifically in relation to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. size, scale, layout, density and impact on the amenity, trees, character and appearance of the area and the relationship to existing development and land uses; 2. quality of design and orientation; 3. maximising the use of sustainable materials and resources; 4. access and vehicle generation levels; 5. the capacity of existing community services and infrastructure; 6. impact upon neighbouring land uses by reason of noise, odour, disturbance or visual intrusion; 7. sustainable drainage and flood risk; 8. impact or enhancement for areas of natural habitats and historical buildings and heritage assets; and 9. impact on the potential loss of sand and gravel mineral resources.
Policy 3: Design of New Development	<p>All development will create distinctive places through the use of high quality and inclusive design and layout and, where appropriate, make innovative use of local traditional styles and materials. Design which is inappropriate to the local area, or which fails to maximise opportunities for improving the character and quality of an area, will not be acceptable. The Policy outlines how the development proposals will demonstrate 14 issues will be secured.</p>
Policy 4: Approach to Flood Risk	<p>Development proposed within an area at risk of flooding (Flood Zones 2 and 3 of the Environment Agency's flood map or at risk during a breach or overtopping scenario as shown on the flood hazard and depths maps in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment) will be permitted, where:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It can be demonstrated that there are no other sites available at a lower risk of flooding (i.e., that the sequential test is passed). 2. It can be demonstrated that essential infrastructure in FZ3a & FZ3b, highly vulnerable development in FZ2 and more vulnerable development in FZ3 provide wider sustainability benefits to the community that outweigh flood risk. 3. The application is supported with a site-specific flood risk assessment, covering risk from all sources of flooding including the impacts of climate change and which: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. demonstrate that the vulnerability of the proposed use is compatible with the flood zone;

Policy	Summary
	<p>b. identify the relevant predicted flood risk (breach/overtopping) level, and mitigation measures that demonstrate how the development will be made safe and that occupants will be protected from flooding from any source;</p> <p>c. propose appropriate flood resistance and resilience measures (following the guidance outlined in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment), maximising the use of passive resistance measures (measures that do not require human intervention to be deployed), to ensure the development maintains an appropriate level of safety for its lifetime;</p> <p>d. include appropriate flood warning and evacuation procedures where necessary (referring to the County’s evacuation routes plan), which have been undertaken in consultation with the authority’s emergency planning staff;</p> <p>e. incorporates the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) (unless it is demonstrated that this is not technically feasible) and confirms how these will be maintained/managed for the lifetime of development (surface water connections to the public sewerage network will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances where it is demonstrated that there are no feasible alternatives);</p> <p>f. demonstrates that the proposal will not increase risk elsewhere and that opportunities through layout, form of development and green infrastructure have been considered as a way of providing flood betterment and reducing flood risk overall;</p> <p>g. demonstrates that adequate foul water treatment and disposal already exists or can be provided in time to serve the development;</p> <p>h. ensures suitable access is safeguarded for the maintenance of water resources, drainage and flood risk management infrastructure.</p> <p>Development in all flood zones, and development over 1 hectare in size in Flood Zone 1, will need to demonstrate that surface water from the development can be managed and will not increase the risk of flooding to third parties.</p> <p>No development will be permitted within a 50m buffer from the toe of the raised Witham Haven Banks (flood defences), as shown on the indicative Plan contained in Appendix 10, to allow access for construction and maintenance.</p> <p>Flood risk management infrastructure shall be provided at the strategic level, where development opportunities allow, to reduce the hazard and probability of flooding.</p>
Policy 5: Meeting Physical Infrastructure and Service Needs	Planning permission will be granted for new development provided that developers can demonstrate that there is or will be sufficient physical infrastructure and service needs capacity to support and meet the needs of the proposed development. A planning condition and/or legal agreement may be required to help secure the arising need.
Policy 6: Developer Contributions	Non-residential development of 1,000sqm gross floorspace or more will be expected to mitigate their impacts upon infrastructure, services and the environment to ensure that such developments are acceptable in planning terms.
Policy 28: The Natural Environment	A high quality, comprehensive ecological network of interconnected

Policy	Summary
	<p>designated sites, sites of nature conservation importance and wildlife-friendly greenspace will be achieved by protecting, enhancing and managing natural assets:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Internationally designated sites, on land or at sea; 2. Nationally or locally designated sites and protected or priority habitats and species; 3. Addressing gaps in the ecological network.
<p>Policy 29: The Historic Environment</p>	<p>Distinctive elements of the South East Lincolnshire historic environment will be conserved and, where appropriate, enhanced. Opportunities to identify a heritage asset's contribution to the economy, tourism, education and the local community will be utilised including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The historic archaeological and drainage landscape of the Fens; 2. The distinctive character of South East Lincolnshire market towns and villages; 3. The dominance within the landscape of church towers, spires and historic windmills.
<p>Policy 30: Pollution</p>	<p>Development proposals will not be permitted where, taking account of any proposed mitigation measures they would lead to unacceptable adverse impacts upon:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. health and safety of the public; 2. the amenities of the area; or 3. the natural, historic and built environment; <p>by way of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. air quality, including fumes and odour; 5. noise including vibration; 6. light levels; 7. land quality and condition; or 8. surface and groundwater quality. <p>Planning applications, except for development within the curtilage of a dwelling house as specified within Schedule 2, Part 1 of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, or successor statutory instrument, must include an assessment of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. impact on the proposed development from poor air quality from identified sources; 10. impact on air quality from the proposed development; and 11. impact on amenity from existing uses.
<p>Policy 31: Climate Change and Renewable and Low Carbon Energy</p>	<p>A. Climate Change</p> <p>All development proposals will be required to demonstrate that the consequences of current climate change have been addressed, minimised and mitigated by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. employing a high-quality design; 2. the adoption of the sequential approach and Exception Test to flood-risk and the incorporation of flood-mitigation measures in design and construction to reduce the effects of flooding, including SuDS schemes for all 'Major' applications;

Policy	Summary
	<p>3. the protection of the quality, quantity and availability of water resources, including for residential developments, complying with the Building Regulation water efficiency standard of 110 litres per person per day;</p> <p>4. reducing the need to travel through locational decisions and, where appropriate, providing a mix of uses;</p> <p>5. incorporating measures which promote and enhance green infrastructure and provide an overall net gain in biodiversity as required by Policy 28 to improve the resilience of ecosystems within and beyond the site.</p> <p>B. Renewable Energy</p> <p>With the exception of Wind Energy, the development of renewable energy facilities, associated infrastructure and the integration of decentralised technologies on existing or proposed structures will be permitted provided, individually, or cumulatively, there would be no significant harm to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. visual amenity, landscape character or quality, or skyscape considerations; 2. residential amenity in respect of: noise, fumes, odour, vibration, shadow flicker, sunlight reflection, broadcast interference, traffic; 3. highway safety (including public rights of way); 4. agricultural land take; 5. aviation and radar safety; 6. heritage assets including their setting; and 7. the natural environment. <p>Provision should be made for post-construction monitoring and the removal of the facility and reinstatement of the site if the development ceases to be operational. Proposals by a local community for the development of renewable and low carbon sources of energy, in scale with their community's requirements, including supporting infrastructure for renewable energy projects, will be supported and considered in the context of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development and meeting the challenge of climate change and against criteria B1-7.</p>
Policy 32: Community, Health and Well-being	Development shall contribute to the creation of socially cohesive and inclusive communities; reducing health inequalities; and improving the community's health and well-being.
Policy 33: Delivering a More Sustainable Transport Network	The Local Planning Authorities will work with partners to make the best use of, and seek improvements to, existing transport infrastructure and services within, and connecting to South East Lincolnshire, having considered first solutions that are based on better promotion and management of the existing network and the provision of sustainable forms of travel.

The Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations

- 4.3.24 The legislative framework for the EIA process originated from the European Council Directive 85/337/EEC. This was codified by Directive 2011/92/EU and then amended by Directive 2014/52/EU (the EIA Directive). The EIA Directive was transposed for NSIPs into UK

law on 16 May 2017 by the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (the EIA Regulations). Owing to the scale and nature of the Project, such regulations must be adhered to by the Applicant and the decision maker.

- 4.3.25 It must be noted that the Environmental Assessments and Miscellaneous Planning (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2018 made under the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018 (as amended), made the necessary changes to domestic legislation which governs EIA as a result of the UK leaving the European Union (EU), and ensures that the EIA Regulations continue to apply to the same degree and effect as they did before the UK's departure from the EU.

Habitats Regulation Assessment

- 4.3.26 The European Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (the Habitats Directive) and the Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds (the Wild Birds Directive) were given statutory effect in the onshore environment and offshore environment out to 12 nautical miles by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (the Habitats Regulations), and in the UK's offshore marine area which covers waters beyond 12nm to the extent of the British Fishery Limits and UK Continental Shelf Designated Area by the Conservation of Offshore Marine Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (the Offshore Habitats Regulations).
- 4.3.27 Following the UK's departure from the EU, the Habitats Directive and the Wild Birds Directive (as transposed into UK law by the Habitats Regulations and the Offshore Habitats Regulations) continues to provide the legislative backdrop for Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) in the UK.
- 4.3.28 Sites formerly referred to as European Sites in the Habitats Regulations and Offshore Habitats Regulations are now collectively termed the "National Site Network" and no longer form part of the Natura 2000 network following amendments to the Habitats Regulations and the Offshore Habitats Regulations by the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. The National Site Network includes Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), for habitats and species, and Special Protection Areas (SPAs), for birds.
- 4.3.29 Under the Habitats Regulations, the competent authority (the SoS for as of February 2023, DESNZ in this case) must consider whether a plan or project has the potential to have an adverse effect on the integrity of the features of a National Site Network site (either alone or in-combination with another plan or project), a process known as an HRA, which includes the undertaking by the competent authority of an Appropriate Assessment.
- 4.3.30 HRA is a four-stage process, starting with screening which was submitted to the relevant statutory stakeholders alongside the Project's Scoping Report. This screening exercise will be updated throughout the pre-application process and will be followed by appropriate assessment for those sites and features for which a Likely Significant Effect (LSE) is identified at screening, which will be reported in a Report to Inform Appropriate Assessment (RIAA). A draft RIAA, which is subject to formal consultation as part of the Section 42 consultation required under the Planning Act 2008, is submitted alongside the PEIR.
- 4.3.31 The requirement for stages 3 and 4 (collectively referred to as derogation and incorporating the requirement for compensation) will ultimately be determined by the conclusions of the

draft RIAA but noting that the Project is already progressing early consideration of 'without prejudice' derogation requirements and compensation options, which will be subject to discussion with relevant stakeholders throughout the pre-application period.

- 4.3.32 The Project is subject to the outcomes of the Plan-Level HRA which was undertaken by TCE. The Plan-Level HRA assessed the potential impacts of the preferred bidding areas that were selected through the Round 4 process on the UK's network of designated sites and protected habitats and species. TCE concluded the Plan-Level HRA in Summer 2022.

Biodiversity Net Gain

- 4.3.33 The UK Environment Act 2021 addresses the vision set out in the UK Government's 25 Year Environment Plan (Defra, 2018) with a specific requirement for 'net gain'. The principle of net gain is the requirement for developments to increase habitat or 'biodiversity net gain' following operations.
- 4.3.34 The NPPF makes general provisions for the delivery of BNG, though this is not a compulsory requirement for NSIPs until November 2023.
- 4.3.35 Outer Dowsing Offshore Wind is committed to Environmental Stewardship and, on top of mitigating adverse impacts on the environment as much as possible, is intent on leaving the environment in a measurably better state than before. The Project is exploring opportunities to deliver on the future requirements for NSIPs to provide 10% BNG and is actively engaging with organisations and environmental bodies local to the Project's footprint to identify potential collaboration opportunities. Once a grid connection for the Project is confirmed, the Project will look to pursue these opportunities with a view to including these as part of their DCO Application.
- 4.3.36 The Project's aspirations to deliver 'net gain' voluntarily are presented in a draft Biodiversity Net Gain and Marine Net Gain Principles and Approach document (Document Reference 8.3) which is submitted with PEIR.

Other Relevant Legislation

- 4.3.37 There is a range of relevant environmental legislation that applies to the Project, which is considered in the context of this Project. This includes:

- The OSPAR Convention;

The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat Ramsar Convention);

- The Convention on Biological Diversity;
- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981;
- Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000;
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC);
- The Commons Act 2006;
- Water Environment (Water Framework Directive, hereafter WFD) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017; and

- Marine Strategy Regulations 2010.

5 Need for the Project

5.1 Overview

- 5.1.1 The extant and draft NPSs establish the policy need for new renewable energy generation and this is set out in Section 5.2. The key drivers underpinning the need for renewable energy within the UK, and why the government believes there is an urgent need for new electricity NSIPs are discussed throughout this section, with the NPSs in particular considered further in Sections 5.2.
- 5.1.2 In April 2022, the UK Government through the British Energy Security Strategy (BESS) stated its ambition to increase offshore wind capacity to 50GW by 2030 (UK Government, 2022). This represents an increase from the approximately 13.6GW currently deployed today, with over £1.6 billion invested so far in the UK offshore wind infrastructure securing 3,600 jobs.
- 5.1.3 The BESS recognises the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, including increasing energy generation from low carbon sources to replace high carbon energy sources such as burning coal and gas.
- 5.1.4 As a result of the ongoing war in Ukraine and its impact on global energy markets, sharp focus is placed on the UK's dependence on imports to heat homes, fuel cars and generate electricity. Energy security is considered to be a primary policy driver, with the need for offshore wind forming a critical part of the BESS. This includes:
- The need to secure safe, affordable, reliable energy, preferably generated in the UK for the UK market;
 - The need to replace existing ageing energy generation infrastructure; and
 - The need to meet expected electricity demand whilst meeting climate change commitments.

5.2 National Policy Statements: The Need for New Nationally Significant Energy Infrastructure Projects and Offshore Wind Projects

- 5.2.1 Part 3 of NPS EN-1 establishes an indisputable and urgent policy need for all types of energy infrastructure in order to achieve energy security and dramatically reduce carbon emissions (NPS EN-1, paragraph 3.1.1). It is not therefore necessary, when determining applications for offshore wind, to demonstrate a specific need for the principle of offshore wind development. Part 3 also explains that, without significant amounts of new large-scale energy infrastructure, the Government's energy and climate change objectives cannot be fulfilled and this will not be possible without some significant residual adverse impacts (NPS EN-1, paragraph 3.2.3). Beyond the principle of offshore wind being needed, it is important to note that the targets within the extant NPS, and markedly the draft NPS, require a level of deployment such that all currently planned and proposed offshore wind projects are needed. This is captured within draft paragraph 3.2.6 which states that the SoS has determined that substantial weight should be given to this need when considering applications for development consent under the PA2008. With regards the role of offshore wind, the draft NPS notes that a secure, reliable, affordable, net zero consistent system in

2050 is likely to be composed predominantly of wind and solar. EN-1 further notes the committed target of 40GW of offshore wind by 2030 (Draft NPS EN1, paragraph 3.3.22), which in practice means the installation of in the region of 2,666 of the larger turbines currently available (Haliade X – 15MW) at a rate of 333 turbines per year.

- 5.2.2 In particular, NPS EN-1 sets out that electricity meets a significant proportion of overall energy demand and reliance upon it is likely to increase in the period leading up to 2050. When combined with the UK Government’s legal obligation to reduce the UK’s greenhouse gas emissions by at least 80% (from 1990 levels), an urgent need for new NSIPs to deliver electricity is established (NPS EN-1, paragraph 3.3.1). The revised targets as presented within the sixth carbon budget, are to achieve net zero by 2050, with ~78% reduction to be achieved by 2035.
- 5.2.3 Section 4 of NPS EN-1 sets out a number of assessment principles that should be taken into account when considering proposals for new energy infrastructure. Where appropriate, these considerations have been addressed in each topic chapter of the PEIR.

5.3 The Need to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions

- 5.3.1 Within the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report, the 2007 Fourth Assessment Report¹, predictions are made that a continuation of global emission trends, including emissions of greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide, could lead average global temperatures to rise by up to 6°C by the end of this century. The potential impacts associated with such a global temperature rise include (DECC, 2014):
- Increased frequency of extreme weather events such as floods and drought;
 - Reduced food supplies;
 - Impacts on human health;
 - Increased poverty; and
 - Ecosystem impacts, including species extinction.
- 5.3.2 The UK Committee on Climate Change (CCC) (2017 carbon budget) reported that 2016 was the hottest year on record, which represented the fifth time in the 21st century a new record high annual temperature had been set (along with 2005, 2010, 2014, and 2015). The UK CCC, in its 2021 status report noted that the 2010s was the hottest decade on record globally; 2020 was then recorded as the second warmest year on record (Met Office, 2021), and 2021 the fifth warmest on record.
- 5.3.3 A commitment by the UK was made during COP26 in Glasgow in 2021 to pursue efforts to limit the global temperature increase to within 1.5°C of the pre-industrial average temperature.
- 5.3.4 Power sector emissions fell 17% in 2015 to 50% below 1990 levels. This follows an average annual decrease of 5% in the years between 2009 and 2014. This reduction is largely due to an increase in renewable and nuclear generation, equating to almost half of the UK’s electricity demand in 2015 (CCC, 2016a). In order to achieve necessary ongoing reductions in emissions, the CCC recommended that the UK government should set out an intention to

¹ <https://www.ipcc.ch/assessment-report/ar4/>

support 1-2GW of offshore wind per year, provided costs continue to fall, with a view to phasing out subsidies in the 2020s (CCC, 2015a).

- 5.3.5 The EU and UK legislation that has been put in place to secure a reduction in emissions is outlined in the PEIR Volume 1, Chapter 2: Need, Policy and Legislative Context.

5.4 Future Increases in Demand

- 5.4.1 The extant NPS EN-1 (paragraphs 3.3.13 – 3.3.14) anticipates that large parts of the country's heat and transportation demand will be electrified, meaning total electricity consumption (measured in terawatt hours over a year) could double or even triple by 2050, depending on the choice of how electricity is supplied.
- 5.4.2 This increase in electricity demand is uncertain, but is likely to be considerably higher than today, particularly now that the UK Government has legislated for net zero emissions. This translates into very significant need for large-scale renewable energy projects. The role of offshore wind in delivering this additional capacity of low carbon energy is highlighted by the CCC reports which recognise that the sector is now maturing and showing very significant cost reductions.
- 5.4.3 The large-scale deployment of renewables will help the UK to reduce its emissions of carbon dioxide by over 750 million tonnes by 2020 (NPS EN-1, paragraph 3.4.2) with offshore wind expected to provide the largest single contribution towards the 2020 renewable energy targets (NPS EN-1, paragraph 3.4.3). Furthermore, to significantly decarbonise the power sector by 2030, NPS EN-1 indicates that it is necessary to bring forward renewable energy projects as soon as possible (NPS EN-1, paragraph 3.4.5).
- 5.4.4 The extant NPS EN-3 recognises that OWFs will deliver a significant proportion of the UK's renewable energy generating capacity up to 2020 and towards 2050 (NPS EN-3, paragraph 2.6.1). It also refers to the Offshore Energy Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) which concludes that there are no overriding environmental considerations preventing the plans [at that time] for 25GW of new offshore wind capacity, if mitigation measures are implemented to prevent, reduce and offset significant adverse effects (NPS EN-3, paragraph 2.6.15). The draft NPS makes clear reference to the revised target of 40GW of new offshore wind capacity; a figure which was revised upward to 50GW by 2030 in the April 2022 UK Government Energy Security Statement.

5.5 Role of Offshore Wind

- 5.5.1 The role of offshore wind is key in achieving the UK Government targets for 2030 and 2050. The offshore wind industry presents an opportunity to utilise and further develop the UK's maritime engineering skills as other industries decline (such as shipbuilding and North Sea oil) in order to secure supply chain and other employment opportunities in the UK. The importance of maximising opportunities for the involvement of local businesses and communities in offshore wind has been highlighted as a key success factor for the sector in the UK (The Crown Estate, 2014).
- 5.5.2 In 2019, the offshore wind sector deal noted that the share of offshore wind in UK energy generation had increased from 0.8% in 2010 to 6.2% in 2017, reaching 10% in 2020. In March 2020, one year on from the sector deal, there was 9.8GW of installed OWF capacity, which

was anticipated to reach 19.5GW by the mid-2020s (at the time of writing the offshore capacity is 13.6GW) (Renewable UK, 2023²). The UK Government has since committed to a target of 50GW of installed OWF capacity by 2030 (UK Government, 2022).

- 5.5.3 The role of OWF, and this Project in particular, in delivering both clean energy (to meet government targets) and significant economic benefits is therefore a material consideration in the planning balance for the proposed Project.

5.6 Local Support for the Benefits of Offshore Wind

- 5.6.1 In addition to the Regional and National policy, goals and targets for renewable energy, local support is also a driver for renewable energy development. The relevant local development plans are the East Lindsey Core Strategy 2018 and Settlement Proposals Document 2018 and the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011-2036.

- 5.6.2 The East Lindsey Core Strategy recognizes the commitment to tackling the causes and effects of global climate change through local action as one of their visions which is translated into their objective to *'support the use of renewable energy balanced against the protection of the District's distinct landscapes'*. Furthermore, the Core Strategy clearly states that *'the benefits of renewable energy developments are a material consideration and will be weighed in the balance alongside all other material considerations'* thus emphasizing the important role of developments, such as offshore wind, in providing national, regional, and local benefits.

- 5.6.3 The South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011-2036 developed a vision for the area focused on guiding sustainable development which includes new development that will help South East Lincolnshire mitigate and adapt to climate change. It is highlighted that *'The use of renewable energy technologies and sustainable drainage systems will also help minimise carbon emissions and flood risk respectively.'* To deliver the Local Plan's vision a series of strategic priorities have been set some of which comprise delivering *'sustainable development in South East Lincolnshire that seeks to meet the social and economic needs of the area, whilst protecting and enhancing its environment for the enjoyment of future generations'* and minimising *'the impact of and adapt to climate change by making more sustainable use of land and resources, reducing exposure to flood risk, promoting sustainable development and reducing human exposure to environmental risks'*.

- 5.6.4 The Project is an opportunity to meet National and Regional goals and targets but to also support the Local Development Plan's visions not only related to climate change but also in terms of economic benefits.

5.7 Apportioning Weight to the Need Established in the Planning Balance &

Decision Making

- 5.7.1 All applications seeking development consent for energy NSIPs should be assessed by the SoS on the basis there is a demonstrated need for those types of infrastructure and that the scale and urgency of that need is as described in NPS EN-1 (paragraph 3.1.3) and summarised above.

² <https://www.renewableuk.com/page/UKWEDhome>

- 5.7.2 Furthermore, substantial weight should be given to the contribution which projects would make towards satisfying that need (NPS EN-1, paragraph 3.1.4). In this policy context, the Project would make a substantial contribution towards the delivery of renewable energy in line with the need to significantly decarbonise the power sector by 2030 and should therefore be ascribed substantial weight in the balance of considerations and the presumption in favour of such developments (NPS EN-1, paragraph 4.1.2).
- 5.7.3 The principle need for the Project is therefore established.

6 Accordance with National Policy Statements and Other National and Regional Policy

6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 This section presents the Project's accordance with each relevant NPS, presenting the relevant NPS test for a given technical area. Where relevant, contextual reference is also made to the marine, and local policies which were considered in detail in Section 4.
- 6.1.2 With regards the NPSs, it is noted that they are subject to revision, with revised NPSs currently being consulted upon. The sections below provide a record of all draft NPS provisions that differ from the extant NPS, and how it is anticipated that the Project will accord with them based on the findings of the PEIR and draft RIAA (Document Reference 7.1), noting that the final revised NPS provisions may differ from the drafts. This reflects the transitional provisions within draft NPS EN-1.
- 6.1.3 The remainder of this section identifies the policy requirements and decision-making considerations set out in the NPSs and, where relevant, other planning policy.
- 6.1.4 Each topic is structured as follows:
- National Policy Statements
 - Describes the requirements set out in the relevant NPSs for the assessment of the topic, how it is anticipated that the Project will meet these requirements and have regard to the policy.
 - Other Policy Considerations
 - Where relevant planning policy or legislative requirements have been identified beyond the NPSs, consideration of the regard to this is set out in this section.
 - Considerations for the SoS.
 - Identifies key considerations for the SoS when having regard to the Project's compliance with relevant policy and the weight that project effects should be given in determining the overall planning balance.

6.2 Consideration of Alternatives

- 6.2.1 The consideration of alternatives is presented in Volume 1, Chapter 4: Site Selection and Consideration of Alternatives of the PEIR and its associated appendices. This section of the Planning Statement provides a summary of notable elements of NPS EN-1, NPS EN-3 and NPS EN-5 before providing the Applicant's position with regards considerations for the SoS.

National Policy Statements: NPS EN-1

- 6.2.2 Table 6.1 outlines the relevant policies from National Policy Statement NPS EN-1 and provides detail as to where this is addressed by the Project.

Table 6.1 Relevant policies from National Policy Statements: NPS EN-1

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
<p>National Policy Statements: NPS EN-1 Paragraph 4.4.1 and 4.4.2</p>	<p>Paragraphs 4.4.1 and 4.4.2 of NPS EN-1 states:</p> <p><i>“As in any planning case the relevance or otherwise to the decision-making process of the existence (or alleged existence) of alternatives to the Project is in the first instance a matter of law, detailed guidance on which falls outside the scope of this NPS. From a policy perspective this NPS does not contain any general requirement to consider alternatives or to establish whether the proposed project represents the best option. However, applicants are obliged to include in their ES, as a matter of fact, information about the main alternatives they have studied. This should include an indication of the main reasons for the applicant’s choice, taking into account the environmental, social, and economic effects and including, where relevant, technical, and commercial feasibility; in some circumstances, there are specific legislative requirements, notably under the Habitats Directive, for the [SoS] to consider alternatives. These should also be identified in the Environmental Statement by the applicant.”</i></p>	<p>The site selection process and alternatives considered have been through a process of detailed analysis of environmental, social, and engineering constraints and key feasible alternatives have been taken forward for consultation through the Scoping process, Evidence Plan Process (EPP), or through consultation meetings, as outlined in Volume 1, Chapter 4: Site Selection and Alternatives.</p>
<p>National Policy Statements: NPS EN-1 Paragraph 4.4.3</p>	<p>Paragraph 4.4.3 of NPS EN-1 states that where there is a policy or legal requirement to consider alternatives, other guiding principles should be considered by the SoS when deciding what weight should be given to alternatives, specifically:</p> <p><i>“The consideration of alternatives in order to comply with policy requirements should be carried out in a proportionate manner;’</i></p> <p><i>‘The [SoS] should be guided in considering alternative proposals by whether there is a realistic prospect of the alternative delivering the same infrastructure capacity (including energy security and climate change benefits) in the same timescale as the Project;’</i></p> <p><i>‘Where (as in the case of renewables) legislation imposes a specific quantitative target for particular technologies or (as in the case of nuclear) there is reason to suppose that the number of sites suitable for deployment of a technology on the scale and within the period of</i></p>	<p>The site selection process and alternatives considered have been through a process of detailed analysis of environmental, social, and engineering constraints and key feasible alternatives have been taken forward for consultation through the Scoping process, Evidence Plan Process (EPP), or through consultation meetings, as outlined in Volume 1, Chapter 4: Site Selection and Alternatives.</p>

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
	<p><i>time envisaged by the relevant NPSs is constrained, the [SoS] should not reject an application for development on one site simply because fewer adverse impacts would result from developing similar infrastructure on another suitable site, and [they] should have regard as appropriate to the possibility that all suitable sites for energy infrastructure of the type proposed may be needed for future proposals;'</i></p> <p><i>'Alternatives not among the main alternatives (noting that as required under the 2017 EIA Regulations reasonable alternatives are described within this chapter) studied by the applicant (as reflected in the Environmental Statement), should only be considered to the extent that the [SoS] thinks they are both important and relevant to [their] decision;'</i></p> <p><i>'As the [SoS] must decide an application in accordance with the relevant NPS (subject to the exceptions set out in the Planning Act 2008), if the [SoS] concludes that a decision to grant consent to a hypothetical alternative proposal would not be in accordance with the policies set out in the relevant NPS, the existence of that alternative is unlikely to be important and relevant to the [SoS's] decision;'</i></p> <p><i>'Alternative proposals which mean the necessary development could not proceed, for example because the alternative proposals are not commercially viable or alternative proposals for sites would not be physically suitable, can be excluded on the grounds that they are not important and relevant to the [SoS's] decision;'</i></p> <p><i>'Alternative proposals which are vague or inchoate can be excluded on the grounds that they are not important and relevant to the [SoS's] decision; and</i></p> <p><i>'It is intended that potential alternatives to a proposed development should, wherever possible, be identified before an application is made to the [SoS] in respect of it (so as to allow appropriate consultation and the development of a suitable evidence base in relation to any alternatives which are particularly relevant). Therefore, where an alternative is first put</i></p>	

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
	<i>forward by a third party after an application has been made, the [SoS] may place the onus on the person proposing the alternative to provide the evidence for its suitability as such and the [SoS] should not necessarily expect the applicant to have assessed it</i>	

National Policy Statements: NPS EN-3

6.2.3 Table 6.2 outlines the relevant policies from National Policy Statement NPS EN-3 and provides detail as to where this is addressed by the Project.

Relevant policies from National Policy Statements: NPS EN-1

Table 6.2 Relevant policies from National Policy Statements: NPS EN-1

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
National Policy Statements: NPS EN-3 Paragraph 2.6.81	<p>The Applicant should include an assessment of the effects of installing cable across the intertidal zone which should include information, where relevant, about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>“Any alternative landfall sites that have been considered by the applicant during the design phase and an explanation for the final choice”;</i> and ▪ <i>“Any alternative cable installation methods that have been considered by the applicant during the design phase and an explanation for the final choice.”</i> 	<p>The site selection process and alternatives considered have been through a process of detailed analysis of environmental, social, and engineering constraints and key feasible alternatives have been taken forward for consultation through the Scoping process, Evidence Plan Process (EPP), or through consultation meetings, as outlined in Volume 1, Chapter 4: Site Selection and Alternatives.</p>

National Policy Statements: NPS EN-5

6.2.4 Table 6.3 outlines the relevant policies from National Policy Statement NPS EN-5 and provides detail as to where this is addressed by the Project.

Table 6.3 Relevant policies from National Policy Statements: NPS EN-5

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
National Policy Statements: NPS EN-5	<p>With regards to the Consideration of Alternatives within EN-5, the Policy encourages Developers to seek alternatives to:</p>	<p>The Project has committed to burying the cables for the length of the onshore ECC. The</p>

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The development of overhead lines; and ▪ The use of sulphur hexafluoride (SF6) as an insulating medium within substations. 	development of an AIS or GIS substation, the latter of which would require the use of SF6, is currently undergoing consideration.

Other Policy Considerations

6.2.5 No other policy considerations were identified for the consideration of alternatives.

Considerations for the SoS

6.2.6 The assessment of alternatives has had regard to the relevant requirements for assessment set out in all relevant policy and regulations, and been carried out, and will continue to be carried out, in accordance with those requirements.

6.2.7 The Applicant will meet the requirements of Paragraph 4.4.2 of NPS EN-1 which requires inter alia consideration of alternatives under the Habitats Regulations, having undertaken consideration of suitable alternatives with regards minimising or avoiding designated sites, and/ or the specific features within the designated sites (Document Reference 7.1). Based on the findings of the PEIR and draft RIAA, the Project is anticipated to be in compliance with all requirements of the Habitats Regulations.

6.2.8 Therefore, it is clear that the Project has complied with all policy and legislation requirements with regards to consideration of alternatives; notwithstanding the outcome of substation technology investigations, which are ongoing. Cognisance of the relevant policy and legislative requirements has resulted in specific design considerations, such as the commitment to underground cables instead of employing overhead lines, and the iterative design process which has sought, and will continue to seek, to minimise visual impacts to coastal receptors.

6.2.9 With regards to the overall process of site selection and consideration of alternatives, the Applicant has presented (in Volume 1, Chapter 4: Site Selection and Consideration of Alternatives and the associated technical appendices) a detailed and comprehensive assessment which takes account of reasonable alternatives. The potential effects on the environment are clearly considered. The influence that consultation has had on the process is presented. The Chapter presents a clearly defined, staged process and identifies the main reasons for each of the options that have been progressed from one stage to a subsequent stage of the design evolution process.

6.2.10 The findings of the PEIR and draft RIAA demonstrate that there is no anticipated conflict with any of the tests set out in the EIA Regulations (2017), The Habitats Regulations or the requirements of NPS EN-1 and NPS EN-3 such that the assessment of alternatives should not weigh against the substantial benefits of the Project when considering the planning balance.

6.3 Good Design

6.3.1 Design considerations of relevance to the onshore design are set out in the onshore Design

Principles Document (see Volume 2, Appendix 3.3: Onshore Substation Design Principles). Additional detail of the potential reinstatement of the onshore ECC and screening proposals for the OnSS can be found in the Landscape and Ecology Design Principles Plan (LEDPP) (see Document Reference 8.7).

National Policy Statements: NPS EN-1

- 6.3.2 Table 6.4 sets out the relevant National Policy Statements from NPS EN-1 related to Good Design and provides detail as to where they are addressed by the Project.

Table 6.4 National Policy Statements: NPS EN-1 related to Good Design

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
<p>EN-1 Policy: Paragraph 4.5.4</p>	<p>For the SoS to consider the proposal for a project, applicants should be able to demonstrate in their application documents how the design process was conducted and how the proposed design evolved. Where a number of different designs were considered, applicants should set out the reasons why the favoured choice has been selected. In considering applications the SoS should take into account the ultimate purpose of the infrastructure and bear in mind the operational, safety and security requirements which the design has to satisfy.</p>	<p>Design decisions in terms of Project infrastructure and location are set out in Volume 1, Chapter 4: Site Selection and Consideration of Alternatives.</p> <p>Further design considerations of relevance to the onshore design are set out in the onshore Design Principles Document (see Volume 2, Appendix 3.3: Onshore Substation Design Principles). Additional detail of the potential reinstatement of the onshore ECC and screening proposals for the OnSS can be found in the Landscape and Ecology Design Principles Plan (LEDPP) (see Document Reference 8.7).</p> <p>With regards offshore design, the Project is being designed in so far as reasonably practicable to apply good design, siting WTGs in an area that seeks to reduce visual effects, whilst also complying with the necessary safety requirements with respect to safe navigation and operation of Search and Rescue procedures. Further design refinements, such as reducing WTG height or altering colour are not considered feasible due to the flexibility needed due to uncertainty in technological advances (as recognised in NPS EN-3) or due to other considerations such as operational safety which requires the WTGs to be appropriately marked and painted to comply with navigational safety requirements.</p>
<p>EN-1 Policy: Paragraph 5.9.8</p>	<p>Landscape effects depend on the existing character of the local landscape, its current quality, how highly it is valued and its capacity to accommodate change. All of these factors need to be considered in judging the impact of a project on landscape. Virtually all nationally significant energy infrastructure projects</p>	<p>The Project has undertaken a design process that goes as far as practicable to develop a design that seeks to minimise harm/ change to the receiving environment, and this is reflected in the iterative process that is being applied to the Project throughout the pre-application process and will continue to be applied.</p> <p>To gain a thorough understanding of the capacity for the seascape and landscape to accommodate change, an assessment of the existing character is being undertaken for both seascapes, with regards the offshore WTGs and other</p>

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
	<p>will have effects on the landscape. Projects need to be designed carefully, taking account of the potential impact on the landscape. Having regard to siting, operational and other relevant constraints the aim should be to minimise harm to the landscape, providing reasonable mitigation where possible and appropriate.</p>	<p>infrastructure (see Volume 1, Chapter 17: Seascape, Landscape and Visual) and landscape with regards the OnSS (see Volume 1, Chapter 28: Landscape and Visual Assessment).</p> <p>With regards careful design offshore, the WTGs and other infrastructure have been sited, as far as reasonably practical, to avoid and minimise significant effects on designated sites within the zone of theoretical visibility (ZTV). A detailed consideration and assessment of the capacity of the seascape to accommodate the offshore infrastructure in the context of the existing baseline, characterised in many respects by the presence of OWF projects, is undertaken in Volume 1, Chapter 17: Seascape, Landscape and Visual.</p> <p>With regards to careful project design, the OnSS has been sited outside any areas of designation. This will be sited with a National Grid substation. The process to site the National Grid connection has been driven by National Grid and the Offshore Transmission Network Review.</p> <p>The sensitivity of the landscape and visual receptors in the landscape study area is a key consideration in the siting and design of the onshore infrastructure. A detailed consideration and assessment of the capacity of the landscape to accommodate the onshore infrastructure in relation to the screening afforded by the existing landforms, trees and hedgerows between sensitive receptors and the Project infrastructure is undertaken in Volume 1, Chapter 28: Landscape and Visual Assessment.</p> <p>Additional landscape mitigation measures for the OnSS are described in Volume 1, Chapter 28: Landscape and Visual Impact in the Landscape and Document 8.7: Landscape and Ecology Design Principles Plan (LEDPP). The extent of mitigation planting incorporated into the design is illustrated in the LEDPP.</p>

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
		<p>Photomontage visualisations showing predicted views of the OnSS are shown without mitigation and with the landscape mitigation at 15-years post-planting in Volume 2, Chapter 28.1: Landscape and Visual Assessment Visualisations Wirelines.</p>
<p>EN-1 Policy: Paragraph 5.9.8</p>	<p>National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Natural Beauty (AONBs) have been confirmed by the UK Government as having the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. Each of these designated areas has specific statutory purposes which help ensure their continued protection and which the Inspectorate/SoS should have regard to in its decisions. The conservation of the natural beauty of the landscape and countryside should be given substantial weight by the Inspectorate in deciding on applications for development consent in these areas.</p> <p>Nevertheless, the Inspectorate may grant development consent in these areas in exceptional circumstances. The development should be demonstrated to be in the public interest and consideration of such applications should include an assessment of:</p>	<p>In order to prioritise the conservation of the natural beauty of the landscape in accordance with paragraphs 5.9.9 and 10 of NPS EN1, no elements of the Project are situated within areas having the highest status of protection (the Broads and AONBs).</p> <p>It is recognised that the offshore array is theoretically apparent from a number of viewpoints but has been located to be at least 54km from the nearest coastline, with only the offshore reactive compensation platform located closer to the coast. As has been described elsewhere in this NPS (Section 5), there is a demonstrable and urgent need for renewable energy, and specifically offshore wind. The economic effects of the proposed Project are considered to be beneficial, as has been concluded in Volume 1, Chapter 29: Socio-Economic Characteristics. Those benefits will also be subject to further consideration within the Supply Chain Plan which will be produced in support of the CfD bid and will aim to secure local investment. The economic benefits and policy need should also be balanced against the significant costs to the economy of unmitigated climate change (as recognised in policy terms (UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2022 Presented to Parliament pursuant to Section 56 of the Climate Change Act 2008)).</p> <p>Consultation will enable the Project to capture and record local community feedback and feed this into the project design. The Applicant has sought to minimise all other potential impacts to recreational amenity associated with the Project.</p>

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The need for the development, including in terms of national considerations, and the impact of consenting or not consenting it upon the local economy; ▪ The cost of, and scope for, developing elsewhere outside the designated area or meeting the need for it in some other way, taking account of the policy on alternatives; and ▪ Any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated. 	

National Policy Statements: NPS EN-3

6.3.3 Table 6.5 sets out the relevant National Policy Statements from NPS EN-3 related to Good Design and provides detail as to where they are addressed by the Project.

Table 6.5 National Policy Statements: NPS EN-3 related to Good Design

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-3 Policy: Paragraph 2.4.2	Proposals for renewable energy infrastructure should demonstrate good design in respect of landscape and visual amenity, and in the design of the Project to mitigate impacts such as noise and effects on ecology.	Proposals for minimising the effects on landscape and visual amenity from the onshore infrastructure are set out in Document 8.7: LEDPP. Design considerations are set out in the Design Principles Document.

National Policy Statements: NPS EN-5

6.3.4 Table 6.6 sets out the relevant National Policy Statements from NPS EN-5 related to Good Design and provides detail as to where they are addressed by the Project.

Table 6.6 National Policy Statements: NPS EN-5 related to Good Design

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-5 Policy: Paragraph 2.7	<p>In terms of Good Design, the 2008 Act requires the SoS to have regard, in designating an NPS, to the desirability of good design. Section 4.6 of EN-1 sets out general criteria for good design that, where possible, all energy infrastructure should embody.</p> <p>However, the SoS should bear in mind that electricity networks infrastructure must in the first instance be safe and secure, and that the functional design constraints of safety and security may limit an applicant's ability to influence the aesthetic appearance of that infrastructure. While the above principles should govern the design of an electricity networks infrastructure application to the fullest possible extent – including in its avoidance and/or mitigation of potential adverse impacts (particularly those detailed in Sections 2.9-2.14 below) – the functional performance of the infrastructure in respect of security of supply and public and occupational safety must not thereby be threatened.</p>	In regards to the ECC, the Project has committed to bury all onshore cables along the route. The location of the route has also undergone significant review of alternative options as outlined in Volume 1, Chapter 4: Site Section and Consideration of Alternatives.

Other Policy Considerations

6.3.5 No other policy considerations were identified in relation to Good Design.

Considerations for the SoS

6.3.6 As set out above, the Project has considered design throughout the development of the

Project to date and has provided details of that process as part of the PEIR.

6.3.7 The current NPS EN-1 states that:

“Given the importance which the Planning Act 2008 places on good design and sustainability, the IPC needs to be satisfied that energy infrastructure developments are sustainable and, having regard to regulatory and other constraints, are as attractive, durable and adaptable including taking account of natural hazards such as flooding) as they can be.”

6.3.8 Where appropriate, climate change resilience and flooding are factored into the Project design presented in the PEIR, particularly when identifying OnSS locations.

6.3.9 Furthermore,

“The [SoS] should satisfy itself that the applicant has taken into account both functionality (including fitness for purpose and sustainability) and aesthetics (including its contribution to the quality of the area in which it would be located) as far as possible. Whilst the applicant may not have any or very limited choice in the physical appearance of some energy infrastructure, there may be opportunities for the applicant to demonstrate good design in terms of siting relative to existing landscape character, landform, and vegetation. Furthermore, the design and sensitive use of materials in any associated development such as electricity substations will assist in ensuring that such development contributes to the quality of the area.”

6.3.10 The design of offshore WTGs and other offshore infrastructure such as offshore substations (OSS) and meteorological masts have very limited scope in terms of physical appearance. However, consideration will be had with regard to the siting of turbines, for example by ensuring that the WTG placement avoids the areas of highest sensitivity.

6.3.11 For the onshore infrastructure, a key design choice made at the start of the Project was to install cables underground, rather than using overhead lines, to convey electricity from Landfall to the OnSS. Further consideration has been had when proposing laying of cables, identifying potential reinstatement measures and enhancements for the surrounding area.

6.3.12 The OnSS does lead to some significant visual effects (as assessed in Volume 1, Chapter 28: Landscape and Visual Assessment), but these have been minimised as far as practical during the site selection process. The OnSS will be located in an area where significant effects are not avoidable, and as such proposals for additional screening and planting are set out in the LEDPP and Design Principles Document, which would provide mitigation and enhancements to the local area and reduce the significance of effect in the long term and incrementally during the initial period of planting establishment.

6.3.13 Good design is being considered throughout the development of the Project and is incorporated into the site selection, project design evolution and set out in the mitigation proposals included in the PEIR. This demonstrates compliance with the tests set out in the Planning Act (2008) and the NPSs.

6.3.14 The principle of good design is incorporated within the design of the Project and forms part of the overall package of the benefits the Project delivers when considering the planning balance.

6.4 Marine Processes

6.4.1 This topic is discussed in full in Volume 1, Chapter 7: Marine Processes of the PEIR.

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-1

6.4.2 Table 6.7 sets out the relevant National Policy Statements from NPS EN-1 related Marine Processes and provides detail as to where they are addressed by the Project.

Table 6.7 National Policy Statements: NPS EN-1 related to Marine Processes

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-1 Policy: Paragraph 5.5.6	Where relevant, applicants should undertake coastal geomorphological and sediment transfer modelling to predict and understand impacts and help identify relevant mitigating or compensatory measures.	Predictions of change to physical processes that could arise from construction, operations and maintenance (O&M) and decommissioning of the Project are presented in Volume 1, Chapter 7: Marine Processes.
EN-1 Policy: Paragraph 5.5.7	<p>The ES should include an assessment of the effects on the coast. In particular, applicants should assess:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The impact of the Project on coastal processes and geomorphology, including by taking account of potential impacts from climate change. If the development will have an impact on coastal processes the applicant must demonstrate how the impacts will be managed to minimise adverse impacts on other parts of the coast; ▪ The implications of the proposed project on strategies for managing the coast as set out in Shoreline Management Plans (SMPs), any relevant Marine Plans and capital programmes for maintaining flood and coastal defences; 	<p>The impact of the proposed Project on coastal processes and geomorphology is considered in Volume 1, Chapter 7: Marine Processes of the PEIR for the construction, O&M and decommissioning phases. The implications of the proposed Project on strategies for managing the coast are considered in Volume 1, Chapter 7: Marine Processes.</p> <p>The effects of the proposed Project on marine ecology, biodiversity and protected sites are considered in Volume 1, Chapter 9: Benthic and Intertidal Ecology, Volume 1, Chapter 10: Fish and Shellfish Ecology, Volume 1, Chapter 11: Marine Mammals, Volume 1, Chapter 12: Offshore and Intertidal Ornithology and the draft RIAA (Document Reference 7.1).</p> <p>The effects of the proposed Project on maintaining coastal recreation sites and features are set out in Volume 1, Chapter 18: Infrastructure and Other Marine Users.</p> <p>The vulnerability of the Project to coastal change is considered in the context of landfall infrastructure in Volume 1, Chapter 7: Marine Processes.</p>

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The effects of the Project on marine ecology, biodiversity and protected sites; ▪ The effects of the Project on maintaining coastal recreation sites and features; and ▪ The vulnerability of the Project to coastal change, taking account of climate change, during the Project's operational life and any decommissioning period. 	
EN-1 Policy: Paragraph 5.5.7	The Applicant should be particularly careful to identify any effects of physical changes on the integrity and special features of MCZs, candidate SACs (cSACs), coastal SACs and candidate coastal SACs, coastal SPAs and potential Sites of Community Importance (SCIs) and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).	Designated nature conservation sites within the physical processes study area have been described in the Marine Processes Chapter for the array area and for the offshore ECC (see Volume 1, Chapter 7: Marine Processes). The predicted changes to physical processes have been considered in relation to indirect effects on other receptors elsewhere in the PEIR, in particular in Volume 1, Chapter 9: Benthic and Intertidal Ecology and within the draft RIAA (Document Reference 7.1).
EN-1 Policy: Section 4.8	The resilience of the Project to climate change (such as increased storminess) should be assessed in the Environmental Statement accompanying an application.	Potential changes in climate are described in Volume 1, Chapter 31: Climate Change and are considered alongside predicted changes.

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-3

6.4.3 Table 6.8 sets out the relevant National Policy Statements from NPS EN-3 related Marine Processes and provides detail as to where they are addressed by the Project.

Table 6.8 National Policy Statements: NPS EN-3 related to Marine Processes

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-3 Policy: Paragraph 2.6.81	<p>An assessment of the effects of installing cable across the intertidal zone should include information, where relevant, about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Any alternative landfall sites that have been 	Details regarding alternative landfall sites that have been considered during the design phase and an explanation for the final choice is provided in Volume 1, Chapter 4: Site Selection and Consideration of Alternatives.

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
	<p>considered by the applicant during the design phase and an explanation for the final choice;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Any alternative cable installation methods that have been considered by the applicant during the design phase and an explanation for the final choice; ▪ Potential loss of habitat; ▪ Disturbance during cable installation and removal (decommissioning); ▪ Increased suspended sediment loads in the intertidal zone during installation; and ▪ Predicted rates at which the intertidal zone might recover from temporary effects. 	<p>Assessment of the potential loss of habitat and disturbance during cable installation and removal, as well as expected rates of recovery, are set out in Volume 1, Chapter 9: Benthic and Intertidal Ecology and in the draft RIAA (Document Reference 7.1).</p> <p>Suspended sediment loads during installation will be assessed in Volume 1, Chapter 7: Marine Processes.</p> <p>Predictions of change to physical processes that could arise from the construction and O&M of the Project are presented in Volume 1, Chapter 7: Marine Processes.</p>
<p>EN-3 Policy: Paragraph 2.6.113</p>	<p>Where necessary, assessment of the effects on the subtidal environment should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Environmental appraisal of array and cable routes and installation methods; ▪ Habitat disturbance from construction vessels' extendible legs and anchors; ▪ Increased suspended sediment loads during construction; and ▪ Predicted rates at which the subtidal zone might recover from temporary effects. 	<p>Predictions of change to physical processes that could arise from the construction, O&M and decommissioning of the Project are presented in Volume 1, Chapter 7: Marine Processes.</p> <p>Assessment of the potential effects on subtidal ecology and disturbance during cable installation and removal, as well as expected rates of recovery, are set out in Volume 1, Chapter 9: Benthic and Intertidal Ecology.</p>
<p>EN-3 Policy: Paragraph 2.6.190</p>	<p>Assessment should be undertaken for all stages of the lifespan of the proposed windfarm in accordance</p>	<p>The impact of the proposed Project on coastal processes and geomorphology is considered in Volume 1, Chapter 7: Marine Processes and</p>

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
	with the appropriate policy for OWF EIAs.	addresses effects arising from the construction, operation and decommissioning phases.
EN-3 Policy: Paragraph 2.6.191 and 2.6.192	The Applicant should consult the Environment Agency, MMO and the MMO's advisors, Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas), on methods for assessment of impacts on physical processes.	Consultation has been undertaken through the scoping process and further consultation related to coastal processes and geomorphology is detailed in Volume 1, Chapter 7: Marine Processes. The Applicant is currently undertaking consultation via the Evidence Plan Process (EPP) on methods for assessment of impacts on physical processes with the relevant stakeholders including MMO and Cefas.
EN-3 Policy: Paragraph 2.6.192	Mitigation measures which the SoS should expect the applicants to have considered include the burying of cables to a necessary depth and using scour protection techniques around offshore structures to prevent scour effects around them. Applicants should consult the statutory consultees on appropriate mitigation.	Embedded mitigation relating to cable burial and scour are set out in Volume 2, Chapter 3.1: Cable Burial Risk Assessment (CBRA) (subject to this requirement being a condition of a Marine Licence). Use of scour protection and methods of cable protection are set out in the Project Description (offshore) as assessed throughout the Volume 1, Chapter 3: Project Description. Consultation has been undertaken through the scoping process and is ongoing with statutory consultees and other interested parties via the EPP and bilateral monthly meetings.
EN-3 Policy: Paragraph 2.6.193	Geotechnical investigations should form part of the assessment as this will enable the design of appropriate construction techniques to minimise any adverse effects.	Site specific geophysical and preliminary geotechnical data has informed the assessment and project design of the Project. Details are provided in Volume 1, Chapter 7: Marine Processes.
EN-3 Policy: Paragraph 2.6.194	The assessment should include predictions of the physical effect that will result from the construction and operation of the required infrastructure and include effects such as the scouring that may result from the Project.	Predictions of change to physical processes that could arise from the construction, operation and decommissioning phases of the Project are presented in the Volume 1, Chapter 7: Marine Processes.

Other Policy Considerations

6.4.4 No other policy considerations were identified for marine processes.

6.5 Marine Water Quality

6.5.1 This topic is assessed in Volume 1, Chapter 8: Marine Water and Sediment Quality of the PEIR. References to sections and tables within Section 6.5 refer to Volume 1, Chapter 8:

Marine Water and Sediment Quality.

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-1

6.5.2 Table 6.9 sets out the relevant National Policy Statements from NPS EN-1 related Marine Water Quality and provides detail as to where they are addressed by the Project.

Table 6.9 National Policy Statements: NPS EN-1 related to Marine Water Quality

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-1 Policy: Paragraph 5.15.3	<p>The ES should in particular describe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The existing quality of waters affected by the proposed project, and the impacts of the proposed project on water quality, noting any relevant existing discharges proposed new discharges and proposed changes to discharges. ▪ Existing physical characteristics of the water environment (including quantity and dynamics of flow) affected by the proposed project and any impact of physical modifications to these characteristics; and any impacts of the proposed project on waterbodies or protected areas under the Water Framework Directive (WFD). 	<p>A baseline of the existing water quality for the area which may be affected by the proposed activities is presented in Volume 1, Chapter 8: Marine Water and Sediment Quality. The impacts of the proposed activities on marine water quality are assessed in the PEIR Chapter. There will be no proposed changes or new discharges as a result of the Project. A full WFD assessment is presented in Volume 2, Appendix 8.1 which details the impacts on coastal and transitional waterbodies and protected areas under WFD. Potential changes to the physical environment, including hydrodynamics, waves and sediment pathways, are presented in Volume 1, Chapter 7: Marine Processes.</p>

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-3

6.5.3 Table 6.10 sets out the relevant National Policy Statements from NPS EN-3 related Marine Water Quality and provides detail as to where they are addressed by the Project.

Table 6.10 National Policy Statements: NPS EN-3 related to Marine Water Quality

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-3 Policy: Paragraph 5.15.2	<p>Where the Project is likely to have effects on the water environment, the applicant should undertake an assessment of the existing status of, and impacts of the proposed project on, water quality, water resources and physical characteristics of the water environment as part of the ES or equivalent.</p>	<p>Volume 1, Chapter 8: Marine Water and Sediment Quality presents an assessment of the Project on water quality. An assessment of the physical characteristics is presented in Volume 1, Chapter 7: Marine Processes.</p>

Other Policy Considerations

6.5.4 No other policy considerations were identified for marine water and sediment quality.

Considerations for the SoS

- 6.5.5 Paragraphs 5.15.2 to 5.15.3 of NPS EN-1 set out a series of principles that will be taken into account when reaching a decision on marine water quality. NPS EN-1 (paragraph 5.15.3) requires an assessment of the proposed project on water quality and considerations of the proposed project on waterbodies or protected areas under the WFD.
- 6.5.6 The assessment of Water Quality and Sediment Quality (Volume 1, Chapter 8: Marine Water and Sediment Quality) has had regard to the relevant requirements for assessment set out in NPS EN-1 and NPS EN-3 and been carried out in accordance with those requirements.
- 6.5.7 A full WFD assessment is presented in Volume 2, Appendix 8.1: Water Framework Directive which details the impacts on coastal and transitional waterbodies and protected areas under WFD.
- 6.5.8 The construction, operation and decommissioning of the Project will be undertaken in accordance with the relevant NPSs and other identified material planning policy matters.
- 6.5.9 The PEIR indicates that there are no anticipated significant effects and therefore effects on marine water and sediment quality should not weigh against the substantial benefits of the Project when considering the planning balance.

6.6 Benthic and Intertidal Ecology

- 6.6.1 This topic is assessed in Volume 1, Chapter 9: Benthic and Intertidal Ecology of the PEIR. References to sections and tables within Section 6.6 refer to Volume 1, Chapter 9: Benthic and Intertidal Ecology.

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-1

- 6.6.2 Table 6.11 sets out the relevant National Policy Statements from NPS EN-1 related Benthic and Intertidal Ecology and provides detail as to where they are addressed by the Project.

Table 6.11 National Policy Statements: NPS EN-1 related to Benthic and Intertidal Ecology

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-1 Policy: Paragraphs 5.3.10 and 5.3.11	SSSIs that are not incorporated within internationally designated sites should be provided with a high degree of protection. Where a proposed development within or outside a SSSI is likely to have an adverse effect on an SSSI (alone or together with other developments) development consent should not normally be granted. If after mitigation an adverse effect is still likely, then consent should only be given where the benefits (including need) for a development outweigh the impacts on the SSSI in question and also the wider SSSI network. SoS should use requirements and/ or	The Project site selection process has avoided direct interaction with all relevant SSSIs (Volume 1, Chapter 4: Site Selection and Alternatives).

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
	planning obligations to mitigate the harmful aspects of the development, and where possible, ensure the conservation of the site's biodiversity or geological interest.	
EN-1 Policy: Paragraph 5.3.12	The SoS is bound by the duties in relation to Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) imposed by sections 125 and 126 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009.	MCZs have been avoided through the Site Selection and Consideration of Alternatives process (Volume 1, Chapter 4: Site Selection and Alternatives) and an MCZ assessment has been carried out (Volume 2, Appendix 9.4: Marine Conservation Zone Assessment).

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-3

6.6.3 Table 6.12 sets out the relevant National Policy Statements from NPS EN-3 related Benthic and Intertidal Ecology and provides detail as to where they are addressed by the Project.

Table 6.12 National Policy Statements: NPS EN-3 related to Benthic and Intertidal Ecology

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-3 Policy: Paragraph 2.6.64	Applicants should assess the effects on the offshore ecology and biodiversity for all stages of the lifespan of the proposed OWF.	The potential effects on offshore ecology and biodiversity associated with the construction, operation and decommissioning phases of the Project have been assessed in Volume 1, Chapter 9: Benthic and Intertidal Ecology, Volume 1, Chapter 10: Fish and Shellfish Ecology, Volume 1, Chapter 11: Marine Mammals, Volume 1, Chapter 12: Offshore and Intertidal Ornithology and the draft RIAA (Document Reference 7.1).
EN-3 Policy: Paragraph 2.6.65	Consultation on the assessment methodologies should be undertaken at an early stage with the statutory consultees as appropriate.	Consultation has been undertaken through the scoping process and is ongoing with the relevant consultees through the EPP as outlined in Volume 1, Chapter 6: Consultation Process and in Volume 1, Chapter 9: Benthic and Intertidal Ecology.
EN-3 Policy: Paragraph 2.6.66	Any relevant data that has been collected as part of post-construction ecological monitoring from existing, operational OWFs should be referred to where appropriate.	Relevant data collected as part of post-construction monitoring from other OWFs has informed the assessment of the Project. The MMO has produced a review (MMO, 2012) of post-construction monitoring being undertaken for OWFs. This notes that there have been limited effects on benthic communities from certain impacts. Where appropriate

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
		Volume 1, Chapter 9: Benthic and Intertidal Ecology cross refers to those studies either individually or through reference to the MMO review.
EN-3 Policy: Paragraph 2.6.67	Applicants should assess the potential for the scheme to have both positive and negative effects on marine ecology and biodiversity.	The effects of the Project on marine ecology and biodiversity (both positive and negative) have been assessed in Volume 1, Chapter 9: Benthic and Intertidal Ecology, Volume 1, Chapter 10: Fish and Shellfish Ecology, Volume 1, Chapter 11: Marine Mammals, Volume 1, Chapter 11: Offshore and Intertidal Ornithology and the draft RIAA (Document Reference 7.1).
EN-3 Policy: Paragraphs 2.6.113 and 2.6.81	Applicants should assess the effects on the subtidal environment from habitat loss due to foundations and seabed preparation, predicted scour, scour protection and altered sedimentary processes and effects on the intertidal zone.	The assessment has considered effects from all development phases on benthic and intertidal habitats and species in the vicinity of the Project. These assessments included all likely effects from temporary and long-term habitat loss and the effects of changes in physical processes in Volume 1, Chapter 9: Benthic and Intertidal Ecology.
EN-3 Policy: Paragraphs 2.6.113 and 2.6.81	Applicants should assess the effects on the benthic environment from extendible legs and anchors of construction vessels and habitat disturbance in the intertidal zone during cable installation and removal (decommissioning).	The Project assessment has considered the effects of benthic and intertidal disturbances throughout the whole of the development in Volume 1, Chapter 9: Benthic and Intertidal Ecology. This makes specific reference to construction vessels and anchors and habitat disturbance within the intertidal zone.
EN-3 Policy: Paragraphs 2.6.113 and 2.6.81	Applicants should assess the effects of increased suspended sediment loads during construction on subtidal habitats and intertidal habitats.	Specific effects of increased suspended sediment load and the associated sediment deposition on benthic and intertidal ecology have been assessed with regards to the construction phase (Volume 1, Chapter 9: Benthic and Intertidal Ecology).
EN-3 Policy: Paragraphs 2.6.113 and 2.6.81	Applicants should assess the predicted rates for subtidal habitat recovery (NPS EN-3, paragraph 2.6.113) and intertidal habitats (NPS EN-3, paragraph 2.6.81).	The likely rates of recovery of benthic and intertidal habitats/species have been presented for each impact discussed, based on the available evidence on benthic habitat recovery which have been considered when assessing the significance of the effects. (Volume 1,

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-3 Policy: Paragraph 2.6.114	If it is proposed to install offshore cables to a depth of at least 1.5 metres below the seabed, the Applicant should not have to assess the effects of the cables on intertidal and subtidal habitat during the operational phase of the OWF.	Chapter 9: Benthic and Intertidal Ecology). The target burial depth below the long-term stable seabed level of 1 metre (but could be between up to 3 metres) is anticipated for the majority of the offshore ECC. The effects of Electromagnetic Fields (EMF) on benthic or intertidal receptors are assessed in (Volume 1, Chapter 9).

Other Policy Considerations

6.6.4 No other policy considerations were identified for Benthic and Intertidal Ecology.

Considerations for the SoS

6.6.5 Part 5.3 of NPS EN-1 sets out matters relevant to biodiversity and geological conservation at national level. It is recognised that:

‘Biodiversity is the variety of life in all its forms and encompasses all species of plants and animals and the complex ecosystems of which they are a part’.

6.6.6 It is recognised in NPS EN-1 that producing the energy required by the UK, significant infrastructure will be required, including large scale projects.

6.6.7 Part 4 of NPS EN-1 sets out a series of general principles that will be taken into account when reaching a decision. NPS EN-1 Paragraph 4.1.6 requires that the following matters relevant to benthic subtidal and intertidal ecology are taken into account when considering any proposed development:

‘The [SoS] must have regard to the MPS and applicable marine plans in taking any decision which relates to the exercise of any function capable of affecting the whole or any part of the UK marine area. In the event of a conflict between any of these marine planning documents and an NPS, the NPS prevails for purposes of [SoS] decision making given the national significance of the infrastructure’.

6.6.8 Paragraph 4.1.4 of NPS EN-1 states that, in reaching a decision, the SoS should have regard to:

“Environmental, social and economic benefits and adverse impacts, at national, regional and local levels”.

6.6.9 Paragraph 2.6.68 of NPS EN-3 sets out matters the SoS should have regard to in reaching a decision. The SoS should consider the effects of a proposal on marine ecology and biodiversity taking into account all relevant information made available to it. Paragraphs 2.6.84 to 2.6.87 and 2.6.115 to 2.6.118 of NPS EN-3 set out matters the SoS should have regard to when considering impacts on subtidal and intertidal environments.

6.6.10 Volume 1, Chapter 9: Benthic and Intertidal Ecology of the PEIR provides a summary of the potential environmental effects and identifies approaches to mitigation and proposed

monitoring during the construction, operation and decommissioning phases (Document 7.1).

- 6.6.11 The assessment of Benthic and Intertidal Ecology has had regard to the relevant requirements for assessment set out in NPS EN-1 and NPS EN-3 have been carried out in accordance with those requirements.
- 6.6.12 The construction, operation and decommissioning of the Project will be in accordance with the relevant NPSs and other identified material planning policy matters. The environmental information and assessment carried out for the Project demonstrate that there is no conflict with any of the conditions set out by the NPSs which would lead to a refusal of development consent on Benthic Subtidal and Intertidal Ecology grounds.
- 6.6.13 The findings of the PEIR and draft RIAA indicate that there are no anticipated significant effects with regards to the EIA Regulations and therefore demonstrates that effects on benthic, subtidal and intertidal ecology should not weigh against the substantial benefits of the Project when considering the planning balance.

6.7 Fish and Shellfish Ecology

6.7.1 This topic is assessed in full in Volume 1, Chapter 10: Fish and Shellfish Ecology of the PEIR.

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-1

6.7.2 Table 6.13 sets out the relevant National Policy Statements from NPS EN-1 related Fish and Shellfish Ecology and provides detail as to where they are addressed by the Project.

Table 6.13 National Policy Statements: NPS EN-1 related to Fish and Shellfish Ecology

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-1 Policy: Paragraph 5.3.12	Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) (Marine Protected Areas in Scotland) introduced under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 are areas that have been designated for the purpose of conserving marine flora and fauna, marine habitat or features of geological or geomorphological interest. The Secretary of State is bound by the duties in relation to MCZs imposed by Sections 125 and 126 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009.	One MCZ relevant to fish and shellfish was identified – Holderness Offshore MCZ. This is discussed in Volume 1 Chapter 10: Fish and Shellfish Ecology.

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-3

6.7.3 Table 6.14 sets out the relevant National Policy Statements from NPS EN-1 related to Fish and Shellfish Ecology and provides detail as to where they are addressed by the Project.

Table 6.14 National Policy Statements: NPS EN-3 related to Fish and Shellfish Ecology

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-3 Policy:	Assessment of offshore ecology and biodiversity should be undertaken by	The Project assessment (Volume 1, Chapter 10) considers effects on fish and

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
Paragraph 2.6.64	the applicant for all stages of the lifespan of the proposed OWF and in accordance with the appropriate policy for OWF EIAs.	shellfish receptors at all stages of the lifespan of the Project, including the construction, operation, and decommissioning phases.
EN-3 Policy: Paragraph 2.6.65	Consultation on the assessment methodologies should be undertaken at early stages with the statutory consultees as appropriate.	Consultation has been undertaken through the scoping process and further consultation is detailed in Volume 1, Chapter 10: Fish and Shellfish Ecology. The Applicant is also undertaking consultation via the EPP.
EN-3 Policy: Paragraph 2.6.66	Any relevant data that has been collected as part of post-construction ecological monitoring from existing, operational OWFs should be referred to where appropriate.	Relevant data collected as part of post-construction monitoring from Sheringham Shoal OWF has been referred to in Volume 1 Chapter 10: Fish and Shellfish Ecology. In addition, pre-construction survey data from other OWF projects including Triton Knoll OWF, Dudgeon OWF, Sheringham Shoal and Dudgeon OWF Extension Projects, Hornsea Project One, Hornsea Project Two, Hornsea Project Three and Hornsea Project Four has been referred to in Volume 1 Chapter 10: Fish and Shellfish Ecology).
EN-3 Policy: Paragraph 2.6.67	The assessment should include the potential of the scheme to have both positive and negative effects on marine ecology and biodiversity.	The assessment methodology includes the provision for assessment of both positive and negative effects (see Volume 1, Chapter 10: Fish and Shellfish Ecology).
EN-3 Policy: Paragraph 2.6.68	The SoS should consider the effects of a proposal on marine ecology and biodiversity taking into account all relevant information made available to it.	The effects of the Project on fish and shellfish ecology and biodiversity have been taken account in Volume 1, Chapter 10 and in the draft RIAA (Document Reference 7.1).
EN-3 Policy: Paragraph 2.6.69	The designation of an area as Natura 2000 site does not necessarily restrict the construction or operation of OWFs in or near that area (see also Section 4.3 of NPS EN-1).	Natura 2000 sites (now National Site Network sites) have been considered during the Project assessment, the conclusions of which are provided within the draft RIAA (Document Reference 7.1).
EN-3 Policy: Paragraph 2.6.70	Mitigation may be possible in the form of careful design of the development itself and the construction techniques employed.	Mitigation is being considered during the design and development of the Project (see Volume 1, Chapter 10 Fish and Shellfish Ecology).
EN-3 Policy:	Ecological monitoring is likely to be appropriate during the construction and operational phases to identify the actual	The requirement for fish and shellfish monitoring has been considered within the impact assessments in Volume 1,

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
Paragraph 2.6.71	impact itself so that, where appropriate, adverse effects can then be mitigated and to enable further useful information to be published relevant to future projects.	Chapter 10. In summary, no fish and shellfish monitoring for the construction, O&M or decommissioning phases of the Project is considered necessary at this stage.
EN-3 Policy: Paragraph 2.6.73	There is the potential for the construction and decommissioning phases, including activities occurring both above and below the seabed, to interact with seabed sediments and therefore have the potential to impact fish communities, migration routes, spawning activities and nursery areas of particular species. In addition, there are potential noise impacts, which could affect fish during construction and decommissioning and to a lesser extent during operation.	6.9.3 The potential effects on fish and shellfish ecology, including the assessment of impacts from underwater noise are presented within Volume 1, Chapter 10.
EN-3 Policy: Paragraph 2.6.74	The applicant should identify fish species that are the most likely receptors of impacts with respect to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Spawning grounds; ▪ Nursery grounds; ▪ Feeding grounds; ▪ Over-wintering areas for crustaceans; and ▪ Migration routes. 	Particular attention is given to impacts on fish and shellfish species at key life stages such as during spawning or on known nursery habitats (see Volume 1, Chapter 10: Fish and Shellfish Ecology).
EN-3 Policy: Paragraph 2.6.75	Where it is proposed that mitigation measures of the type set out in NPS EN-3 paragraph 2.6.76 below are applied to offshore export cables to reduce Electromagnetic Fields (EMF) the residual effects of EMF on sensitive species from cable infrastructure during operation are not likely to be significant. Once installed, operational EMF impacts are unlikely to be of sufficient range or strength to create a barrier to fish movement.	EMF effects on fish and shellfish are considered within Volume 1, Chapter 10.
EN-3 Policy: Paragraph 2.6.76	EMF during operation may be mitigated by use of armoured cable for inter-array and export cables which should be buried at a sufficient depth. Some research has shown that where cables are buried at depths greater than 1.5m	Mitigation of EMF through cable burial (and cable armouring, where appropriate) is considered within Volume 1, Chapter 10.

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
	below the seabed impacts are likely to be negligible. However, sufficient depth to mitigate impacts will depend on the geology of the seabed.	
EN-3 Policy: Paragraph 2.6.77	During construction, 24 hour working practices may be employed so that the overall construction programme and the potential for impacts to fish communities is reduced in overall time.	The Project can confirm that 24 hour working practices will be employed for offshore construction works (Volume 1, Chapter 3: Project Description).
EN-3 Policy: Paragraph 2.6.122	The construction and operation of offshore wind farms can have both positive and negative effects on fish and shellfish stocks.	The effects on fish and shellfish stocks from the construction and O&M of the Project have been assessed in Volume 1, Chapter 10. Impacts on commercial fisheries are assessed in Volume 1, Chapter 14: Commercial Fisheries.

Other Policy Considerations

6.7.4 No other policy considerations were identified for Fish and Shellfish Ecology.

Considerations for the SoS

6.7.5 Part 5.3 of NPS EN-1 sets out the policy for the SoS in relation to generic biodiversity impacts. Paragraphs 2.6.58 to 2.6.71 of NPS EN-3 sets out offshore wind-specific biodiversity policy. In addition, there are specific considerations set out in NPS EN-3 (paragraph 2.6.73) which apply to the effect of offshore wind energy infrastructure proposals on fish and shellfish as set out below:

‘There is potential for the construction and decommissioning phases, including activities occurring both above and below the seabed, to interact with seabed sediments and therefore have the potential to impact fish communities, migration routes, spawning activities and nursery areas of particular species. In addition, there are potential noise impacts, which could affect fish during construction and decommissioning and to a lesser extent during operation’.

6.7.6 It is recognised in NPS EN-1 that producing the energy required by the UK, significant infrastructure will be required, including large-scale projects.

6.7.7 Part 4 of NPS EN-1 sets out a series of general principles that will be taken into account when reaching a decision. NPS EN-1 paragraph 4.1.6 requires that the following matters relevant to fish and shellfish ecology are taken into account when considering any proposed development:

“The [SoS] must have regard to the MPS and applicable marine plans in taking any decision which relates to the exercise of any function capable of affecting the whole or any part of the UK marine area. In the event of a conflict between any of these marine planning documents and an NPS, the NPS prevails for purposes of [SoS] decision making given the national significance of the infrastructure”.

- 6.7.8 Paragraph 4.1.4 of NPS EN-1 states that, in reaching a decision, the SoS should have regard to:
“Environmental, social and economic benefits and adverse impacts, at national, regional and local levels”.
- 6.7.9 Paragraph 2.6.75 of NPS EN-3 sets out matters the SoS should have regard to in reaching a decision. Where it is proposed that mitigation measures are applied to offshore export cables to reduce EMF (e.g., armoured cabling and cable burial at sufficient depths) the residual effects of EMF on sensitive species from cable infrastructure during operation are not likely to be significant. Once installed, operational EMF impacts are unlikely to be of sufficient range or strength to create a barrier to fish movement.
- 6.7.10 Volume 1, Chapter 10: Fish and Shellfish Ecology provides a summary of the potential environmental effects and identifies approaches to mitigation and proposed monitoring during the construction phase, O&M phase, and decommissioning phase.
- 6.7.11 The assessment of Fish and Shellfish has had regard to the relevant requirements for assessment set out in EN-1 and EN-3 and been carried out in accordance with those requirements.
- 6.7.12 The construction, O&M and decommissioning of the Project will be in accordance with the relevant NPSs and other identified material planning policy matters. The findings of the PEIR and draft RIAA demonstrate that there is no conflict with any of the conditions set out by the NPSs which would lead to a refusal of development consent on fish and shellfish grounds.
- 6.7.13 The findings of the PEIR and draft RIAA indicate that there will be no significant effects with regards to the EIA Regulations and therefore the effects on fish and shellfish ecology should not weigh against the substantial benefits of the Project when considering the planning balance.

6.8 Marine Mammals

- 6.8.1 This topic is assessed in full in Volume 1, Chapter 11: Marine Mammals of the PEIR.

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-1

- 6.8.2 Table 6.15 sets out the relevant National Policy Statements from NPS EN-1 related to Marine Mammals and provides detail as to where they are addressed by the Project.

Table 6.15 National Policy Statements: NPS EN-1 related to Marine Mammals

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-1 Policy: Paragraph 5.4.3	Where the development is subject to EIA the applicant should ensure that the Environmental Statement (ES) clearly sets out any effects on internationally, nationally and locally designated sites of ecological or geological conservation importance, on protected species and on habitats and other species identified	The potential effects of the Project have been assessed in regard to international, national and local sites designated for ecological or geological features of conservation importance in Volume 1, Chapter 11. Direct or indirect effects on features of relevant Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Area (SPA) sites were also

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
	as being of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity.	considered in the Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Report and where relevant have been included in the draft RIAA (Document Reference 7.1). Important protected areas for marine mammals within their respective Management Units (Mus) are detailed in Volume 2, Appendix 11.1: Marine Mammals Technical Baseline.

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-3

6.8.3 Table 6.16 sets out the relevant National Policy Statements from NPS EN-3 related to Marine Mammals and provides detail as to where they are addressed by the Project.

Table 6.16 National Policy Statements: NPS EN-3 related to Marine Mammals

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-3 Policy: Paragraph 2.6.92	The assessment of the effects on marine mammals should include details of likely feeding areas; known birthing areas/haul-out sites; nursery grounds; known migration or commuting routes; duration of disturbing activity including cumulative/ in-combination effects; baseline noise levels; predicted noise levels in relation to mortality, permanent threshold shift (PTS) and temporary threshold shift (TTS); soft-start noise levels; and operational noise.	All of the specified marine mammal ecology details are included in Volume 1, Chapter 11: Marine Mammals. This assessment also considers the cumulative impacts of the Project and other relevant plans or projects.
EN-3 Policy: Paragraph 2.6.93	The Applicant should discuss any proposed piling activities with the relevant body. Where assessment shows that noise from offshore piling may reach noise levels likely to lead to an offence, the Applicant should look at possible alternatives or appropriate mitigation before applying for a European Protected Species (EPS) licence.	The consideration of the impacts of the noise from proposed piling activities and the relevant mitigation measures are detailed in Volume 1, Chapter 11: Marine Mammals and presented within the Outline Marine Mammal Mitigation Protocol (document 8.4). An Outline EPS licence will be prepared to support the application.

Other Policy Considerations

6.8.4 Table 6.17 sets out other policy considerations related to Marine Mammals and provides detail as to where they are addressed by the Project.

Table 6.17 Other Policy Considerations related to Marine Mammals

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
Habitats Directive	All cetaceans in Northern European waters are listed under Annex IV of the EU Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (the Habitats Directive) as EPS of Community Interest and in need of strict protection. The harbour porpoise, bottlenose dolphin, harbour seal and grey seal have protection under Annex II as species of Community Interest whose conservation requires the designation of SACs.	The potential impact to EPS (risk of injury or disturbance) is assessed in the draft RIAA (Document Reference 7.1).
ASCOBANS	Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic and North Seas (ASCOBANS) came into force in 1994. The aim of the Agreement is for member parties to cooperate to achieve and maintain Favourable Conservation Status for small cetaceans. ASCOBANS is applied in all UK waters in accordance with existing statutory protection for cetacean species.	The effect of all potential impacts on the conservation status of small cetaceans is assessed in Volume 1, Chapter 11.
Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD)	The overarching goal of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) is to achieve 'Good Environmental Status' (GES) by 2020 across Europe's marine environment. To this end, Annex I of the Directive identifies 11 high level qualitative descriptors for determining GES. Those descriptors particularly relevant to the marine mammal assessment for the Project are Descriptors 4) Elements of marine food webs, 6) Sea floor integrity, 8) Contaminants, and 11) Energy including underwater noise.	The descriptors for determining GES haven been addressed in Volume 1, Chapter 11.

Considerations for the SoS

- 6.8.5 Part 5.3 of NPS EN-1 sets out the policy for the SoS in relation to generic biodiversity impacts. Paragraphs 2.6.58 to 2.6.71 of NPS EN-3 sets out offshore wind-specific biodiversity policy. In addition, there are specific considerations from piling noise which apply to offshore wind energy infrastructure proposals with regard to marine mammals.

- 6.8.6 It is recognised in NPS EN-1 that producing the energy required by the UK, significant infrastructure will be required, including large scale projects.
- 6.8.7 Part 4 of NPS EN-1 sets out a series of general principles that will be taken into account when reaching a decision. NPS EN-1 paragraph 4.1.6 requires that the following matters relevant to marine mammals are taken into account when considering any proposed development:
- “The [SoS] must have regard to the MPS and applicable marine plans in taking any decision which relates to the exercise of any function capable of affecting the whole or any part of the UK marine area. In the event of a conflict between any of these marine planning documents and an NPS, the NPS prevails for purposes of [SoS] decision making given the national significance of the infrastructure”.*
- 6.8.8 Paragraph 4.1.4 of NPS EN-1 states that, in reaching a decision, the SoS should have regard to:
- “Environmental, social and economic benefits and adverse impacts, at national, regional and local levels”.*
- 6.8.9 Paragraph 2.6.94 to 2.6.96 of NPS EN-3 relate to the SoS’s decision-making, and sets out that:
- “The preferred methods of construction, in particular the construction method needed for the proposed foundations and the preferred foundation type, where known at the time of application, are designed so as to reasonably minimise significant disturbance effects on marine mammals. Unless suitable noise mitigation measures can be imposed by requirements to any development consent the [SoS] may refuse the application.*
- The conservation status of marine European Protected Species and deals are of relevance to the [SoS]. The [SoS] should take into account the views of relevant statutory advisors.*
- Fixed submerged structures such as foundations are likely to pose little collision risk for marine mammals and the [SoS] is not likely to have to refuse to grant consent for a development on the grounds that offshore windfarm foundations pose a collision risk to marine mammals”.*
- 6.8.10 Different foundation options have been considered for the Project. The maximum design scenario (MDS) is defined as those that represent the realistic MDS that have the potential to occur. These have been assessed and are presented in Volume 1, Chapter 11: Marine Mammals.
- 6.8.11 The conservation status of species is factored into the assessment of significance in Volume 1, Chapter 11: Marine Mammals.
- 6.8.12 Volume 1, Chapter 11: Marine Mammals provides a summary of the potential environmental effects and identifies approaches to mitigation and proposed monitoring during the construction phase, O&M phase, and decommissioning phase.
- 6.8.13 The assessment of marine mammals has had regard to the relevant requirements for assessment set out in NPS EN-1 and NPS EN-3 and has been carried out in accordance with those requirements.

- 6.8.14 The construction, O&M and decommissioning of the Project will be in accordance with the relevant NPSs and other identified material planning policy matters. The PEIR and draft RIAA (Document Reference 7.1) prepared for the Project indicates that there is no anticipated conflict with any of the conditions set out by the NPSs which would lead to a refusal of development consent on marine mammal grounds.
- 6.8.15 The PEIR and draft RIAA prepared for the Project indicate that there are no anticipated significant effects with regards to the EIA Regulations.
- 6.8.16 The PEIR indicates that there are no anticipated significant effects with regards to the EIA Regulations and therefore the effects on marine mammals should not weigh against the substantial benefits of the Project when considering the planning balance.

6.9 Offshore and Intertidal Ornithology

6.9.1 This topic is assessed in full in Volume 1, Chapter 12: Offshore and Intertidal Ornithology.

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-1

6.9.2 No specific policy requirements for offshore and intertidal ornithology have been identified in NPS EN-1.

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-3

6.9.3 Table 6.18 sets out the relevant National Policy Statements from NPS EN-3 related to offshore and intertidal ornithology and provides detail as to where they are addressed by the Project.

Table 6.18 National Policy Statements: NPS EN-3 related to Offshore and Intertidal Ornithology

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-3 Policy: Paragraphs 2.6.102-105	NPS EN-3 requires the EIA to include relevant data from other operational wind farms, consultation over surveys and Collision Risk Model (CRM).	The Applicant has consulted Natural England prior to and during the process of surveying and assessment. Details of consultation are provided in Volume 1, Chapter 12. The cumulative impact assessment presented in Volume 1, Chapter 12 refers to data from a significant number of other wind farms. The results of the CRM are presented in Volume 1, Chapter 12.

Other Policy Considerations

6.9.4 No other policy considerations were identified in relation to Offshore and Intertidal Ornithology.

Considerations for the SoS

- 6.9.5 Part 5.3 of EN-1 sets out the policy for the SoS in relation to generic biodiversity impacts. Paragraphs 2.6.58 to 2.6.71 of NPS EN-3 sets out offshore wind-specific biodiversity policy.
- 6.9.6 It is recognised in NPS EN-1 that producing the energy required by the UK, significant

infrastructure will be required, including large scale projects.

- 6.9.7 Part 4 of NPS EN-1 sets out a series of general principles that will be taken into account when reaching a decision. NPS EN-1 paragraph 4.1.6 requires that the following matters are taken into account when considering any proposed development:

‘The [SoS] must have regard to the MPS and applicable marine plans in taking any decision which relates to the exercise of any function capable of affecting the whole or any part of the UK marine area. In the event of a conflict between any of these marine planning documents and an NPS, the NPS prevails for purposes of [SoS] decision making given the national significance of the infrastructure’.

- 6.9.8 Paragraph 4.1.4 of NPS EN-1 states that, in reaching a decision, the SoS should have regard to:

“Environmental, social and economic benefits and adverse impacts, at national, regional and local levels”.

- 6.9.9 Paragraph 2.6.106 of NPS EN-3 relates to the SoS’s decision- making, and sets out that:

‘In addition to Section 5.3 of EN-1 the offshore wind-specific biodiversity considerations set out in paragraphs 2.6.58 to 2.6.71 above should inform [SoS] decision making’.

- 6.9.10 The requirements of the aforementioned paragraphs (specifically 2.6.68 to 2.6.71) have been assessed and are presented in Volume 1, Chapter 12: Offshore and Intertidal Ornithology. A summary is provided of the potential environmental effects and identifies approaches to mitigation and proposed monitoring during the construction phase, O&M phase, and decommissioning phase.

- 6.9.11 The assessment of Offshore Ornithology has had regard to the relevant requirements for assessment set out in NPS EN-1 and NPS EN-3 and been carried out in accordance with those requirements.

- 6.9.12 The construction, O&M and decommissioning of the Project will be in accordance with the relevant NPSs and other identified material planning policy matters.

6.10 Marine and Intertidal Archaeology

- 6.10.1 This topic is assessed in full in Volume 1, Chapter 13: Marine and Intertidal Archaeology.

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-1

- 6.10.2 Table 6.19 sets out the relevant National Policy Statements from NPS EN-1 related to marine and intertidal archaeology and provides detail as to where they are addressed by the Project.

Table 6.19 National Policy Statements: NPS EN-1 related to Marine and Intertidal Archaeology

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-1 Policy: Paragraph 5.8.9	Where a development site includes, or the available evidence suggests it has the potential to include, heritage assets with an archaeological interest, the	A desk-based assessment has been undertaken to assess the archaeological interest of offshore heritage interests and

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
	Applicant should carry out appropriate desk-based assessment and, where such desk-based research is insufficient to properly assess the interest, a field evaluation.	summarised in Volume 1, Chapter 13: Marine and Intertidal Archaeology.
EN-1 Policy: Paragraph 5.8.10	The Applicant should ensure that the extent of the impact of the Project on the significance of any heritage assets affected can be adequately understood from the application and supporting documents.	The significance of the offshore heritage assets and the extent of the impact of the Project is assessed in Volume 1, Chapter 13: Marine and Intertidal Archaeology and Volume 2, Appendix 13.1 Marine and Intertidal Archaeology Technical Report.

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-3

6.10.3 Table 6.20 sets out the relevant National Policy Statements from NPS EN-3 related to marine and intertidal archaeology and provides detail as to where they are addressed by the Project.

Table 6.20 National Policy Statements: NPS EN-3 related to Marine and Intertidal Archaeology

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-3 Policy: Section 2.6.32	[The Inspectorate] will need to be satisfied that the foundations will not have an unacceptable adverse effect on marine heritage assets.	In order to address potential adverse effects, mitigation measures have been designed to protect any marine archaeological receptors of interest. With the implementation of the mitigation measures all effects should be reduced to minor negative significance or minor to moderate beneficial significance (see Volume 1, Chapter 13: Marine and Intertidal Archaeology).
EN-3 Policy: Section 2.6.139	Heritage assets can be affected by OWF development in two principal ways: from the direct effect of the physical siting of the development itself and from indirect changes to the physical marine environment.	These potential effects have been assessed in Volume 1, Chapter 13: Marine and Intertidal Archaeology and Volume 2, Appendix 13.1: Marine and Intertidal Archaeology Technical Report.
EN-3 Policy: Section 2.6.140	Consultation with relevant statutory consultees including Historic England (formerly English Heritage) should be undertaken by the applicants at an early stage of the development.	Consultation has been undertaken through the scoping process and further consultation is detailed in Volume 1, Chapter 13: Marine and Intertidal Archaeology. The Applicant is also undertaking ongoing consultation via the EPP.
EN-3 Policy: Section 2.6.141	Assessment should be undertaken as set out in Section 5.8 of NPS EN-1. Desk-based studies should take into account any geotechnical or geophysical surveys	An archaeological assessment of geophysical survey data was undertaken, and the results are summarised in

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
	that have been undertaken to aid the windfarm design.	Volume 1, Chapter 13: Marine and Intertidal Archaeology.
EN-3 Policy: Section 2.6.142	Assessment should include the identification of any beneficial effects on the historic marine environment, for example through improved access or the contribution to new knowledge that arises from investigation.	Beneficial effects have been identified in Volume 1, Chapter 13: Marine and Intertidal Archaeology.
EN-3 Policy: Section 2.6.143	Where elements of an application (whether offshore or onshore) interact with features of historic maritime significance that are located onshore, the effects should be assessed in accordance with the policy at Section 5.8 in NPS EN-1.	The onshore and offshore archaeological resources have been cross-referenced and technical reports have been shared between archaeological contractors (see Volume 1, Chapter 13: Marine and Intertidal Archaeology and Volume 1, Chapter 20: Onshore Archaeology and Cultural Heritage).
EN-3 Policy: Section 2.6.144	[The Inspectorate] should be satisfied that OWFs and associated infrastructure have been designed sensitively taking into account known heritage assets and their status (for example designated features).	In order to address potential adverse effects, mitigation measures have been designed to protect any marine archaeological receptors of interest. With the implementation of the mitigation measures all effects should be reduced to minor negative significance or minor to moderate beneficial significance (see Volume 1, Chapter 13: Marine and Intertidal Archaeology).
EN-3 Policy: Section 2.6.145	Avoidance of important heritage assets, including archaeological sites and historic wrecks, is the most effective form of protection and can be achieved through the implementation of an archaeological exclusion zone (AEZ) around such heritage assets which preclude development activities within their boundaries.	Avoidance, where possible, will be achieved through the recommendation of AEZs, as outlined in the mitigation measures (see Volume 1, Chapter 13: Marine and Intertidal Archaeology). The AEZs have been designed to protect any marine archaeological receptors of interest. Consultation on any AEZs will be undertaken through the EPP.
EN-3 Policy: Section 2.6.146	Where requested by applicants, [the Inspectorate] should consider granting consents that allow for micro-siting to be undertaken within a specified tolerance. This allows changing to be made to the precise location of infrastructure during the construction phase so that account can be taken of unforeseen circumstances such as the	Micro-siting is recommended in the mitigation measures that have been designed to protect any marine archaeological receptors of interest. Volume 1, Chapter 13 provides information about micro-siting, and provides information about the Offshore Renewables Protocol for Archaeological Discoveries (ORPAD), to manage unexpected discoveries.

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
	discovery of marine archaeological remains.	

Other Policy Considerations

6.10.4 Table 6.21 sets out other policy considerations related to marine and intertidal archaeology and provides detail as to where they are addressed by the Project.

Table 6.21 Other Policy Considerations related to Marine and Intertidal Archaeology

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
Protection of Wrecks Act 1973: Section One and Two	This Act allows the SoS to designate a restricted area around a wreck to prevent uncontrolled interference.	There are no identified protected wrecks within the study area. Any wrecks which may be protected prior to the construction of the Project will be appropriately considered in the development of the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) (Document Reference 8.5). The mitigation measures have been designed to protect any marine archaeological receptors of interest (see Volume 1, Chapter 13: Marine and Intertidal Archaeology).
Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 (as amended)	Under this Act, the SoS for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) can schedule any site which appears to be of national importance because of its historic, architectural traditional, artistic or archaeological interest. Additional controls are placed upon works affecting Scheduled Monuments and Areas of Archaeological Importance under the Act.	There are no Scheduled Monuments or designated Areas of Archaeological Importance within the study area (see Volume 1, Chapter 13: Marine and Intertidal Archaeology).
Protection of Military Remains Act 1986	This Act provides protection for designated military vessels and for all aircraft that crashed while in military service. The Act provides two types of protection: Protected Places (wrecks designated by name even if the location is not known) and Controlled Sites (sites designated by location). It is illegal to disturb or remove anything from sites. For Controlled Sites, it is illegal to conduct any operations (including diving or excavation) within the Controlled Site unless	There are no aircraft crash sites within the study area (see Volume 1, Chapter 13: Marine and Intertidal Archaeology). Any aircraft crash sites which may occur prior to the construction of the Project will be appropriately considered in the development of the WSI (Document Reference 8.5).

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
	licensed to do so by the Ministry of Defence.	
Merchant Shipping Act 1995	This Act sets out the procedures for determining ownership of underwater finds that turn out to be 'wreck', including ship, aircraft, hovercraft, parts of these, their cargo or equipment. Any recovered material must be reported to the Receiver of Wreck.	<p>The mitigation measures outlined in Volume 1, Chapter 13: Marine and Intertidal Archaeology have been designed to protect any marine archaeological receptors of interest. AEZs are recommended around known features of anthropogenic origin of archaeological interest and historic records of archaeological material.</p> <p>Any discoveries of unexpected material will be reported through the Offshore Renewables Protocol for Archaeological Discoveries (ORPAD) and reported to the Receiver of Wreck. See Volume 1, Chapter 13 for more details.</p>

Consideration for the SoS

- 6.10.5 Part 5.8 of NPS EN-1 sets out matters relevant to the Historic Environment at national level. It is recognised that:
- 'The construction, operation and decommissioning of energy infrastructure has the potential to result in adverse impacts on the historic environment'.*
- 6.10.6 It is recognised in NPS EN-1 that producing the energy required by the UK, significant infrastructure will be required, including large scale projects.
- 6.10.7 Part 4 of NPS EN-1 sets out a series of general principles that will be taken into account when reaching a decision. NPS EN-1 paragraph 4.1.3 requires that the following matters relevant to the Historic Environment are taken into account when considering any proposed development:
- "Potential adverse impacts, including long-term and cumulative adverse impacts, as well as any measures to avoid, reduce or compensate for any adverse impacts".*
- 6.10.8 Paragraph 4.1.4 of NPS EN-1 states that, in reaching a decision, the SoS should have regard to
- "Environmental, social and economic benefits and adverse impacts, at national, regional and local levels".*
- 6.10.9 NPS EN-1 paragraphs 5.8.11 to 5.8.18 set out matters the SoS should have regard to in reaching a decision, including proposed mitigation, specifically in respect of matters relating to the Historic Environment. It is confirmed that the SoS should seek to identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by the Project, including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset taking account, inter alia,

of:

- Evidence provided with the application;
- Any designation records;
- The Historic Environment Record, and similar sources of information;
- The heritage assets themselves;
- The outcome of consultations with interested parties; and
- Where appropriate and when the need to understand the significance of the heritage asset demands it, expert advice.

6.10.10 Specifically, with regard to Offshore Archaeology and Cultural Heritage, NPS EN-3 requires that the SoS should be satisfied that the Project is being designed sensitively taking into account known heritage assets and their status, including features like protected wrecks (2.6.144 of EN-3).

6.10.11 Volume 1, Chapter 13: Marine and Intertidal Archaeology provides a summary of the potential environmental effects and identifies approaches to mitigation and proposed monitoring during the construction phase, O&M phase, and decommissioning phase.

6.10.12 The assessment of Volume 1, Chapter 13: Marine and Intertidal Archaeology has had regard to the relevant requirements for assessment set out in EN-1 and EN-3 and been carried out in accordance with those requirements.

6.10.13 The construction, O&M and decommissioning of the Project will be in accordance with the relevant NPSs and other identified material planning policy matters.

6.10.14 The PEIR prepared for the Project indicates that there are no anticipated significant adverse effects on offshore archaeology.

6.11 Commercial Fisheries

6.11.1 This topic is assessed in full in Volume 1, Chapter 14: Commercial Fisheries.

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-1

6.11.2 No relevant policy requirements for commercial fisheries have been identified in NPS EN-1.

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-3

6.11.3 Table 6.22 sets out the relevant National Policy Statements from NPS EN-3 related commercial fisheries and provides detail as to where they are addressed by the Project.

Table 6.22 National Policy Statements: NPS EN-3 related to Commercial Fisheries

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-3 Policy: Section 2.6.121-123	Whilst the footprint of the OWF and any associated infrastructure may be a hindrance to certain types of commercial fishing activity such as trawling and longlining, other fishing activities may be able to take	This is addressed in Volume 1, Chapter 14: Commercial Fisheries with regards impacts during the construction and O&M phases of the Project.

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
	<p>place within operational OWFs without unduly disrupting or compromising navigational safety. Consequently, the establishment of a windfarm can increase the potential for some fishing activities, such as potting, where this would not compromise any advisory safety area in place. The [SoS] should consider adverse or beneficial impacts on different types of commercial fishing activity.</p>	
<p>EN-3 Policy: Section 2.6.124</p>	<p>In some circumstances, transboundary issues may be a consideration as fishermen from other countries may fish in waters within which OWFs are sited.</p>	<p>Transboundary commercial fisheries issues are assessed within Volume 1, Chapter 14. The potential transboundary impact of constraints on foreign commercial fishing activities is concluded to be of minor significance and is therefore considered to be not significant in EIA terms.</p>
<p>EN-3 Policy: Section 2.6.127</p>	<p>Early consultation should be undertaken with statutory advisors and with representatives of the fishing industry which could include discussion of impact assessment methodologies. Where any part of the proposal involves a grid connection to shore, appropriate inshore fisheries groups should also be consulted.</p>	<p>Discussions with fisheries groups and representatives commenced at an early stage of the Project, through Scoping and is ongoing. Consultation has been undertaken at a scale that seeks to capture fishing activity in the region, including in and around the Project. Consultation is detailed in Volume 1, Chapter 14: Commercial Fisheries.</p>
<p>EN-3 Policy: Section 2.6.129</p>	<p>The assessment by the Applicant should include detailed surveys of the effects on fish stocks of commercial interest and any potential reduction in such stocks, as well as likely constraints on fishing activity within the Project's boundaries. Robust baseline data should have been collected and studies conducted as part of the assessment.</p>	<p>Robust baseline datasets analysed include EU and UK statistics and surveillance data, and published reports. In addition, consultation with the fishing industry has identified key concerns as well as available data and potential impacts, which have been taken into account within the commercial fisheries assessment. Relevant surveys and data used to inform the assessment are detailed in Volume 1, Chapter 10: Fish and Shellfish Ecology, Volume 1, Chapter 14: Commercial Fisheries and Volume 2, Appendix 14.1: Commercial Fisheries Technical Baseline.</p>

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-3 Policy: Section 2.6.126, 2.6.130 & 2.6.131	In some circumstances, applicants may seek declaration of safety zones around wind turbines and other infrastructure, although these might not be applied until after consent to the windfarm has been granted. The declaration of a safety zone excludes or restricts activities within the defined sea areas including commercial fishing. Where there is a possibility that advisory safety areas will be sought around offshore infrastructure, potential effects should be included in the assessment on commercial fishing. Where the precise extent of potential advisory safety areas is unknown, a realistic worst-case scenario should be assessed. Applicants should consult the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) regarding the exclusion of certain types of fishing.	<p>The Applicant will apply for safety zones post-consent. Safety zones of up to 500m will be sought during construction, maintenance and decommissioning phases, as described in both the maximum design scenario and embedded environmental measures.</p> <p>The need for safety zones has been considered by the navigational risk assessment (NRA) completed for the Project. The risk assessment results have been taken into account within the commercial fisheries assessment (Volume 1, Chapter 14) and consultation has also been undertaken with the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) (see Volume 1, Chapter 15: Shipping and Navigation).</p>
EN-3 Policy: Section 2.6.131	The assessment by the Applicant should include detailed surveys of the effects on fish stocks of commercial interest and the potential reduction or increase in such stocks that will result from the presence of the windfarm development and the implementation of any advisory safety areas.	The Project assessment considers the effects on commercial fish stocks in Volume 1, Chapter 10: Fish and Shellfish Ecology.

Other Policy Considerations

6.11.4 Table 6.23 sets out other policy considerations related commercial fisheries and provides detail as to where they are addressed by the Project.

Table 6.23 Other Policy Considerations related to Commercial Fisheries

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
Marine Policy Statement	The UK MPS explicitly expresses support for the fishing sector, and with regard to displacement, advocates 'seeking solutions such as co-location of activity wherever possible'. MPS paragraphs 2.2.1,	A Fisheries Liaison and Coexistence Plan will be produced and consulted upon which sets out the measures for communication and coexistence during construction and O&M phases of the Project.

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
	3.8.10 and 2.3.1.5 stipulate that the process of marine planning should 'enable the co-existence of compatible activities wherever possible' and supports the reduction of real and potential conflict as well as maximising compatibility and encouraging co-existence of activities.	
East Inshore and East Offshore Marine Plan (Defra, 2014) Policy FISH1	Within areas of fishing activity, proposals should demonstrate in order of preference: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ a) that they will not prevent fishing activities on, or access to, fishing grounds ▪ b) how, if there are adverse impacts on the ability to undertake fishing activities or access to fishing grounds, they will minimise them ▪ c) how, if the adverse impacts cannot be minimised, they will be mitigated ▪ d) the case for proceeding with their proposal if it is not possible to minimise or mitigate the adverse impacts 	The extent to which the Project impacts on recognised and important fishing grounds has been considered and consultation with fishing stakeholders in order to fully understand any potential impacts has been undertaken. The results of the assessment and a range of commitments to mitigation are presented within Volume 1, Chapter 14: Commercial Fisheries.

Considerations for the SoS

- 6.11.5 Paragraphs 2.6.132 and 2.6.133 of NPS EN-3 sets out the policy for the SoS's decision making in relation to Commercial Fisheries.
- 6.11.6 It is recognised in NPS EN-1 that producing the energy required by the UK, significant infrastructure will be required, including large scale projects.
- 6.11.7 Part 4 of NPS EN-1 sets out a series of general principles that will be taken in account when reaching a decision. Paragraph 4.1.2 requires that:
- "The [SoS] should start with a presumption in favour of granting consent to applications for energy NSIPs".*
- 6.11.8 Paragraph 4.1.4 of NPS EN-1 states that, in reaching a decision, the SoS should have regard to
- "Environmental, social and economic benefits and adverse impacts, at national, regional and local levels".*

6.11.9 Paragraph 2.6.132 relates to the SoS's decision making, and sets out that:

“The [SoS] should be satisfied that the site selection process has been undertaken in a way that reasonably minimises adverse impacts on fish stocks, including during peak spawning periods and the activity of fishing itself. The [SoS] should consider the extent to which the Project occupies any recognised important fishing grounds and whether the Project would prevent or significantly impede protection of sustainable Commercial Fisheries or fishing activities”.

6.11.10 Paragraph 2.6.33 states that:

“The [SoS] should be satisfied that the applicant has sought to design the proposal having consulted representatives of the fishing industry with the intention of minimising the loss of fishing opportunity taking into account effects on other marine interests”.

6.11.11 The effects arising from the Project have been and will be discussed with statutory bodies during pre- and post-application consultation. The Project is taking, and will continue to take, steps to minimise the effects upon the fishing industry in the area through appropriate mitigation where required. Designed-in measures related to commercial fisheries will be adopted as part of the Project are provided in Volume 1, Chapter 14: Commercial Fisheries.

6.11.12 Volume 1, Chapter 14: Commercial Fisheries also provides a summary of the potential environmental effects during the construction phase, O&M phase, and decommissioning phase.

6.11.13 The assessment of Commercial Fisheries has had regard to the relevant requirements for assessment set out in EN-1 and EN-3 and been carried out in accordance with those requirements.

6.11.14 The construction, O&M and decommissioning of the Project will be in accordance with the relevant NPSs and other identified material planning policy matters. The environmental information and assessment carried out for the Project demonstrate that there is no conflict with any of the conditions set out by the NPSs which would lead to a refusal of development consent on commercial fisheries grounds.

6.11.15 The PEIR prepared for the Project indicates that there are no anticipated significant effects with regards to the EIA Regulations.

6.11.16 Whilst isolated moderate significance impacts on the potting fleet have been identified, this effect will be mitigated through the agreed fisheries coexistence and liaison plan, which it is concluded will reduce the impact to minor and not significant with regards the EIA Regulations.

6.12 Shipping and Navigation

6.12.1 This topic is assessed in Volume 1, Chapter 15: Shipping and Navigation.

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-1

6.12.2 No specific policy requirements for shipping and navigation have been identified in NPS EN-1.

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-3

6.12.3 Table 6.24 sets out the relevant National Policy Statements from NPS EN-3 related to shipping and navigation and provides detail as to where they are addressed by the Project.

Table 6.24 National Policy Statements: NPS EN-3 related to Shipping and Navigation

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-3 Policy: Section 2.6.153	Stakeholders in the navigation sector should be engaged in the early stages of the development phase and this should continue throughout construction, O&M and decommissioning.	Consultation has been undertaken through the scoping process and further consultation is detailed in Volume 1, Chapter 15: Shipping and Navigation. Discussions are ongoing with the MCA and Trinity Light House Service (TLHS).
EN-3 Policy: Section 2.6.154	Consultation should be undertaken with the MMO, MCA, relevant General Lighthouse Authority (GLA), relevant industry bodies and representatives of recreational users.	Consultation has been undertaken through the scoping process and further consultation is detailed in Volume 1, Chapter 15: Shipping and Navigation. Discussions are ongoing with the MCA and TLHS.
EN-3 Policy: Section 2.6.155	NPS EN-3 paragraph 2.6.155 states that information on internationally recognised sea lanes should be considered prior to undertaking assessments.	Internationally recognised sea lanes, other identified routes and navigational features such as IMO routing measures are considered a key element of the shipping and navigation baseline. The methodology for baseline data gathering and baseline conditions are outlined in Volume 1, Chapter 15: Shipping and Navigation.
EN-3 Policy: Section 2.6.156	Applicants should undertake a Navigational Risk Assessment (NRA) in accordance with relevant Government guidance prepared in consultation with the MCA and the other navigation stakeholders listed above.	The NRA is considered a key input to the shipping and navigation impact assessment including compliance with MCA guidance documents. The NRA is provided in Volume 5, Appendix 9.1 and its methodology was agreed during consultation with the MCA and Trinity House.
EN-3 Policy: Section 2.6.158	Where there is a possibility that safety zones will be sought around offshore infrastructure, potential effects should be included in the assessment on navigation and shipping.	The effectiveness of safety zones is discussed within Volume 1, Chapter 15 and a Safety Zone Statement will be submitted alongside the DCO application.
EN-3 Policy: Section 2.6.160	The potential effect on recreational craft, such as yachts, should be considered in any assessment.	Small craft including recreational vessels are considered a relevant receptor to shipping and navigation. The impact

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
		assessment (which includes consideration of recreational vessels in transit) is provided in Volume 1, Chapter 15: Shipping and Navigation.

Other Policy Considerations

6.12.4 Table 6.25 sets out other policy considerations related to shipping and navigation and provides detail as to where they are addressed by the Project.

Table 6.25 Other Policy Considerations related to Shipping and Navigation

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
Ports NPS Paragraph 5.14.2	Where the Project is likely to have socio-economic impacts at local or regional levels, the Applicant should undertake and include in their application an assessment of these impacts as part of the ES.	Impacts on port access and vessel routeing have been assessed from a navigational safety perspective in the construction phase, the operational phase and the decommissioning phase (see Volume 1, Chapter 15: Shipping and Navigation).
Ports NPS Paragraph 5.14.2	Applicants should describe the existing socio-economic conditions in the areas surrounding the Project and should also refer to how the development's socio-economic impacts correlate with local planning policies.	Socioeconomic impacts are assessed separately in Volume 1, Chapter 29: Socio-Economic Characteristics. The conclusions drawn are that there is no anticipated significant adverse effect associated with the proposed Project on vessel routing, either in the context of routes to ports or the wider regional economy.
MGN 654 Guidance on UK Navigational Practice, Safety and Emergency Response Issues	This Marine Guidance Note (MGN) highlights issues to be considered when assessing the impact on navigational safety and emergency response, caused by offshore renewable energy installations (OREI), including traffic surveys, consultation, structure layout, collision avoidance, impacts on communications/ radar/ positioning systems and hydrography.	Consultation that has been undertaken, an overview of traffic surveys and analysis, and assessment of impacts on shipping and navigation are detailed in Volume 1, Chapter 15: Shipping and Navigation.
Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) Methodology for Assessing Marine Navigational	The DECC document provides a template for preparing navigational risk assessment (NRA) for OWFs.	This guidance document has been used for drafting the NRA, which is provided as an appendix to the PEIR (Volume 2, Appendix 15.1).

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
Safety Risks of Offshore Wind Farms		
International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities (IALA AISM) 0-139 the Marking of Man-Made Offshore Structures:	Guidance to national authorities on the marking of offshore structures including windfarms.	Lighting and marking will be agreed with Trinity House in advance of construction and will be IALA G1162 compliant. This is detailed in Volume 1, Chapter 15: Shipping and Navigation.
International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Formal Safety Assessment	Process for undertaking marine navigation risk assessments.	The IMO Formal Safety Assessment (FSA) methodology (IMO, 2018) has been applied for assessing effects on shipping and navigation receptors including application of the As Low As Reasonably Practicable (ALARP) principle to ensure risks are within tolerable levels. The methodology for assessment is detailed in Volume 1, Chapter 15: Shipping and Navigation. This guidance document has been used for drafting the NRA, which is provided as an appendix to the PEIR (see Volume 2, Appendix 15.1).

Consideration for the SoS

- 6.12.5 Part 5.8 of NPS EN-1 sets out matters relevant to shipping and navigation at a national level. It is recognised in NPS EN-1 that producing the energy required by the UK, significant infrastructure will be required, including large-scale projects.
- 6.12.6 NPS EN-3 contains more specific guidance, relevant to the SoS's decision-making process with regard to shipping and navigation.
- 6.12.7 Volume 1, Chapter 15: Shipping and Navigation Chapter provides a summary of the potential environmental effects and identifies approaches to mitigation and proposed monitoring during the construction phase, O&M phase, and decommissioning phase.
- 6.12.8 The assessment of Shipping and Navigation has had regard to the relevant requirements for assessment set out in EN-1 and EN-3 and been carried out in accordance with those requirements.
- 6.12.9 The construction, O&M and decommissioning of the Project will be in accordance with the relevant NPSs and other identified material planning policy matters.

6.12.10 The PEIR prepared for the Project indicates that there are no anticipated significant effects with regards to the EIA Regulations, therefore effects on shipping and navigation should not weigh against the substantial benefits of the Project when considering the planning balance.

6.13 Aviation, Radar, and Military and Communication

6.13.1 This topic is assessed in detail in Volume 1, Chapter 16: Aviation, Radar, and Military and Communication.

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-1

6.13.2 Table 6.26 sets out the relevant National Policy Statements from NPS EN-1 related to Aviation, Radar, and Military and Communication and provides detail as to where they are addressed by the Project.

Table 6.26 National Policy Statements: NPS EN-1 related to Aviation, Radar, and Military and Communication

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-1 Policy: Paragraphs 5.4.10 to 5.4.13	<p>Informs that if the Project could have an effect on civil and military aviation then the assessment should be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consult the Ministry of Defence (MoD), the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and NATS and any aerodrome – licensed or otherwise – likely to be affected by the Project in preparing an assessment of the proposal on aviation or other defence interests. ▪ Any assessment of aviation or other defence interests should include potential impacts of the Project upon the operation of Communication, Navigation and Surveillance (CNS) infrastructure, flight patterns (both civil and military), other defence assets and aerodrome operational procedures. ▪ Assess the cumulative effects of the Project with other relevant projects in 	<p>Consultation has been undertaken through the scoping process and further consultation is detailed in Volume 1, Chapter 16: Aviation, Radar, and Military and Communication. The assessment of civil and military aviation flight patterns and infrastructure and cumulative effects are also provided in the chapter.</p>

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-1 Policy: Paragraph 5.4.15	<p>relation to aviation and defence.</p> <p>Informs that if there are conflicts between the Government’s energy and transport policies and military interests in relation to the application, the decision maker should expect the relevant parties to have made appropriate efforts to work together to identify realistic and pragmatic solutions to the conflicts. In so doing, the parties should seek to protect the aims and interests of the other parties as far as possible.</p>	<p>Potential mitigation for impacts on military radars is discussed in Volume 1, Chapter 16: Aviation, Radar, and Military and Communication. Engagement with the MOD will continue throughout the DCO pre-application phase.</p>
EN-1 Policy: Paragraph 5.4.16	<p>Advises that there are statutory requirements concerning the fitting of lighting to tall structures. Where lighting is requested on a structure that goes beyond statutory requirements by any of the relevant aviation and defence consultees, the decision maker should satisfy itself of the necessity of such lighting taking into account the case put forward by the consultees. The effect of such lighting on the landscape and ecology may be a relevant consideration.</p>	<p>Marking and lighting requirements are discussed in Volume 1, Chapter 16: Aviation, Radar, and Military and Communication.</p>
EN-1 Policy: Paragraph 5.4.17	<p>Informs that where, after reasonable mitigation, operational changes, obligations and requirements have been proposed, the decision maker considers that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A development would prevent a licensed aerodrome from maintaining its licence; ▪ The benefits of the Project are outweighed by the harm to aerodromes serving business, training or emergency service needs, taking into account the relevant importance and 	<p>The Project has the potential to generate clutter on radar displays and thus have an effect on the safe and efficient provision of enroute air traffic control services for civil aviation. However, mitigation options are available and outlined in Volume 1, Chapter 16: Aviation, Radar, and Military and Communication. Once mitigation has been implemented, there will be no significant effects on any of the stated infrastructure or services.</p>

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
	<p>needs for such aviation infrastructure;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The development would significantly impede or compromise the safe and effective use of defence assets or significantly limit military training; or ▪ The development would have an impact on the safe and efficient provision of enroute air traffic control services for civil aviation, in particular through an adverse effect on the infrastructure required to support communications, navigation or surveillance systems then consent should not be granted. 	

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-3

6.13.3 Table 6.27 sets out the relevant National Policy Statements from NPS EN-3 related to Aviation, Radar, and Military and Communication and provides detail as to where they are addressed by the Project.

Table 6.27 National Policy Statements: NPS EN-3 related to Aviation, Radar, and Military and Communication

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-3 Policy: Paragraph 2.6.187-188	<p>Informs that detailed discussions between the applicant for the OWF and the relevant consultees should have progressed as far as reasonably possible prior to the submission of an application to the decision maker. As such, appropriate mitigation should be included in any application to the decision maker, and ideally agreed between relevant parties.</p>	<p>Further engagement with NATS, the MOD and other relevant aviation stakeholders will continue throughout the EIA process in order to agree appropriate mitigations prior to application submission. Consultation to date is recorded in Volume 1, Chapter 16: Aviation, Radar, and Military and Communication.</p>
EN-3 Policy: Paragraph 2.6.107	<p>Indicates that aviation and navigation lighting should be minimised to avoid attracting birds, taking into account impacts on safety.</p>	<p>Proposed lighting is discussed in Volume 1, Chapter 16: Aviation, Radar, and Military and Communication. In accordance with ANO Article 223, lighting intensity will be reduced at and below the horizontal and further reduced when</p>

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
		visibility in all directions from every WTG is more than 5km.

Other Policy Considerations

6.13.4 Table 6.28 sets out other policy considerations related to Aviation, Radar, and Military and Communication and provides detail as to where they are addressed by the Project.

Table 6.28 Other Policy Considerations related to Aviation, Radar, and Military and Communication

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
Air Navigation Order (ANO) 2016/765 (2022)	<p>Article 222 details the requirements for the lighting of enroute obstacles that are 150 metres (m) or more above ground level.</p> <p>Article 223 modifies the requirements of Article 222 with respect to WTGs in UK territorial waters of 60m or more above the level of the sea at the highest astronomical tide.</p>	Lighting is addressed in Volume 1, Chapter 16: Aviation, Radar, and Military and Communication.

Considerations for the SoS

- 6.13.5 Paragraphs 5.4.14 to 5.4.21 of EN-1 set out matters the SoS will need to be satisfied that the effects on civil and military aerodromes, aviation technical sites and other defence interests have been addressed by the applicant and any necessary assessment of the proposal on aviation or defence interests is carried out, along with any relevant mitigation.
- 6.13.6 The Applicant has consulted all relevant aviation and communications stakeholders as part of the EIA process and taken those responses into consideration in preparation of the application, along with all relevant legislation and guidance.
- 6.13.7 Aviation lighting requirements are outlined in Volume 1, Chapter 3: Project Description as well as in Volume 1, Chapter 17: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. Lighting requirements will satisfy the requirements of CAP 393 (Article 223).
- 6.13.8 Paragraph 5.4.17 of NPS EN-1 requires that:
- 6.13.9 Where, after reasonable mitigation, operational changes, obligations, and requirements have been proposed, the [SoS] considers that:
- *“A development would prevent a licensed aerodrome from maintaining its licence;*
 - *The benefits of the Project are outweighed by the harm to aerodromes serving business, training, or emergency service needs;*
 - *The development would significantly impede or compromise the safe and effective use of defence assets or significantly limit military training; or*
 - *The development would have an impact on the safe and efficient provision of en route air traffic control services for civil aviation; consent should not be granted.”*

6.13.10 The Project is being sited to minimise conflicts with aviation, military and communication receptors. In cases where conflict is being highlighted by early consultation, the Applicant has, where appropriate, proposed mitigation measures to reduce or negate impacts. Embedded and additional mitigation measures for aviation, military and communication receptors are presented in Volume 1, Chapter 16.

6.13.11 NPS EN-1 paragraph 5.4.18 states that:

“Where a proposed energy infrastructure development would significantly impede or compromise the safe and effective use of civil or military aviation or defence assets and/ or significantly limit military training, the [SoS] may consider the use of ‘Grampian’, or other forms of condition which relate to the use of future technological solutions to mitigate impacts”.

6.13.12 Paragraph 5.4.19 then requires that:

“Mitigation for infringement of Obstacle Limitation Surfaces (OLS) may include:

- *Amendments to layout or scale of infrastructure;*
- *Changes to operational procedures of the aerodromes in accordance with relevant guidance; and*
- *Installation of obstacle lighting and/ or by notification in Aeronautical Information Service publications.*

6.13.13 For CNS infrastructure, the UK military Low Flying system (including Tactical Training Areas and designated air traffic routes), mitigation may also include:

- Lighting;
- Operational airspace changes; and
- Upgrading of existing CNS infrastructure.

6.13.14 The assessment of aviation and radar has had regard to the relevant requirements for assessment set out in EN-1 and EN-3 and is being carried out in accordance with those requirements.

6.13.15 The construction, O&M and decommissioning of the Project will be carried out in accordance with the relevant NPSs and other identified material planning policy matters. The PEIR prepared for the Project demonstrates that there is no anticipated conflict with any of the conditions set out by the NPSs.

6.13.16 The PEIR also indicates that radar impacts can be successfully mitigated and as such should not weigh against the substantial benefits of the Project.

6.14 Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (SLVIA)

6.14.1 This topic is assessed in detail in Volume 1, Chapter 17: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-1

6.14.2 Table 6.29 sets out the relevant National Policy Statements from NPS EN-1 related to Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (SLVIA) and provides detail as to where they are addressed by the Project.

Table 6.29 National Policy Statements: NPS EN-1 related to Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (SLVIA)

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-1 Policy: Paragraph 5.9.5	<p>The Applicant should carry out a landscape and visual assessment. This policy makes reference to the following documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2002, 2nd edition): Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment; and ▪ Land Use Consultants (2002): Landscape Character Assessment – Guidance for England and Scotland. 	<p>The Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA) (2002, 2nd edition) have been superseded by GLVIA Version 3 (GLVIA3). The SLVIA is being prepared following the more recent GLVIA3 as described in Volume 1, Chapter 17 and associated Appendix in Volume 2. Chapter 7.1. Landscape Character Assessment guidance (2002) has also been superseded by Natural England (2014) guidance ‘An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment’.</p>
EN-1 Policy: Paragraph 5.9.5	<p>The landscape and visual assessment should include reference to any landscape character assessment and associated studies as a means of assessing landscape impacts relevant to the proposed project. The applicant’s assessment should also take account of any relevant policies based on these assessments in local development documents in England.</p>	<p>The SLVIA is being carried out with reference to published Landscape Character Assessments (LCAs). LCAs and local plan policies for the study area are referred to in Volume 1, Chapter 17: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.</p>
EN-1 Policy: Paragraph 5.9.6	<p>The Applicant’s assessment should include the effects during construction of the Project and the effects of the completed development and its operation on landscape components and landscape character.</p>	<p>The effect on landscape components and landscape character during construction and O&M are assessed in Volume 1, Chapter 17: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. The Planning Inspectorate has agreed that construction effects within the array area can be scoped out of the SLVIA.</p>
EN-1 Policy: Paragraph 5.9.7	<p>The assessment should include the visibility and conspicuousness of the Project during construction and of the presence and operation of the Project and potential impacts on views and</p>	<p>The visual effects of the Project during construction and O&M are assessed in Volume 1, Chapter 17: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.</p>

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
	visual amenity. This should include light pollution effects, including on local amenity, and nature conservation.	
EN-1 Policy: Paragraph 5.9.8	Landscape effects depend on the existing character of the local landscape, its current quality, how highly it is valued and its capacity to accommodate change. All of these factors need to be considered in judging the impact of a project on landscape. Virtually all nationally significant energy infrastructure projects will have effects on the landscape. Projects need to be designed carefully, taking account of the potential impact on the landscape. Having regard to siting, operational and other relevant constraints the aim should be to minimise harm to the landscape, providing reasonable mitigation where possible and appropriate.	The quality, value and capacity of the landscape to accommodate change are considerations of the landscape assessment. The design of the Project is considering the potential impact on seascape, landscape and visual receptors, in order to minimise harm by mitigation of landscape effects as presented in Volume 1, Chapter 17: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. Adverse landscape and visual effects would be minimised through embedded environmental measures.
EN-1 Policy: Paragraph 5.9.12-13	The duty to have regard to the purposes of nationally designated areas also applies when considering applications for projects outside the boundaries of these areas which may have impacts within them. The aim should be to avoid compromising the purposes of designation and such projects should be designed sensitively given the various siting, operational, and other relevant constraints. Paragraph 5.9.13 advises: <i>"The fact that a proposed project will be visible from within a designated area should not in itself be a reason for refusing consent".</i>	The potential for the offshore elements of the Project to affect the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB, Norfolk Coast AONB and Registered Parks and Gardens (RPG), has been considered in Volume 1, Chapter 17: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.
EN-1 Policy: Paragraph 5.9.14	Outside nationally designated areas, there are local landscapes that may be highly valued locally and protected by local designation. Where a local development document has policies based on landscape character	The value of the local landscape is a consideration within the SLVIA and is informed by local landscape designations identified in local development plan documents. Effects on landscape character are addressed

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
	assessment, these should be paid particular attention. However, local landscape designations should not be used in themselves to refuse consent, as this may unduly restrict acceptable development.	in Volume 1, Chapter 17: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.
EN-1 Policy: Paragraph 5.9.15 & 5.9.16	The scale of such projects means that they will often be visible within many miles of the site of the proposed infrastructure. The [SoS] should judge whether any adverse impact on the landscape would be so damaging that it is not offset by the benefits (including need) of the Project. The [SoS] should consider whether the Project is being designed carefully, taking account of environmental effects on the landscape and siting, operational and other relevant constraints, to minimise harm to the landscape, including by reasonable mitigation.	Volume 1, Chapter 4: Site Selection and Consideration of Alternatives of the PEIR sets out the iterative process that has influenced, and will continue to influence, the design of the Project. The mitigation of landscape and visual effects is being carefully considered in the SLVIA, to minimise ‘harm to the landscape’ or seascape where possible. Whilst it is not possible to reduce individual WTG parameters, or to entirely avoid landscape impacts, the impacts have been minimised as far as practicable whilst maintaining an economically viable project, and providing meaningful contribution to the UK climate targets and the associated benefits which are imperative.
EN-1 Policy: Paragraph 5.9.17	The IPC [now the Planning Inspectorate and the Secretary of State] should consider whether the project has been designed carefully, taking account of environmental effects on the landscape and siting, operational and other relevant constraints, to minimise harm to the landscape, including by reasonable mitigation.	Volume 1, Chapter 4: Site Selection and Consideration of Alternatives sets out the iterative process that has influenced the design of the Project. The mitigation of seascape, landscape and visual effects has been carefully considered in the SLVIA in Volume 1, Chapter 17: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, to minimise ‘harm to the landscape’ where possible.
EN-1 Policy: Paragraph 5.9.21	Reducing the scale of a project can help to mitigate the visual and landscape effects of a proposed project. However, reducing the scale or otherwise amending the design of a proposed energy infrastructure project may result in a significant operational constraint and reduction	The iterative design process will reduce the offshore array from 500 to 300km ² .

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
	<p>in function – for example, the electricity generation output. There may, however, be exceptional circumstances, where mitigation could have a very significant benefit and warrant a small reduction in function. In these circumstances, the [SoS] may decide that the benefits of the mitigation to reduce the landscape and/or visual effects outweigh the marginal loss of function. Similarly, paragraph 2.6.210 of EN-3 advises:</p> <p><i>"Neither the design nor scale of individual WTGs can be changed without significantly affecting the electricity generating output of the WTGs. Therefore, the [SoS] should expect it to be unlikely that mitigation in the form of reduction in scale will be feasible. However, the layout of the WTGs should be designed appropriately to minimise harm, taking into account other constraints such as ecological effects, safety reasons or engineering and design parameters".</i></p>	
<p>EN-1 Policy: Paragraph 5.9.22</p>	<p>Within a defined site, adverse landscape and visual effects may be minimised through appropriate siting of infrastructure within that site, design including colours and materials, and landscaping schemes, depending on the size and type of the proposed project. Materials and designs of buildings should always be given careful consideration.</p>	<p>Adverse landscape and visual effects are minimised through embedded environmental measures set out in Volume 1, Chapter 17: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. The role of the site selection process in minimising landscape and visual effects is presented in Volume 1, Chapter 4: Site Selection and Consideration of Alternatives. Choice of colours and materials follows the substation design principles (see Volume 2, Appendix 3.3: Onshore Substation Design Principles) and as set out in Volume 1, Chapter 3: Project Description.</p>

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-3

6.14.3 Table 6.30 sets out the relevant National Policy Statements from NPS EN-3 related to Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (SLVIA) and provides detail as to where they are addressed by the Project.

Table 6.30 National Policy Statements: NPS EN-3 related to Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (SLVIA)

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-3 Policy: Section 2.4.2	Proposals for renewable energy infrastructure should demonstrate good design in respect of landscape and visual amenity, and in the design of the project to mitigate impacts such as noise and effects on ecology.	The Project has been designed to address potential seascape, landscape and visual effects. Embedded environmental measures that address seascape, landscape and visual effects are presented in Volume 1, Chapter 17: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.
EN-3 Policy: Section 2.6.199	Seascape is a discrete area within which there is shared inter-visibility between land and sea. (Definition taken from Appendix 3 of DTI (2005) Guidance on the Assessment of the Impact of Offshore Wind Farms: Seascape and Visual Impact Report). In some circumstances it may be necessary to carry out a seascape and visual impact assessment (SVIA) in accordance with the relevant OWF EIA policy.	The effect of the Project on seascape character is assessed in Volume 1, Chapter 17: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. The definitions of seascape have been more recently defined in Seascape Character Assessment guidance published by Natural England (Natural England, 2012).
EN-3 Policy: Section 2.6.200	The seascape is an important resource and an economic asset. Coastal landscapes are often recognised through statutory landscape designations.	The effect of the Project on statutory landscape designations such as AONBs and conservation areas more broadly is assessed in Volume 1, Chapter 17: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.
EN-3 Policy: Section 2.6.202	Where a proposed OWF will be visible from the shore, an SVIA should be undertaken which is proportionate to the scale of the potential impacts. Impact on seascape should be addressed in addition to the landscape and visual effects discussed in EN-1.	The visibility of the Project from the shore and impacts on seascape are addressed in Volume 1, Chapter 17. The scope of the SLVIA assessment, MDSs, and preferred boundary for assessment was determined in consultation with the SLVIA technical group as part of the EPP.
EN-3 Policy: Section 2.6.203	Where necessary, assessment of the seascape should include an assessment of three principal	The effect of the Project on seascape character, including the three principal considerations outlined above, is assessed in Volume 1, Chapter 17:

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
	<p>considerations on the likely effect of OWFs on the coast:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ limit of visual perception from the coast; ▪ individual characteristics of the coast which affect its capacity to absorb a development; and ▪ how people perceive and interact with the seascape. 	Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.
EN-3 Policy: Section 2.6.204	As part of the SLVIA, photomontages are likely to be required. Viewpoints to be used for the SLVIA should be selected in consultation with the statutory consultees at the EIA Scoping stage.	Photomontages and wirelines of the Project are provided in Volume 2, Appendix 17.2. Viewpoints are being agreed in consultation with statutory consultees as described in Volume 1, Chapter 17: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. Wireline visualisations are included in Appendix 17.2. Requirements for photomontages will be discussed and agreed with statutory consultees as part of future consultation.
EN-3 Policy: Section 2.6.205	Magnitude of change to both the identified seascape receptors (such as seascape units and designated landscapes) and visual receptors (such as viewpoints) should be assessed in accordance with the standard methodology for SVIA.	The methodology for the assessment of magnitude of change to seascape receptors, designated landscapes and visual receptors is set out in Volume 1, Chapter 17: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.

Other Policy Considerations

6.14.4 Table 6.31 sets out other policy considerations related to Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (SLVIA) and provides detail as to where they are addressed by the Project.

Table 6.31 Other Policy Considerations related to Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (SLVIA)

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949	This Act Places a duty on public bodies i.e., “relevant authorities” including for example the Councils, statutory undertakers and in the context of the Development Consent Order (DCO), the Secretary of State (SoS), to have regard to the	<p>The LVIA includes consideration of effects on landscape character including landscape designations.</p> <p>The potential effects of the onshore ECC and OnSS on the Lincolnshire Wolds</p>

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
	<p>purposes for which Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty are designated. In relation to the Norfolk Coast and Lincolnshire Wolds this includes conserving and enhancing natural beauty.</p>	<p>AONB is considered in Volume 1, Chapter 28: Landscape and Visual Assessment.</p>
<p>Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW)</p>	<p>Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW) amended the provisions relating to AONBs. Section 82(1) of CRoW defines an AONB in England as:</p> <p><i>“An area that is not in a National Park, but which appears to Natural England to be of such outstanding natural beauty that it is desirable that the protective provisions of Part IV of The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 should apply to it for the purpose of conserving and enhancing the area’s natural beauty”.</i></p> <p>The UK Government current online Guidance on AONBs confirms with regard to the above legislation that: “An area of outstanding natural beauty (AONB) is land protected by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW Act). It protects the land to conserve and enhance its natural beauty”.</p>	<p>The LVIA includes consideration of effects on landscape character including landscape designations.</p> <p>The potential effects of the onshore ECC and OnSS on the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB is considered in Volume 1, Chapter 28: Landscape and Visual Assessment.</p>
<p>UK Marine Planning Policy Statement</p>	<p>Provides the UK’s framework for preparing marine plans.</p> <p>UK MPS Paragraph 2.6.5.3</p> <p><i>“In considering the impact of an activity or development on seascape, the marine plan authority should take into account existing character and quality, how highly it is valued and its capacity to accommodate change specific to any development. Landscape Character assessment methodology may be an aid to this process.”</i></p>	<p>These aspects of the seascape, landscape and visual resource are considered in the assessment of the impacts in Volume 1, Chapter 28: Landscape and Visual Assessment.</p>

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
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East Riding Local Plan 2012 – 2029 Strategy Document (Adopted April 2016)

6.14.5 Table 6.32 sets out relevant policies from the East Riding Local Plan related to Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (SLVIA) and provides detail as to where they are addressed by the Project.

Table 6.32 East Riding Local Plan 2012 – 2029 policies related to Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (SLVIA)

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
Policy EC5 - Supporting the Energy Sector	Sets out criteria applicable to new energy related development. It identifies that new development should be acceptable in terms of [inter alia] cumulative effects with other developments, the character and sensitivity of landscapes to accommodate such development, with particular emphasis placed on identified Important Landscape Areas, and visual impacts. Relevant to the Project, Important Landscape Areas include the Heritage Coast at Spurn Head.	The potential effects of the Project on landscape character are addressed in Volume 1, Chapter 28: Landscape and Visual Assessment.
Policy ENV1: Integrating High Quality Design	Set out criteria for the design of new development. Whilst this policy is focussed on proposals such as residential development, elements of Part A are applicable to the Project: 6.14.6 1. Contribute to safeguarding and respecting the diverse character and appearance of the area through their design, layout, construction and use; and 6.14.7 2. Seek to reduce carbon emissions and make prudent and efficient use of natural resources, particularly land, energy and water.	Volume 1, Chapter 3: Project Description and Volume 1, Chapter 4: Site Selection and Consideration of Alternatives set out how the project addresses climate change, benefits to society and solves multiple design/environmental factors to secure environmental and socio-economic benefits. Design principles, particularly in relation to the Offshore Reactive Compensation Platforms will be considered through the design process as part of the preparation of the ES.

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
Policy ENV2: Promoting a high-quality landscape	<p>This policy states that <i>“Development proposals should be sensitively integrated into the existing landscape, demonstrate an understanding of the intrinsic qualities of the landscape setting and, where possible, seek to make the most of the opportunities to protect and enhance landscape characteristics and features.”</i></p> <p>The policy includes a number of criteria to achieve this, the most relevant to the Project being: Protect and enhance views across valued landscape features, including flood meadows, chalk grassland, lowland heath, mudflats and salt marsh, sand dunes and chalk cliffs; and Protect and enhance the undeveloped coast.</p> <p>The policy goes on to state that <i>“proposals should protect and enhance existing landscape character as described in the East Riding Landscape Character Assessment”.</i></p> <p>It places an emphasis on the Important Landscape Areas as shown on the Policies Map, which include the Heritage Coast designation Spurn Head.</p>	<p>The potential effects of the Project on landscape character are addressed in Volume 1, Chapter 28: Landscape and Visual Assessment.</p>

East Lindsey Local Plan, Core Strategy, Adopted 2018

- 6.14.8 Table 6.33 sets out relevant policies from the East Lindsey Local Plan related to Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (SLVIA) and provides detail as to where they are addressed by the Project.
- 6.14.9 The Vision and Objectives for East Lindsey includes [inter alia] reference to:
“a high-quality environment that makes the most of its special qualities, particularly the coast, the Lincolnshire Wolds and the historic market towns”.

Table 6.33 East Lindsey Local Plan, Core Strategy, Adopted 2018 policies related to Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (SLVIA)

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
Strategic Policy 23 (SP23) – Landscape	Sets out provision for the protection, enhancement, use and management of the landscape within the District. It identifies that development will be guided by the District’s Landscape Character Assessment and places an emphasis on landscapes that are considered to be highly sensitive.	<p>The potential effects of the Project on landscape character are addressed in Volume 1, Chapter 28: Landscape and Visual Assessment.</p> <p>The Lincolnshire Wolds AONB is a statutorily protected landscape, recognised by Government to be of the highest value. The offshore elements of the Project will be visible within the setting of the LWAONB and may influence its distinctive character. The likely impacts of the Project on the perceived landscape and seascape character, and special qualities of the Lincolnshire Wolds, are addressed in Volume 1, Chapter 28: Landscape and Visual Assessment.</p>
Strategic Policy 27 (SP27) Renewable and Low Carbon Energy	This establishes support for large scale renewable and low carbon energy development, providing the individual or cumulative impacts of such development are considered acceptable (weighted against the benefits) in relation to [inter alia] “the surrounding landscape, townscape and historic landscape character, and visual qualities”.	The potential effects of the Project on landscape character are addressed in in section 27.8 of Volume 1, Chapter 28: Landscape and Visual Assessment.

North Norfolk Local Development Framework, Core Strategy, Adopted Sept 2008

6.14.10 Table 6.34 sets out relevant policies from the North Norfolk Local Development Framework related to Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (SLVIA) and provides detail as to where they are addressed by the Project.

Table 6.34 North Norfolk Local Development Framework, Core Strategy, Adopted Sept 2008 policies related to Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (SLVIA)

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
Core Aim 3	Defines the need to <i>“protect the built and natural environment and local distinctive identity of North Norfolk and enable people’s enjoyment of this resource”</i> .	The potential effects of the Project on landscape character are addressed in Volume 1, Chapter 28: Landscape and Visual Assessment.

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
Policy SS 4 Environment	Sets out that <i>“renewable energy proposals will be supported where impacts on amenity, wildlife and landscape are acceptable”</i> .	
Policy EN 1 Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and The Broads	Sets out that the individual and cumulative effects of the development proposals will be carefully assessed. It places a clear emphasis on protecting the AONB and its special qualities.	The Norfolk Coast AONB is a statutorily protected landscape, recognised by Government to be of the highest value. The offshore elements of the Project will be visible within the setting of the Norfolk Coast AONB and may influence its distinctive character. The likely impacts of the Project on the perceived landscape and seascape character, and special qualities of the Norfolk Coast, are addressed in Volume 1, Chapter 28: Landscape and Visual Assessment.
Policy EN 2 Protection and Enhancement of Landscape and Settlement Character	Provides broader protection of the landscape, identifying the need to take account of the North Norfolk Landscape Character Assessment.	In line with policies EN2, EN4 and EN7, the potential effects of the Project on landscape character are addressed in Volume 1, Chapter 28: Landscape and Visual Assessment.
Policy EN 4 Design	This sets out a number of criteria associated with the design of the Project. Whilst this policy is focussed on terrestrial development, the overarching principles relating to local distinctiveness and the protection of the character and quality of an area are broadly applicable.	
Policy EN 7 Renewable Energy	This includes points that are specific to potential landscape and visual effects. It also sets out that large scale renewable energy proposals would not be permitted in areas of national importance, unless it can be demonstrated that that objectives of the designation are not compromised.	

North Norfolk Local Plan 2016 – 2036 Proposed Submission Version (Regulation 19 Publication) Local Plan, January 2022

6.14.11 Table 6.35 sets out relevant policies from the North Norfolk Local Plan 2016 – 2036 Proposed Submission Version related to Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (SLVIA) and provides detail as to where they are addressed by the Project.

Table 6.35 North Norfolk Local Plan 2016 – 2036 Proposed Submission Version policies related to Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (SLVIA)

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
Objective 2	Protecting Character includes reference to the protection, conservation and enhancement of the natural environment. It also sets out the need to protect, enhance and maintain the unique qualities and character of the District.	The potential effects of the Project on landscape character are addressed in Volume 1, Chapter 28: Landscape and Visual Assessment.
Policy CC 1	Delivering Climate Resilient Sustainable Growth sets out broad criteria for sustainable development with part 1, point h specifically relating to the conservation and enhancement of landscape character.	
Policy CC2	Renewable and Low Carbon Energy is specific to the terrestrial elements of renewable energy development, including the landward infrastructure for offshore developments. The criteria set out in this policy include consideration of the potential landscape and visual effects of such developments.	
Policies ENV 1 Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and The Broads, ENV 2 Protection and Enhancement of Landscape and Settlement	These policies largely reflect the corresponding policies in the Adopted Local Plan, placing an emphasis on the protection, conservation and enhancement of the landscape. The policies include references to the qualities and characteristics of the landscape and the published landscape character assessment.	The Norfolk Coast AONB is a statutorily protected landscape, recognised by Government to be of the highest value. The offshore elements of the Project will be visible within the setting of the Norfolk Coast AONB and may influence its distinctive character. The likely impacts of the Project on the perceived landscape and seascape character, and special qualities of the Norfolk Coast AONB, are addressed in Volume 1, Chapter 28: Landscape and Visual Assessment.

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
Character and ENV 3 Heritage & Undeveloped Coast		

Consideration for the SoS

6.14.12 Paragraphs 5.9.8 to 5.9.20 of NPS EN-1 sets out a series of principles that will be taken into account when reaching a decision. Paragraph 5.9.8 of NPS EN- 1 advises:

"Landscape effects depend on the existing character of the local landscape, its current quality, how highly it is valued and its capacity to accommodate change. All of these factors need to be considered in judging the impact of a project on landscape. Virtually all nationally significant energy infrastructure projects will have effects on the landscape. Projects need to be designed carefully, taking account of the potential impact on the landscape. Having regard to siting, operational and other relevant constraints the aim should be to minimise harm to the landscape, providing reasonable mitigation where possible and appropriate".

6.14.13 Volume 1, Chapter 28: Landscape and Visual Assessment a summary of the potential effects during the construction, O&M and decommissioning phases of the Project, and summarises embedded mitigation. The cumulative effects assessment is also presented in this Chapter.

6.14.14 The design of the offshore WTG array will take into account the potential impact on the landscape in order to minimise harm by mitigation of landscape effects. During development, the Project will seek to refine the array area to reduce the westerly spread of the Project in views from coastline.

6.14.15 The SLVIA has found that the introduction of the array to the seascape/ landscape would not result in the key characteristics of the surrounding area being affected to such a degree that it would become a 'windfarm seascape' (in addition to or in combination with other operational or consented windfarms). This is an important distinction as it implies that the carrying capacity – as defined by its inherent landscape character – would not be exceeded by the array (in combination with other operational or consented OWFs).

6.14.16 NPS EN-1 (Paragraph 5.9.9) considers the potential effects of development on nationally designated landscapes, such as AONBs, National Parks and the Broads.

6.14.17 NPS EN-1 recognises that each of these designated landscape types have a specific statutory purpose, and that the SoS should have regard to that in decision making. In such areas, NPS EN-1 requires that the conservation of the natural beauty of the landscape and countryside should be given substantial weight by the SoS in deciding on applications for development consent. The Project is being assessed as having no significant SLVIA effects on designated landscapes, and that the SoS should have regard to that in decision making.

6.14.18 NPS EN-1 notes that Projects should be designed carefully, taking account of environmental effects on the landscape and siting, O&M and maintenance and other relevant constraints, to minimise the harm to the landscape by reasonable mitigation (5.9.17). Volume 1, Chapter 28: Landscape and Visual Assessment outlines how the Project complies with this requirement. As stated above, design changes will be undertaken to minimise the effects of

the Project.

- 6.14.19 NPS EN-1 (5.9.18) states that all proposed energy infrastructure is likely to have visual effects for many receptors around proposed sites. The [SoS] will have to judge whether the visual effects on sensitive receptors, such as local residents, and other receptors, such as visitors to the local area, outweigh the benefits of the Project. Coastal areas are particularly vulnerable to visual intrusion because of the potential high visibility of development on the foreshore, on the skyline and affecting views along stretches of undeveloped coast.
- 6.14.20 In response to this, the potential effects of the temporary and permanent elements of the Project on the Landscape and Seascape are assessed within the PEIR. No significant effects have been identified in the context of a seascape characterised in part by existing offshore wind infrastructure, and in a region in which consultation has not demonstrated there to be significant concern or opposition amongst residential receptors.
- 6.14.21 NPS EN-3 requires applicants to undertake a SLVIA if the OWF will be visible from the shore. The SLVIA considers the effects of the offshore components of the Project as a result of changes to the seascape/ landscape as an environmental resource in its own right, as well as on people's views and visual amenity. The assessment considers potential effects within a 60km radius study area (the area that the tips of the WTGs are theoretically visible from) and uses a combination of seascape/ landscape character assessment, and computerised visual representations from a variety of sensitive viewpoints within the ZTV through a site-specific survey to assess the potential effects. A full description of the assessment can be found within Volume 1, Chapter 28: Landscape and Visual Assessment.
- 6.14.22 The cumulative impact upon seascape character, historic seascape character and visual receptors during the construction, O&M, and decommissioning phases of the Project is presented in Volume 1, Chapter 28: Landscape and Visual Assessment. The assessment identified that the visual effects arising from additional cumulative changes, as a result of the array in combination with the cumulative projects will not be significant.
- 6.14.23 The assessment of Landscape and Seascape effects has had regard to the relevant requirements for assessment set out in the extant and draft EN-1 and EN-3 NPSs and been carried out in accordance with those requirements.
- 6.14.24 The assessment has had regard to, and is in accordance with, the relevant policies identified regarding landscape and seascape construction, O&M and decommissioning of the Project will be in accordance with the relevant NPSs and other identified material planning policy matters. The PEIR prepared for the Project demonstrates that whilst significant effects are anticipated there is some scope for these to be accommodated within the seascape, landscape character and in visual terms.
- 6.14.25 NPS EN-1 acknowledges that:
- "Virtually all nationally significant energy infrastructure projects will have effects on the landscape".*

6.15 Infrastructure and Other Marine Users

- 6.15.1 This topic is assessed in detail in Volume 1, Chapter 18: Infrastructure and Other Marine Users.

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-1

6.15.2 Table 6.36 sets out the relevant National Policy Statements from NPS EN-1 related to Infrastructure and Other Marine Users and provides detail as to where they are addressed by the Project.

Table 6.36 National Policy Statements: NPS EN-1 related to Infrastructure and Other Marine Users

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-1 Policy: Paragraph 5.4.11	The Project should consult the Ministry of Defence (MoD), Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), National Air Traffic Services (NATS) and any aerodrome – licensed or otherwise – likely to be affected by the proposed development in preparing an assessment of the proposal on aviation or other defence interests.	As described in the baseline environment in section in Volume 1, Chapter 18: Infrastructure and Other Marine Users, there is no military activity within the area.

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-3

6.15.3 Table 6.37 sets out the relevant National Policy Statements from NPS EN-3 related to Infrastructure and Other Marine Users and provides detail as to where they are addressed by the Project.

Table 6.37 National Policy Statements: NPS EN-3 related to Infrastructure and Other Marine Users

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-3, Paragraph 2.6.35	There may be constraints imposed on the siting or design of offshore wind farms because of restrictions resulting from the presence of other offshore infrastructure or activities.	Site selection is addressed in Volume 1, Chapter 4: Site Selection and Consideration of Alternatives.
EN-3 Policy: Paragraph 2.6.179	Applicants should undertake an assessment of the potential effect of the Project on existing or permitted offshore infrastructure or activities.	Volume 1, Chapter 18: Infrastructure and Other Marine Users includes an assessment of the potential effects of the Project on marine infrastructure and other users of the marine environment.
EN-3 Policy: Paragraph 2.6.180-181	Applicants should establish stakeholder engagement with interested parties in the offshore sector in the development phase of the proposed OWF, with an aim to resolve as many issues as possible prior to the submission of an application. Such stakeholder engagement should continue	Consultation with potentially affected stakeholders is being carried out from the early stages of the Project and continues through the pre- application consultation process. Details of consultation are presented in Volume 1, Chapter 18: Infrastructure and Other Marine Users.

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-3 Policy: Paragraph 2.6.184	<p>throughout the life of the development.</p> <p>Applicants should ensure site selection and site design of the proposed OWF is being made with a view to avoiding or minimising disruption or economic loss or adverse effect on safety to other offshore industries.</p> <p>The [SoS] should be satisfied that site selection and site design of the windfarm is being made with a view to avoiding or minimising disruption or economic loss or any adverse effects on safety to other offshore industries. The [SoS] should not consent applications, which pose unacceptable risks to safety after mitigation measures have been considered.</p> <p>Where schemes have been carefully designed and the necessary consultation is being undertaken at an early stage, mitigation measures may be found that can negate or reduce effects on other offshore infrastructure or operations to a level sufficient to enable the [SoS] to grant consent.</p>	<p>Site selection is addressed in Volume 1, Chapter 4: Site Selection and Consideration of Alternatives. Economic impacts are considered in Volume 1, Chapter 29: Socio-Economic Characteristics. The PEIR boundary has been refined since scoping in order to minimise, as far as practicable, disruption or economic loss or any adverse effect on safety to other offshore industries. Additionally, designed in mitigation and controls are set out in Volume 1, Chapter 18: Infrastructure and Other Marine Users.</p>
EN-3 Policy: Paragraph 2.6.187-188	<p>In relation to mitigation, detailed discussions between the Applicant and the relevant consultees should have progressed as far as reasonably possible prior to the submission of an application. As such, appropriate mitigation should be included in any application and ideally agreed between relevant parties. NPS EN-3 paragraph 2.6.188 explains that in some circumstances, the SoS may wish to consider the potential to use requirements involving arbitration</p>	<p>The Project is being sited to minimise conflicts with marine infrastructure and other users, where possible. In cases where conflict is being highlighted in early consultation, the applicant has, where appropriate and feasible, proposed mitigation measures to reduce or negate impacts (see Volume 1, Chapter 18: Infrastructure and Other Marine Users). See also Volume 1, Chapter 4: Site Selection and Consideration of Alternatives.</p>

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
	as a means of resolving how adverse impacts on other commercial activities will be addressed.	

UK Marine Police Statement (MPS)

6.15.4 Table 6.38 sets out the policies from the UK Marine Police Statement related to Infrastructure and Other Marine Users and provides detail as to where they are addressed by the Project.

Table 6.38 UK Marine Police Statement policies related to Infrastructure and Other Marine Users

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
UK MPS, Section 3.2.9	The construction and operation of offshore marine infrastructure, as well as policies on conservation designations and the health of the wider environment may impact on defence interests in certain areas. Marine plan authorities and decision makers should take full account of the individual and cumulative effects of marine infrastructure on both marine and land-based MoD interests. Marine plan authorities, decision makers and developers should consult the MoD in all circumstances to verify whether defence interests will be affected.	As described in the baseline environment in Volume 1, Chapter 18: Infrastructure and Other Marine Users, there is no military activity within the area. Further information is provided in Volume 1, Chapter 15: Shipping and Navigation and Volume 1, Chapter 16: Aviation, Radar, Military and Communication.

East Marine Plans (EMP) (DEFRA, 2014)

6.15.5 Table 6.39 sets out the policies from the East Marine Plans related to Infrastructure and Other Marine Users and provides detail as to where they are addressed by the Project.

Table 6.39 East Marine Plans policies related to Infrastructure and Other Marine Users

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EMP, AGG1	Proposals in areas where a licence for extraction of aggregates has been granted or formally applied for should not be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances.	Marine aggregate sites have been identified within the existing environment section of Volume 1, Chapter 18: Infrastructure and Other Marine Users.
EMP, AGG3	Within defined areas of high potential aggregate resources, proposals should demonstrate in order of preference:	Marine aggregate sites have been identified within the existing environment section of Volume 1, Chapter 18: Infrastructure and Other Marine Users. This chapter identifies

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ That they will not prevent aggregate extraction; ▪ How, if there are adverse impacts on aggregate extraction, they will minimise these; ▪ How, if the adverse impacts cannot be minimised, they will be mitigated; ▪ The case for proceeding with the application if it is not possible to minimise or mitigate the adverse impacts. 	<p>where likely significant effects have been determined and where mitigation is proposed.</p>
EMP, DD1	<p>Proposals within or adjacent to licensed dredging and disposal areas should demonstrate, in order of preference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ That they will not adversely impact dredging and disposal activities; ▪ How, if there are adverse impacts on dredging and disposal, they will minimise these; ▪ How, if the adverse impacts cannot be minimised, they will be mitigated; ▪ The case for proceeding with the proposal if it is not possible to minimise or mitigate the proposed impacts. 	<p>Marine dredging and disposal sites have been identified within the existing environment section of Volume 1, Chapter 17. This chapter identifies where likely significant effects have been determined and where mitigation is proposed.</p>
EMP, OG1	<p>Proposals within areas with existing oil and gas production should not be authorised except where compatibility with oil and gas production and infrastructure can be satisfactorily demonstrated.</p>	<p>This will be considered in the development of the assessment on the oil and gas industry which will be presented in the final DCO application.</p>

Considerations for the SoS

6.15.6 Paragraphs 2.6.182 to 2.6.186 of NPS EN-3 sets out the policy for the SoS's decision making in relation to infrastructure.

- It is recognised in NPS EN-1 that producing the energy required by the UK, significant

infrastructure will be required, including large-scale projects.

- Part 4 of NPS EN-1 sets out a series of general principles that will be taken into account when reaching a decision. Paragraph 4.1.2 requires that:
 - The [SoS] should start with a presumption in favour of granting consent to applications for energy NSIPs.

6.15.7 Paragraph 4.1.4 of NPS EN-1 states that, in reaching a decision, the SoS should have regard to:

“Environmental, social and economic benefits and adverse impacts, at national, regional and local levels”.

6.15.8 Paragraph 2.6.183 relates to the SoS’s decision making, and sets out that:

“Where a proposed offshore windfarm potentially affects other offshore infrastructure or activity, a pragmatic approach should be employed by the [SoS]. Much of this infrastructure is important to other offshore industries as is its contribution to the UK economy. In such circumstances the [SoS] should expect the applicant to minimise negative impacts and reduce risks to as low as reasonably practicable.”

6.15.9 Paragraph 2.6.184 states that:

“As such, the [SoS] should be satisfied that the site selection and site design of the proposed offshore windfarm has been made with a view to avoiding or minimising disruption or economic loss or any adverse effect on safety to other offshore industries. The [SoS] should not consent applications which pose unacceptable risks to safety after mitigation measures have been considered.”

6.15.10 Volume 1, Chapter 18: Infrastructure and Other Marine Users of the PEIR provides a summary of the potential environmental effects and identifies approaches to mitigation and proposed monitoring during the construction phase, O&M phase, and decommissioning phase.

6.15.11 The assessment of infrastructure and other users of the marine environment has had regard to the relevant requirements for assessment set out in NPS EN-1 and NPS EN-3 and been carried out in accordance with those requirements.

6.15.12 The construction, O&M and decommissioning of the Project will be in accordance with the relevant NPSs and other identified material planning policy matters.

6.15.13 The PEIR prepared for the Project indicates that there are no anticipated significant effects with regards to the EIA Regulations and therefore effects on infrastructure and other marine users should not weigh against the substantial benefits of the Project when considering the planning balance.

6.16 Air Quality

6.16.1 This topic is assessed in Volume 1, Chapter 19: Onshore Air Quality. References to sections and tables within Section 6.16 refer to Volume 1, Chapter 19: Onshore Air Quality.

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-1

6.16.2 Table 6.40 sets out the relevant National Policy Statements from NPS EN-1 related to Air Quality and provides detail to where they are addressed by the project.

Table 6.40 National Policy Statements: NPS EN-1 related to Air Quality

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.2.7	The ES should describe any significant air emissions, their mitigation and any residual effects distinguishing between the Project stages and taking account of any significant emissions from any road traffic generated by the Project.	This assessment of any significant air emissions is set out in sections 1.5-1.9 of the PEIR Chapter.
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.2.7	The ES should describe the predicted absolute emission levels of the proposed project, after mitigation methods have been applied.	The Chapter assesses the risk and significance of potentially significant emissions to air, with and without appropriate mitigation.
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.2.7	The ES should describe existing air quality levels and the relative change in air quality from existing levels.	Existing air quality is described in the section 1.4 of the Chapter and the relative change is described in section 1.7.

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-3

6.16.3 No relevant policy requirements for air quality have been identified in EN-3.

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-5

6.16.4 No relevant policy requirements for air quality have been identified in EN-5.

Other Policy Considerations

6.16.5 No other policy considerations were identified for Air Quality.

Considerations for the SoS

6.16.6 Part 5.2 of NPS EN-1 sets out matters relevant to Air Quality at a national level. It is recognised that in order to produce the energy required by the UK, significant infrastructure will be required, including large scale projects.

6.16.7 Part 4 of NPS EN-1 sets out a series of general principles that will be taken into account when reaching a decision. NPS EN-1 paragraph 4.1.3 requires that the following matters relevant to Air Quality are taken into account when considering any proposed development:

"Potential adverse impacts, including long-term and cumulative adverse impacts, as well as any measures to avoid, reduce or compensate for any adverse impacts".

6.16.8 Paragraph 4.1.4 of NPS EN-1 states that in reaching a decision, the SoS should have regard

to ‘environmental, social and economic benefits and adverse impacts at national, regional and local levels’. NPS EN-3 paragraphs 5.2.8 to 5.2.10 set out matters the SoS should have regard to in reaching a decision, including proposed mitigation, specifically in respect of Air Quality matters. It is confirmed that the SoS must have regard to the following:

- "Give Air Quality considerations substantial weight where a project would lead to a deterioration in Air Quality in an area, or leads to a new area where air quality breaches any national air quality limits;
- Potential Air Quality effects; and
- In the event that a project will lead to non-compliance with a statutory limit the [SoS] should refuse consent".

6.16.9 Table 1.14 of Volume 1, Chapter 19: Onshore Air Quality provides a summary of the potential effects during the construction, O&M and decommissioning phases of the Project, as well as additional proposed mitigation measures. Embedded mitigation measures are described in Table 10. The Project will not lead to non-compliance with a statutory limit.

6.16.10 The assessment of Air Quality has regard to the relevant requirements for assessment set out in EN-1 and EN-3 and is being carried out in accordance with those requirements.

6.16.11 The construction, O&M and decommissioning of the Project will be carried out in accordance with the relevant NPSs and other identified material planning policy matters.

6.16.12 The PEIR prepared for the Project indicates that there are no anticipated significant effects with regard to air quality impacts and the Project will not lead to non-compliance with a statutory limit. Accordingly, effects on air quality should not weigh against the substantial benefits of the Project.

6.17 Onshore Archaeology and Cultural Heritage

6.17.1 This topic is assessed in Volume 1, Chapter 20: Onshore Archaeology and Cultural Heritage. References to sections and tables within Section 6.17 refer to Volume 1, Chapter 20: Onshore Archaeology and Cultural Heritage.

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-1

6.17.2 Table 6.41 sets out the relevant National Policy Statements from NPS EN-1 related to Onshore Archaeology and Cultural Heritage and provides detail to where they are addressed by the project.

Table 6.41 National Policy Statements: NPS EN-1 related to Onshore Archaeology and Cultural Heritage

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.8.4	The NPS discusses the generic impacts on the historic environment associated with the construction, O&M and decommissioning of energy infrastructure. The NPS sets out the need to consider the impacts on	Effects on designated and non-designated heritage assets have been considered at sections 20.7.

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
	both designated and non-designated heritage assets	
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.8.5	Where non-designated heritage assets are of equivalent significance to designated heritage assets, they are subject to the policy considerations that apply to designated heritage assets.	Non-designated heritage assets of equivalent significance to designated heritage assets are identified and assessed as appropriate in sections 20.4-20.7.
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.8.6	Non-designated heritage assets of lesser significance should be considered within any decision making.	Effects on non-designated heritage assets have been considered at sections 20.7 as appropriate.
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.8.9	A field survey may be required to inform any assessment of significance	Initial walkovers and receptor visits have been undertaken to inform the assessment as outlined in the Chapter.
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.8.10	Any application should contain sufficient information to allow heritage significance to be understood.	Statements of significance of heritage assets are set out in sections 20.5-20.7 in sufficient detail to allow heritage significance to be understood.
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.8.12	The nature of the significance of the heritage assets and the value that they hold for this, and future generations should be taken into account in considering the impact of a proposed development on any heritage assets	The assessment presented in sections 20.5-20.7 has regard to the significance of heritage assets. Particularly, the assessment identifies and assesses the significance of the heritage assets themselves.
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.8.14	Development which would give rise to substantial harm to designated heritage assets should be exceptional, or for heritage assets of the highest significance (Grade I and II* listed buildings, scheduled monuments, designated battlefields, World Heritage Sites and grade I and II* designated registered parks and gardens), should be wholly exceptional. Harm to designated heritage assets of less than substantial magnitude should be weighed against the benefits of the proposal.	No cases have been identified where substantial harm to the heritage significance of a designated heritage asset would arise.

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.8.15	Development giving rise to substantial harm to a designated heritage asset should only be permitted where necessary to deliver significant public benefits which outweigh the harm occasioned	No cases have been identified where substantial harm to the heritage significance of a designated heritage asset would arise.
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.8.16	Not all elements of a conservation area or World Heritage Site necessarily contribute positively to significance and the contribution of parts of such designations which may be affected should be considered.	No cases have been identified where substantial harm to the heritage significance of a conservation area or World Heritage Site would arise.
5.8.19-5.8.22	Provisions for the recording of at-risk heritage assets to mitigate against loss of evidential interest are set out	Mitigation measures including preservation by record have regard to the provisions of NPS EN-1.

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-3

6.17.3 NPS EN-3 contains no specific policy on onshore historic environment remains, referring back to the generic policies in NPS EN-1 Section 6, and specifically refers back to NPS EN-1 for the consideration of elements of the marine historic environment which are located onshore (NPS EN-3 2.6.143). The approach taken and assessment presented in the Chapter follows the provisions within NPS EN-1.

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-5

Table 6.42 sets out the relevant National Policy Statements from NPS EN-5 related to Onshore Archaeology and Cultural Heritage and provides detail to where they are addressed by the project.

Table 6.42 National Policy Statements: NPS EN-5 related to Onshore Archaeology and Cultural Heritage

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-5 Policy Paragraph 2.8.9	Archaeology is considered in NPS EN-5 when weighing up the development of overhead lines and underground cables. The consideration of effects to below ground archaeological remains is balanced against the visual effects of using overhead lines.	The approach taken and assessment presented in Volume 1, Chapter 20: Onshore Archaeology and Cultural Heritage follows the provisions within NPS EN-1.

Other Policy Considerations

No other policy considerations were identified for onshore archaeology and cultural heritage. Consideration for the SoS

6.17.4 Part 5.8 of NPS EN-1 set out matters relevant to the Historic Environment at national level. It is recognised that "the construction, operation and decommissioning of energy infrastructure has the potential to result in adverse impacts on the historic environment". It is recognised in NPS EN-1 that producing the energy required by the UK, significant infrastructure will be required, including large-scale projects. Paragraph 5.8.13 of NPS EN-1 also recognises that new development can make a positive contribution to the character and local distinctiveness of the historic environment. Part 4 of NPS EN-1 sets out a series of general principles that will be taken in account when reaching a decision. NPS EN-1 paragraph 4.1.3 requires that the following matters relevant to the historic environment are taken in account when considering any proposed development:

"Potential adverse impacts, including long-term and cumulative adverse impacts, as well as any measures to avoid, reduce or compensate for any adverse impacts".

6.17.5 Paragraph 4.1.4 of NPS EN-1 states that, in reaching a decision, the SoS should have regard to:

"Environmental, social and economic benefits and adverse impacts, at national, regional and local levels".

6.17.6 NPS EN-1 paragraphs 5.8.11 to 5.8.18 set out matters the SoS should have regard to in reaching a decision, including proposed mitigation, specifically in respect of matters relating to the Historic Environment. It is confirmed that the SoS should seek to identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by the Project, including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset taking account, inter alia, of:

- Evidence provided with the application;
- Any designation records;
- The Historic Environment Record, and similar sources of information;
- The heritage assets themselves;
- The outcome of consultations with interested parties; and
- Where appropriate and when the need to understand the significance of the heritage asset demands it, expert advice.

6.17.7 The assessment of the Historic Environment has had regard to the relevant requirements for assessment set out in EN-1 and been carried out in accordance with those requirements. Table 20.9-20.35 of Volume 1, Chapter 20: Onshore Archaeology and Cultural Heritage provides a summary of the potential effects during the construction, O&M and decommissioning phases of the Project, with embedded mitigation summarised in Table 20.4.

6.17.8 Paragraph 5.8.14 of NPS EN-1 states that development which would give rise to substantial

harm to designated heritage assets should be exceptional, or for heritage assets of the highest significance (Grade I and II* listed buildings, scheduled monuments, designated battlefields, World Heritage Sites and grade I and II* designated registered parks and gardens), should be wholly exceptional. Harm to designated heritage assets of less than substantial magnitude should be weighed against the benefits of the proposal. Paragraph 5.8.15 of NPS EN-1 states that the development giving rise to substantial harm to a designated heritage asset should only be permitted where necessary to deliver significant public benefits which outweigh the harm.

- 6.17.9 No residual effects considered significant for purposes of the EIA regulations have been identified, notwithstanding some changes in setting arising from the presence of the Project. The assessment concluded that assuming the avoidance of all Scheduled Monuments, no potentially significant direct or in-direct impacts have been identified for designated heritage assets. In terms of non-designated assets, potentially significant direct and indirect impacts have been identified, however suitable mitigation is available.
- 6.17.10 The construction, O&M and decommissioning of the Project will be in accordance with the relevant NPSs and other identified material planning policy matters.
- 6.17.11 The PEIR prepared for the Project indicates that there are no anticipated significant effects on onshore designated historic environment. Whilst there are potentially significant effects on non-designated assets, archaeological recording is provided as a mitigation measure to offset this effect. As such, the effect on onshore historic environment should be given little weight against the substantial benefits of the Project when considering the planning balance.

6.18 Onshore Ecology and Ornithology

- 6.18.1 These topics are assessed in Volume 1, Chapter 21: Onshore Ecology and Volume 1, Chapter 22: Onshore Ornithology. References to sections and tables within Section 6.18 refer to Volume 1, Chapter 21: Onshore Ecology and Volume 1, Chapter 22: Onshore Ornithology.

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-1

- 6.18.2 Table 6.43 sets out the relevant National Policy Statements from NPS EN-1 related Onshore Ecology and Ornithology and provides detail to where they are addressed by the project.

Table 6.43 National Policy Statements: NPS EN-1 related to Onshore Ecology and Ornithology

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 4.3.1	Prior to an order to grant development consent, due consideration must be given by the [SoS] as to whether the Project may have a significant effect on a European site, or on any site to which the same protection is applied as a matter of policy, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.	NPS section 4.3.1 is addressed in Volume 1, Chapter 21.
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.3	This section discusses the generic biodiversity and geological conservation effects associated with energy	Effects on internationally, nationally and locally designated sites of ecological conservation

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
	<p>infrastructure, recognising the need to protect the most important biodiversity and geological conservation interests. Where the development is subject to EIA, the applicant should ensure that the PEIR clearly sets out any effects on internationally, nationally and locally designated sites of ecological or geological conservation importance, on protected species and on habitats and other species identified as being of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity (NPS EN-1 Section 5.3.3). The EIA should illustrate where the Project is able to use opportunities to conserve and enhance biodiversity interests (NPS EN-1 Section 5.3.4) and should aim to avoid significant harm through the use of mitigation and considering reasonable alternatives. Where significant harm cannot be avoided, then appropriate compensation measures should be provided.</p>	<p>importance (where relevant), on protected species and on habitats and other species identified as being of importance for the conservation of biodiversity are assessed in Section 21.7.</p> <p>NPS EN-1 Section 5.3 is addressed in Volume 1, Chapter 21. Geological interest is addressed in Volume 1, Chapter 23: Geology and Ground Conditions. NPS section 5.3.4 is addressed in Volume 1, Chapter 21: Onshore Ecology and Ornithology. Volume 1, Chapter 4: Site Selection and Consideration of Alternatives, describes the options and process undertaken to the preferred selection.</p> <p>Mitigation measures, including measures embedded in the design, are set out in Section 21.5 of the PEIR Chapters. Outline proposals for mitigation and compensation, along with proposals for biodiversity enhancement, are included in the LEDPP (Document Reference 8.7).</p>

6.18.3 Table 6.44 sets out the relevant National Policy Statements from the Draft NPS EN-1 related Onshore Ecology and Ornithology and provides detail to where they are addressed by the project.

Table 6.44 National Policy Statements: Draft NPS EN-1 related to Onshore Ecology and Ornithology

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.4.4	<p>Although not finalised, consideration of the draft NPS is considered pertinent with regards biodiversity, and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) in particular. The draft NPS EN-1 encourages the applicant to consider how proposals can contribute to BNG in paragraph 5.4.4, noting</p>	<p>Proposals to provide enhancement have been discussed with the Environment Agency, Natural England and Local Wildlife Organisations via the EPP</p>

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
	<p>that the scope of potential gains is dependent on the type, scale and location of each project. Paragraph 5.4.17 of the draft NPS adds that:</p> <p><i>“Proposals should also consider any opportunities to maximise the restoration, creation, and enhancement of wider biodiversity. Consideration should be given to improvements to, and impacts on, habitats and species in, around and beyond developments, for wider ecosystem services and natural capital benefits, beyond those under protection and identified as being of principal importance. This may include considerations and opportunities identified through Local Nature Recovery Strategies, and national goals and targets set through the government’s strategy for nature for example.”</i></p> <p>In addition, Paragraph 5.4.19 states that:</p> <p><i>“Applicants should consider producing and implementing a Biodiversity Management Strategy as part of their development proposals. This could include provision for biodiversity awareness training to employees and contractors so as to avoid unnecessary adverse impacts on biodiversity during the construction and operation stages.”</i></p>	<p>meetings and bilateral discussions which have been ongoing since July 2022. The proposals, which were agreed in principle with EPP members, are presented within the Landscape and Ecology Design Principles Plan (LEDPP).</p> <p>The LEDPP sets out the in-principle measures which will be implemented to avoid, reduce, mitigate or compensate for potential impacts on landscape and biodiversity resources and measures intended to provide biodiversity enhancements due to the onshore elements of the Project. The LEDPP therefore operates as the Biodiversity Management Strategy referenced by draft NPS EN-1.</p>

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-3

6.18.4 No relevant policy requirements for Onshore Ecology and Ornithology have been identified in NPS EN-3.

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-5

6.18.5 Table 6.45 sets out the relevant National Policy Statements from NPS EN-5 related Onshore Ecology and Ornithology and provides detail to where they are addressed by the project.

Table 6.45 National Policy Statements: NPS EN-5 related to Onshore Ecology and Ornithology

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-5 Policy Paragraph 2.8.4	Onshore Ecology and Ornithology is considered in NPS EN-5 when weighing up the development of overhead lines and underground cables. The consideration of permanent of effects of using overhead lines balance with the temporary effects of using underground cables.	The approach taken and assessment presented in Volume 1, Chapter 21: Onshore Ecology and Volume 1, Chapter 22: Onshore Ornithology follows the provisions within NPS EN-1

Other Policy Considerations

6.18.6 Table 6.46 sets out other policy considerations related to Onshore Ecology and Ornithology and provides detail as to where they are addressed by the Project.

Table 6.46 Other Policy Considerations related to Onshore Ecology and Ornithology

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017	Under the Regulations a competent authority, before deciding to give consent for a plan or project which is likely to have a significant effect on a European site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) and is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of that site, must make an appropriate assessment of the implications of the plan or project for that site in view of that site's conservation objectives. A person applying for any such consent, must provide such information as the competent authority may reasonably require for the purposes of the assessment or to enable it to determine whether an appropriate assessment is required	The relevant provisions of the Habitats Regulations are addressed in Volume 1, Chapter 21. The site selection process, as detailed in Volume 1, Chapter 4: Site Selection and Consideration of Alternatives, has enabled the Project to avoid any interaction with onshore European sites (and avoid direct interaction with offshore European sites).
Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (WCA 1981)	The WCA 1981 makes it an offence (subject to exceptions) to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild animal listed on Schedule 5 and prohibits intentional or reckless interference with places used for shelter or protection, or intentionally or recklessly disturbing animals occupying such places.	The relevant provisions of the Wildlife & Countryside Act are addressed in Volume 1, Chapter 21.

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
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Consideration for the SoS

- 6.18.7 Part 5.7 of NPS EN-1 set out matters relevant to Ecology and Nature Conservation at national level. It is recognised that ‘Biodiversity is the variety of life in all its forms and encompasses all species of plants and animals and the complex ecosystems of which they are a part’. It is recognised in EN-1 that producing the energy required by the UK, significant infrastructure will be required, including large scale projects.
- 6.18.8 Part 4 of NPS EN-1 sets out a series of general principles that will be taken in account when reaching a decision. NPS EN-1 paragraph 4.1.3 requires that the following matters relevant to Ecology and Nature Conservation are taken into account when considering any proposed development:
- its potential benefits including its contribution to meeting the need for energy infrastructure, job creation and any long-term or wider benefits [such as ecological enhancement and management]; and
 - its potential adverse impacts, including long-term and cumulative adverse impacts, as well as any measures to avoid, reduce or compensate for any adverse impacts.
- 6.18.9 Paragraph 4.1.4 of NPS EN-1 states that, in reaching a decision, the SoS should have regard to:
- “Environmental, social and economic benefits and adverse impacts, at national, regional and local levels”.*
- 6.18.10 NPS EN-1 paragraphs 5.3.5 to 5.3.8 set out matters the SoS should have regard to in determining an application for development consent. This includes, inter alia, the following:
- The Government’s biodiversity strategy is to ensure a halting, and if possible, a reversal, of declines in priority habitats and species, with wild species and habitats as part of healthy, functioning ecosystems; and
 - The general acceptance of biodiversity’s essential role in enhancing the quality of life, with its conservation becoming a natural consideration in all relevant public, private and non-governmental decisions and policies.
- 6.18.11 The Government must also take into account the challenge and urgency of climate change: failure to address this challenge will result in significant adverse impacts to biodiversity (EN-1 paragraph 5.3.6).
- 6.18.12 The assessment of Ecology and Nature Conservation has had regard to the relevant requirements for assessment set out in EN-1 and been carried out in accordance with those requirements. Table 21.12 of Volume 1, Chapter 21: Onshore Ecology and Table 22.1 Volume 1, Chapter 22: Onshore Ornithology provides a summary of the potential effects during the construction, O&M and decommissioning phases of the Project, with embedded mitigation summarised in Section 21.5 and Section 22.5.
- 6.18.13 In the absence of mitigation, a significant effect is possible on some ecological receptors. The construction of the Project could result in some temporary significant effects during

construction, in advance of the proposed mitigation measures being sufficiently mature. Residual effects following the implementation of the proposed mitigation measures, if required, would not be significant.

- 6.18.14 As a result of disturbance to some habitats during the construction period, and loss of some habitats as a result of the construction of the OnSS, potentially significant effects are offset with compensatory habitats; this includes compensatory planting of new hedgerow. The Project will seek opportunities to provide replacement and enhancement of habitat for great crested newt (GCN) where possible to help toward restoring the favourable conservation status in the medium term. Residual effects from permanent loss of habitat from the OnSS will be offset via compensatory measures including habitat enhancement described in the Landscape and Ecology Design Principles Plan (LEDPP) (Document Reference 8.7). This will be further described in the Outline Landscape and Ecology Mitigation Strategy (OLEMS) which will be submitted alongside the ES.
- 6.18.15 Following the implementation of the agreed mitigation measures, compensatory measures, and enhancement measures no significant effects are anticipated in relation to any onshore biodiversity receptors during either the construction, O&M or decommissioning phases. No significant cumulative effects are predicted with other developments.
- 6.18.16 The mitigation measures for onshore ecology are presented in Table 21.12 of the Onshore Ecology PEIR Chapter including the consideration of cable routing, reinstatement and restoration of habitats and the use of a qualified Ecological Clerk of Works.
- 6.18.17 The construction, O&M, and decommissioning of the Project will be in accordance with the relevant NPSs and other identified material planning policy matters.
- 6.18.18 The PEIR and draft RIAA (Document Reference 7.1) prepared out for the Project concludes that there are no anticipated significant effects with regards the EIA Regulations and therefore effects on onshore biodiversity should not weigh against the substantial benefits of the Project when considering the planning balance.

6.19 Ground Conditions and Land Use

- 6.19.1 These topics are assessed in Volume 1, Chapter 23: Geology and Ground Conditions and Volume 1, Chapter 25: Land Use. References to sections and tables within Section 6.19 refer to Volume 1, Chapter 23: Geology and Ground Conditions and Volume 1, Chapter 25: Land Use.

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-1

- 6.19.2 Table 6.47 sets out the relevant National Policy Statements from NPS EN-1 related to Onshore Ecology and Ornithology and provides detail to where they are addressed by the project.

Table 6.47 National Policy Statements: NPS EN-1 related to Ground Conditions and Land Use

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.3.3	Proposals should clearly set out any effects on internationally, nationally and locally designated	The effects of onshore infrastructure associated with the Project on designated sites of geological conservation importance are considered

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
	sites of geological conservation importance.	in Volume 1, Chapter 23 of the PEIR Chapter.
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.3.7	Proposals should avoid significant harm to geological conservation interests including through mitigation and consideration of reasonable alternatives; where significant harm cannot be avoided, then appropriate compensation measures should be sought.	The effects of onshore infrastructure associated with the Project on designated sites of geological conservation importance are considered in Volume 1, Chapter 23.
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.10.8	Proposals should seek to minimise impacts on the Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land and to minimise impacts on soil quality taking into account any mitigation measures proposed. For developments on previously developed land, applicants should ensure that they have considered the risk posed by land contamination	Volume 1, Chapter 4: Site Selection and Consideration of Alternatives considered several options to mitigate potential impacts on Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land. The effects of onshore infrastructure associated with the Project on agricultural land and soil quality are considered in Volume 1, Chapter 25: Land Use.
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.10.8	For developments on previously developed land, applicants should ensure that they have considered the risk posed by land contamination.	Routing and siting considerations that are discussed in Volume 1, Chapter 4: Site Selection and Consideration of Alternatives. Although the onshore infrastructure does not utilize previously developed land, an assessment of the potential for impacts to occur from contamination is provided in Volume 1, Chapter 23: Geology and Ground Conditions.

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-3

6.19.3 No relevant policy requirements for ground conditions, and land use have been identified in NPS EN-3.

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-5

6.19.4 No relevant policy requirements for ground conditions, and land use have been identified in NPS EN-5.

Other Policy Considerations

6.19.5 No other policy considerations were identified for ground conditions and land use.

Consideration for the SoS

6.19.6 The onshore infrastructure for the Project does not utilise brownfield land with the onshore ECC routed predominantly within agricultural (greenfield) land, however, the majority of below ground infrastructure does not preclude land remaining 'greenfield'.

6.19.7 Part 5 of NPS EN-1 sets out matters relevant to biodiversity and geological conservation effects at a national level. It is recognised that:

“Geological conservation relates to the sites that are designated for their geology and/or their geomorphological importance”.

6.19.8 It is accepted in NPS EN-1 that producing the energy required by the UK, significant infrastructure will be required, including large-scale projects.

6.19.9 Part 4 of NPS EN-1 sets out a series of general principles that will be taken into account when reaching a decision. NPS EN-1 paragraph 4.1.3 requires that the following matters are taken into account regarding geology and ground conditions:

“Its potential benefits including its contribution to meeting the need for energy infrastructure, job creation and any long-term or wider benefits; and

its potential adverse impacts, including any long-term and cumulative adverse impacts, as well as any measures to avoid, reduce or compensate for any adverse impacts”.

6.19.10 NPS EN-1 paragraphs 5.3.5 to 5.3.8 set out matters the SoS should have regard to in reaching a decision, including proposed mitigation, specifically in respect of geology matters. It is confirmed that the development should aim to avoid significant harm to biodiversity and geological conservation interests, including through mitigation and consideration of reasonable alternatives.

6.19.11 In taking decisions, the SoS should ensure appropriate weight is attached to designated sites of international, national and local importance. These are identified and considered in Volume 1, Chapter 23: Geology and Ground Conditions.

6.19.12 The assessment of impacts to Ground Conditions and Land Use had regard to the relevant requirements for assessment set out in NPS EN-1, NPS EN-3 and NPS EN-5, and is carried out in accordance with those requirements.

6.19.13 Paragraphs 5.10.13 to 5.10.18 of EN-1 set out a series of principles that will be taken into account when reaching a decision regarding land use. NPS EN-1 (paragraph 5.10.13) requires that where a project conflicts with a proposal in a development plan, account should be had to the stage the development plan has reached when considering what weight to give it in the decision-making process.

6.19.14 The assessment of Ground Conditions and Land Use has therefore had regard to the relevant requirements for assessment set out in NPS EN-1 and is being carried out in accordance with those requirements.

6.19.15 Table 23.29 of Volume 1, Chapter 23: Geology and Ground Conditions provides a summary

of the potential effects during the construction, O&M and decommissioning phases of the Project. Table 23.5 of the PEIR Chapter provides a summary of the approach to embedded mitigation.

- 6.19.16 The construction, O&M and decommissioning of the Project will be carried out in accordance with the relevant NPSs and other identified material planning policy matters.
- 6.19.17 The PEIR prepared for the Project indicates that there are no anticipated significant effects with regard to the EIA Regulations and as such effects on ground conditions and land use should not weigh against the substantial benefits of the Project.

6.20 Hydrology, Hydrogeology and Flood Risk

- 6.20.1 This topic is assessed in Volume 1, Chapter 24: Hydrology, Hydrogeology and Flood Risk. References to sections and tables within Section 6.20 refer to Volume 1, Chapter 24: Hydrology, Hydrogeology and Flood Risk.

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-1

- 6.20.2 Table 6.48 sets out the relevant National Policy Statements from NPS EN-1 related to Hydrology, Hydrogeology and Flood Risk and provides detail to where they are addressed by the project.

Table 6.48 National Policy Statements: NPS EN-1 related to Hydrology, Hydrogeology and Flood Risk

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 4.8.6	Requires that applicants for new energy infrastructure must take into account the potential impacts of climate change using the latest UK Climate Projections available at the time, to ensure that appropriate mitigation or adaptation measures have been identified for the estimated lifetime of the new infrastructure.	The characterisation of the flood risk baseline and future baseline is being established using the Environment Agency's Development Advice Map and data from recent hydraulic models, which take into account climate change effects. Flood risk is being considered for the life of the development in Volume 1, Chapter 24: Hydrology, Hydrogeology and Flood Risk.
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.7.4	Requires that applications for energy projects of 1 hectare or greater in Zone A and all energy projects located in Zones B and C should be accompanied by a flood risk assessment (FRA). An FRA may also be required where there maybe flooding issues other than from rivers and the sea (for example from surface water), or where the Environment Agency, Drainage Board or other body have indicated that there may be	AFRA will be prepared for the proposed works to be undertaken during the construction of the onshore (ECC) and onshore substation to inform the ES submission once the design details are more refined.

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
	<p>drainage problems. The FRA should identify and assess the risks of all forms of flooding to and from the Project and demonstrate how these flood risks will be managed, taking climate change into account.</p> <p>The minimum requirements for what should be included in an FRA are also outlined at paragraph 5.7.5 of NPS EN-1.</p>	
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.7.7-5.7.8	<p>Require applicants to hold pre-application discussions with the Environment Agency and any other relevant bodies. Any concerns in regard to flood risk should be discussed all reasonable steps to agree ways in which the proposal might be amended, or additional information provided, which would alleviate concerns.</p>	<p>Consultation with Environment Agency is being undertaken as part of the EPP, as set out in Section 24.3 of the PEIR Chapter. In addition, Statutory Consultation on the Project was undertaken in 2021, with resulting feedback considered within this PEIR.</p>
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.7.9	<p>Sets out the assessment and reporting required to satisfy development consent, including where relevant: an FRA; application of the sequential test as part of the site selection; sequential approach at the site level to minimise risk; the proposal is in line with relevant local flood risk management strategies; priority is being given to the use of sustainable drainage systems (SUDs); and in flood risk areas the proposals are appropriately flood resilient and resistant to flooding.</p>	<p>Details of the sequential site selection process, including consideration of flood risk is presented in Volume 1, Chapter 4: Site Selection and Consideration of Alternatives. Details of the potential effects of flooding are presented in Volume 1, Chapter 24: Hydrology, Hydrogeology and Flood Risk. A formal flood risk assessment of the final ECC and OnSS will be presented with the DCO application once design details are more refined.</p>
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.12.2	<p>Where the Project is likely to have effects on the water environment, the applicant should undertake an assessment of the existing status of, and impacts of the proposed project on, water quality, water resources and physical characteristics of the water environment as part of the PEIR or equivalent.</p>	<p>The baseline environment (Section 24.4) is described for the hydrology, hydrogeology and flood risk study area. An assessment of the impacts on water quality, resources and physical characteristics is provided in Section 24.7.</p>

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.15.3	<p>The PEIR should in particular describe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The existing quality of waters affected by the proposed project on water quality, noting any relevant existing discharges, proposed new discharges and proposed changes to discharges; ▪ Existing water resources affected by the proposed project on water resources, noting any relevant existing abstraction rates, proposed new abstraction rates and proposed changes to abstraction rates (including any impact on or use of mains supplies and in reference to Catchment Abstraction Management Strategies; ▪ Existing physical characteristics of the water environment (including quantity and dynamics of flow) affected by the proposed project and any impact of physical modifications to these characteristics; and ▪ Any impacts of the proposed project on water bodies or protected areas under the WFD [Water Framework Directive] and Source Protection Zones (SPZs) around potable groundwater abstractions. 	<p>The baseline characteristics of the water environment (which includes water quality, water resources, and flood risk) is provided in: Environmental assessment during construction, O&M, and decommissioning phase - sections 24.4; and Embedded mitigation- section 24.5 of the PEIR Chapter.</p>
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.7.3	<p>Projects which may be affected by, or may add to, flood risk should arrange pre-application discussions with the Environment Agency, and, where relevant, other bodies such</p>	<p>Discussions with the Environment Agency, Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFAs) and relevant internal drainage boards (IDB) have been carried out throughout the EPP. Details of the</p>

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
	as Internal Drainage Boards [IDBs], sewerage undertakers, navigation authorities, highways authorities and reservoir owners and operators. Such discussions should identify the likelihood and possible extent and nature of the flood risk, help scope the FRA, and identify the information that will be required by [the Inspectorate] to reach a decision on the application when it is submitted.	consultation are provided in section 7.3 of the PEIR Chapter.
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.15.6	The [SoS] should satisfy itself that a proposal has regard to the River Basin Management Plans (RBMP) and meets the requirements of the WFD (including Article 4.7) and its daughter directives, including those on priority substances and groundwater.	WFD classifications and objectives are taken into account, as the WFD water bodies themselves are receptors outlined in: Existing environment section 24.4; and Environmental assessment during construction, O&M, and decommissioning phase – section 24.7. A WFD Assessment is presented in Appendix 8.1 of Volume 2.

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-3

6.20.3 No relevant policy requirements for Hydrology, Hydrogeology and Flood Risk have been identified in NPS EN-3.

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-5

6.20.4 No relevant policy requirements for Hydrology, Hydrogeology and Flood Risk have been identified in NPS EN-5.

Other Policy Considerations

6.20.5 No other policy considerations were identified for hydrology, hydrogeology and flood risk.

Consideration for the SoS

6.20.6 Part 5.7 of NPS EN-1 sets out matters relevant to hydrology and flood risk. It is recognised that:

"Flooding is a natural process that plays an important role in shaping the natural environment. Although flooding cannot be wholly prevented, its adverse impacts can be avoided or reduced through good planning and management".

6.20.7 It is accepted in NPS EN-1 that producing the energy required by the UK, significant infrastructure will be required, including large-scale projects.

6.20.8 In taking decisions, the SoS should ensure appropriate weight is attached to designated sites of international, national and local importance. These are identified and considered in

Volume 1, Chapter 24: Hydrology, Hydrogeology, and Flood Risk.

6.20.9 Paragraphs 5.7.9 to 5.7.12 set out matters the SoS should have regard to in determining an application for development consent regarding hydrology and flood risk. These include:

- *"Application supported by an appropriate FRA;*
- *The Sequential Test has been applied as part of site selection;*
- *A sequential approach has been applied at the site level to minimise risk by detecting the most vulnerable uses to areas of lowest flood risk;*
- *The proposal is in line with any relevant national and local flood risk management strategy;*
- *Priority has been given to the use of sustainable drainage systems (SUDS); and*
- *In flood risk areas the Project is appropriately flood resilient and resistant, including safe access and escape routes where required, and that any residual risk can be safely managed over the lifetime of the development".*

6.20.10 The assessment of impacts to Hydrology, Hydrogeology, and Flood Risk has had regard to the relevant requirements for assessment set out in EN- 1 and is being carried out in accordance with those requirements, including the production of an FRA which will be submitted with the DCO application.

6.20.11 The assessment of Hydrology, Hydrogeology, and Flood Risk has therefore had regard to the relevant requirements for assessment set out in EN-1 and EN-3 and is being carried out in accordance with those requirements.

6.20.12 Table 24.31 of the PEIR Chapter provides a summary of the potential effects during the construction, O&M and decommissioning phases of the Project. Table 24.25 provides a summary of the approach to embedded mitigation.

6.20.13 The construction, O&M and decommissioning of the Project will be carried out in accordance with the relevant NPSs and other identified material planning policy matters.

6.20.14 The PEIR prepared for the Project indicates that there are no anticipated significant effects with regard to the EIA regulations and as such effects on Hydrology, Hydrogeology and Flood Risk should not weigh against the substantial benefits of the Project. The evidence of how the project has followed the requirements of the sequential and exception tests will be presented in the FRA, to be submitted with the DCO application.

6.21 Noise and Vibration

6.21.1 This topic is assessed in Volume 1, Chapter 26: Noise and Vibration. References to sections and tables within Section 6.21 refer to Volume 1, Chapter 26: Noise and Vibration.

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-1

6.21.2 Table 6.49 sets out the relevant National Policy Statements from NPS EN-1 related to Noise and Vibration and provides detail to where they are addressed by the project.

Table 6.49 National Policy Statements: NPS EN-1 related to Noise and Vibration

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.11.1	Excessive noise can have wide-ranging impacts on the quality of human life, health (for example owing to annoyance or sleep disturbance) and use and enjoyment of areas of value such as quiet places and areas with high landscape quality. The Government's policy on noise is set out in the Noise Policy Statement for England (NPSE). It promotes good health and good quality of life through effective noise management. Similar considerations apply to vibration, which can also cause damage to buildings.	Volume 1, Chapter 26: Noise and Vibration describes how a set of assessment criteria have been developed which has enabled the Project to be assessed against the principal aims of the NPSE which is referenced here.
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.11.6	Operational noise, with respect to human receptors, should be assessed using the principles of the relevant British Standards and other guidance. For the prediction, assessment and management of construction noise, reference should be made to any relevant British Standards and other guidance which also give examples of mitigation strategies. The standards and guidance used to assess the Project are set out in this table.	Volume 1, Chapter 26: Noise and Vibration describes how these standards have been used to assess the impact of noise and vibration.
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.11.7	The applicant should consult Environment Agency and Natural England, as necessary and in particular with regard to assessment of noise on protected species or other wildlife.	The results of any noise surveys and predictions may inform the ecological assessment. The seasonality of potentially affected species in nearby sites may also need to be taken into account. The assessment of noise impacts on ecological receptors is provided in Volume 1, Chapter 21: Onshore Ecology and Volume 1, Chapter 22: Onshore Ornithology and is being discussed with

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
		the Environment Agency and Natural England through the EPP.
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.11.8	The Project should demonstrate good design through selection of the quietest cost-effective plant available; containment of noise within buildings wherever possible; optimisation of plant layout to minimise noise emissions; and, where possible, the use of landscaping, bunds or noise barriers to reduce noise transmission.	Mitigation for reducing noise and vibration is described in section 7.5-7.7. Additional mitigation may be required, subject to the final design, as described in the Outline Noise and Vibration Management Plan (Document Reference: 8.1.1). Flexibility is retained at this stage to allow the principles of good design and avoidance of effect to be applied post-consent, with mitigation applied only where avoidance is not possible.
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.11.9	<p>The [SoS] should not grant development consent unless it is satisfied that the proposals will meet the following aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Avoid significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life from noise; ▪ Mitigate and minimise other adverse impacts on health and quality of life from noise; and ▪ Where possible, contribute to improvements to health and quality of life through the effective management and control of noise. 	Volume 1, Chapter 26: Noise and Vibration describes how a set of assessment criteria have been developed which has enabled the Project to be assessed against the principal aims of the NPSE which are in accordance with the three aims set out in paragraph 5.11.9 of NPS EN-1.
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.11.10	When preparing the development consent order, the SoS should consider including measurable requirements or specifying the mitigation measures to be put in place to ensure that noise levels do not exceed any limits specified in the DCO.	Embedded mitigation for reducing noise and vibration is described in Section 7.5. No additional mitigation is required as described in section 7.5-7.7. The mitigation measures set out could be specified so that the noise levels do not exceed any limits specified in the development consent order.

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-3

6.21.3 No relevant policy requirements for Noise and Vibration have been identified in EN-3.

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-5

6.21.4 Table 6.50 sets out the relevant National Policy Statements from NPS EN-5 related to Noise and Vibration and provides detail to where they are addressed by the project.

Table 6.50 National Policy Statements: NPS EN-5 related to Noise and Vibration

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-5 Policy Paragraph 2.12	With regards to Noise and Vibration, EN-5 focuses on the potential for overhead lines to emit an audible crackle or hum particularly during periods of rainfall. Audible noise effects can also arise from substation equipment such as transformers, quadrature boosters and mechanically switched capacitors. Transformers are installed at many substations and generate low frequency hum. Whether the noise can be heard outside a substation depends on a number of factors, including transformer type and the level of noise attenuation present (either engineered intentionally or provided by other structures).	Embedded mitigation for reducing noise and vibration is described in Section 7.5. Standard methods of assessment and interpretation using the principles of the relevant British Standard are being considered throughout the assessment. There are no overhead lines proposed by the Project.

Other Policy Considerations

6.21.5 No other policy considerations were identified for noise and vibration.

Considerations for the SoS

6.21.6 Part 5.11 of NPS EN-1 sets out matters relevant to Noise and Vibration at a national level. It is recognised that ‘excessive noise can have wide- ranging impacts on the quality of human life, health and use and enjoyment of areas of value such as quiet places and areas with high landscape quality’. It is recognised in NPS EN-1 that producing the energy required by the UK requires significant infrastructure, including large- scale projects.

6.21.7 Part 4 of NPS EN-1 sets out a series of general principles that will be taken into account when reaching a decision. NPS EN-1 paragraph 4.1.3 requires that the following matters relevant to Noise and Vibration are taken into account when considering any proposed development:

“Potential adverse impacts, including long-term and cumulative adverse impacts, as well as any measures to avoid, reduce or compensate for any adverse impacts”.

6.21.8 Paragraph 4.1.4 of NPS EN-1 states that in reaching a decision, the SoS should have regard to:

"Environmental, social and economic benefits and adverse impacts at national, regional and local levels".

- 6.21.9 NPS EN-3 paragraphs 5.11.8 to 5.11.10 set out matters the SoS should have regard to in reaching a decision, including proposed mitigation, specifically in respect of Noise and Vibration matters. It is confirmed that the SoS should not grant development consent unless it is satisfied that the proposals will avoid significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life from noise; mitigate and minimise other adverse impacts on health and quality of life from noise; and where possible, contribute to improvements to health and quality of life through the effective management and control of noise.
- 6.21.10 Table 7.77 of Volume 1, Chapter 26: Noise and Vibration provides a summary of the potential effects during the construction, O&M and decommissioning phases of the Project, as well as additional proposed mitigation measures. Embedded mitigation measures are described in Table 7.41.
- 6.21.11 The assessment of Noise and Vibration has had regard to the relevant requirements for assessment set out in EN-1 and EN-5 and is carried out in accordance with those requirements.
- 6.21.12 The construction, O&M and decommissioning of the Project will be carried out in accordance with the relevant NPSs and other identified material planning policy matters.
- 6.21.13 The PEIR prepared for the Project indicates that there are no anticipated significant effects with regard to the noise and vibration and therefore these effects should not weigh against the substantial benefits of the Project when considering the planning balance.

6.22 Traffic and Transport

- 6.22.1 This topic is assessed in Volume 1, Chapter 27: Traffic and Transport. References to sections and tables within Section 6.22 refer to Volume 1, Chapter 27: Traffic and Transport.

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-1

- 6.22.2 Table 6.51 sets out the relevant National Policy Statements from NPS EN-1 related to Traffic and Transport and provides detail to where they are addressed by the project.

Table 6.51 National Policy Statements: NPS EN-1 related to Traffic and Transport

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.13.5	The NPS discusses generic impacts associated with the transport of materials, goods and personnel to and from a development during all project phases. If a project is likely to have significant transport impacts the applicant will be required to produce a Transport Assessment (TA). The likely impact from substantial Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) traffic should be managed through the use of a	Consideration of the construction, O&M and decommissioning phases of the Project are set out in Volume 1, Chapter 27: Traffic and Transport. The mitigation section sets out the embedded and applied mitigation that will be required as part of the Project. An Outline Travel Plan (Document Reference: 8.1.6) and Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (Document Reference: 8.1.5) which provides details on how traffic would be managed.

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
	<p>Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP), with provision of adequate parking and arrangements for abnormal disruption. A Travel Plan will also be required in some instances setting out mitigation and management measures.</p>	
<p>EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.13.8</p>	<p>Demand management measures must be considered where any form of mitigation is required.</p>	<p>Mitigation measures proposed in the Chapter will manage routing and timing of HGV and staff movements.</p>
<p>EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.13.11</p>	<p>The [SoS] may attach requirements to a consent where there is likely to be substantial HGV traffic that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Control the number/routing of HGV movements during specific periods of the construction process; and ▪ Through consultation with network providers and the police force, ensure adequate arrangements are in place for the delivery of any abnormal loads. 	<p>Routing for HGV movements is being identified, as well as proposed working hours, to minimise the impact of the Project on the surrounding highway network. The need for any permits from relevant road and bridge authorities in relation to the transportation of Abnormal Indivisible Loads (AILs) will be obtained in advance of construction, following assessment of routes.</p>
<p>EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.13.11</p>	<p>If a project is likely to have significant transport implications, the applicant's ES should include a transport assessment, using the NATA/WebTAG methodology stipulated in Department for Transport (DfT) guidance, or any successor to such methodology.</p>	<p>Volume 1, Chapter 27: Traffic and Transport and supporting appendices have been produced in accordance with current transport guidance and this is evidenced throughout.</p>
<p>EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.13.4</p>	<p>Where appropriate, the applicant should prepare a travel plan including demand management measures to mitigate transport impacts. The applicant should also provide details of proposed measures to improve access by public transport, walking and cycling, to reduce the need for parking associated with the proposal and to mitigate transport impacts.</p>	<p>Volume 1, Chapter 27: Traffic and Transport outlines the embedded traffic and transport mitigation measures for the construction phase of the Project, such as the Outline Traffic Plan (OTP) (Document Reference: 8.1.6) and the Outline Public Access Management Plan (Document Reference: 8.1.7) included in the CoCP. The OTP will include demand management measures to be adopted.</p>

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-3

6.22.3 Table 6.52 sets out the relevant National Policy Statements from NPS EN-3 related to Traffic and Transport and provides detail to where they are addressed by the project.

Table 6.52 National Policy Statements: NPS EN-3 related to Traffic and Transport

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-3 Policy Paragraph 2.6.4	The extent to which generic impacts set out in EN-1 are relevant may depend upon the phase of the Project being considered. For example, land-based traffic and transport and noise issues may be relevant during the construction and decommissioning periods only, depending upon the specific proposal.	Volume 1, Chapter 27: Traffic and Transport does not include an assessment of the traffic impacts associated with the O&M phase of the Project.
EN-3 Policy Paragraph 2.7.77	Where a cumulative impact is likely, a cumulative transport assessment should form part of the assessment to consider the impacts of abnormal traffic movements relating to the Project in question.	Volume 1, Chapter 27: Traffic and Transport discusses the relevant committed developments within the vicinity of the Project, as well as assessing their cumulative impact on the Project.

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-5

6.22.4 No relevant policy requirements for Traffic and Transport have been identified in NPS EN-5.

Other Policy Considerations

6.22.5 No other policy considerations were identified for traffic and transport.

Consideration for the SoS

6.22.6 Part 5.13 of EN-1 sets out matters relevant to Traffic and Access at a national level. It is recognised that:

“The transport of materials, goods and personnel to and from a development during all project phases can have a variety of impacts on the surrounding transport infrastructure and potentially on connecting transport networks, for example through increased congestion. Impacts may include economic, social and environmental effects. Environmental effects may result particularly from increases in noise and emissions from road transport”.

6.22.7 It is recognised in NPS EN-1 that producing the energy required by the UK will require significant infrastructure, including large-scale projects.

6.22.8 Part 4 of NPS EN-1 sets out a series of general principles that will be taken into account when reaching a decision. NPS EN-1 paragraph 4.1.3 requires that the following matters relevant to Traffic and Access are taken into account when considering any proposed development:

- its potential benefits including its contribution to meeting the need for energy infrastructure, job creation and any long-term or wider benefits; and
- Its potential adverse impacts, including long-term and cumulative adverse impacts, as well as any measures to avoid, reduce or compensate for any adverse impacts.

6.22.9 Paragraph 1.4.1 of NPS EN-1 states that in reaching a decision, the SoS should have regard to:

"Environmental, social and economic, social and economic benefits and adverse impacts at national, regional and local levels".

6.22.10 NPS EN-1 paragraphs 5.13.6 and 5.13.7 set out matters the SoS should have regard to in determining an application for development consent, including:

- A new energy NSIP may give rise to substantial impacts on the surrounding transport infrastructure and the [SoS] should therefore ensure that the applicant has sought to mitigate these impacts, including during the construction phase of the development. Where the proposed mitigation measures are insufficient to reduce the impact on the transport infrastructure to acceptable levels, the [SoS] should consider requirements to mitigate adverse impacts on transport networks arising from the development; and
- Should the applicant be willing to enter into planning obligations, or requirements can be imposed to mitigate transport impacts identified in the NATA/WebTAG transport assessment, then development consent should not be withheld, and appropriately limited weight should be applied to residual effects on the surrounding transport infrastructure.

6.22.11 The greatest number of vehicle movements will be generated in the construction phase, with O&M traffic flows negligible by comparison. Fewer vehicle movements will be required during decommissioning than construction.

6.22.12 Table 27.89 of Volume 1, Chapter 27: Traffic and Transport provides a summary of the potential effects during the construction and decommissioning phases of the Project, as well as additional proposed mitigation measures. Embedded mitigation measures are described in Section 8.5.

6.22.13 The assessment of traffic and access has had regard to the relevant requirements for assessment set out in EN-1 and EN-3 and is being carried out in accordance with those requirements.

6.22.14 The construction, O&M and decommissioning of the Project will be carried out in accordance with the relevant NPSs and other identified material planning policy matters.

6.22.15 The PEIR prepared for the Project indicates that there are no anticipated significant effects with regard to traffic. Effects from traffic should therefore not weigh against the substantial benefits of the Project.

6.23 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

6.23.1 This topic is assessed in Volume 1, Chapter 28: Landscape and Visual Assessment. References to sections and tables within Section 6.23 refer to Volume 1, Chapter 28: Landscape and Visual Assessment.

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-1

6.23.2 Landscape and Visual matters, including the assessment of seascape effects, are considered within NPS EN-1. Table 6.53 sets out the relevant National Policy Statements from NPS EN-1 related to Noise and Vibration and provides detail to where they are addressed by the project.

Table 6.53 National Policy Statements: NPS EN-1 related to Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.9.5-5.96	NPS EN-1 requires that applicants carry out a landscape and visual assessment and report it in the Environmental Statement and have regard to guidance produced to assist in the assessment. The assessment should include the effects during construction, and O&M of the Project on landscape components and landscape character	NPS EN-1 is considered to be the primary policy with respect to the approach to the assessment of potential effects on Landscape, and the Applicant has carried out an assessment that follows this approach.
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.9.7	NPS EN-1 also states that the applicant's assessment should include the visibility and conspicuousness of the Project and potential effects on local amenity and nature conservation	The assessment has characterised the relevant landscape baselines, drawing on relevant national and local planning policy, landscape character areas and physical landscape features. This is supplemented through consultation with local planning authorities. Further information, including photomontages, is being obtained through field work. The methodology used to inform the baseline is set out in more detail in Volume 1, Chapter 28: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-3

6.23.3 NPS EN-3 acknowledges that generic landscape and visual impacts are considered in EN-1 and provides further guidance on the assessment of seascape and visual effects. Table 6.54 sets out the relevant National Policy Statements from NPS EN-1 related to Noise and Vibration and provides detail to where they are addressed by the project.

Table 6.54 National Policy Statements: NPS EN-3 related to Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-3 Policy Paragraph 2.4.2	Paragraph 2.4.2 of NPS EN3 advises: <i>'Proposals for renewable energy infrastructure should demonstrate good design in respect of landscape and visual amenity, and in the design of the Project to mitigate</i>	The assessment has followed guidance set out in EN-1, as set out in the sections above. The mitigation of landscape and visual effects through good design are considered within the LVIA. See Volume

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
	<i>impacts such as noise and effects on ecology.'</i>	1, Chapter 28: Landscape and Visual Assessment.

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-5

6.23.4 Table 6.55 sets out the relevant National Policy Statements from NPS EN-1 related to Noise and Vibration and provides detail to where they are addressed by the project.

Table 6.55 National Policy Statements: NPS EN-5 related to Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-3 Policy Paragraph 2.4.2	EN-5: Paragraph 2.8.2 advises: <i>'New substations, sealing end compounds and other above ground installations that form connection, switching and voltage transformation points on the electricity networks can also give rise to landscape and visual impacts. Cumulative landscape and visual impacts can arise where new overhead lines are required along with other related developments such as substations, windfarms and/or other new sources of power generation'.</i>	The proposed onshore ECC is to be underground, thereby minimising landscape and visual effects. The LVIA has assessed the effects of the underground onshore ECC and OnSS in Volume 1, Chapter 28: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.

Other Policy Considerations

6.23.5 No other policy considerations were identified for landscape and visual impact assessment.

Considerations for the SoS

6.23.6 Paragraphs 5.9.8 to 5.9.20 of NPS EN-1 sets out a series of principles that will be taken into account when reaching a decision. NPS EN-1 paragraph 5.9.8 states that projects need to be designed carefully, taking account of the potential impact on the landscape and to minimise harm to the landscape by reasonable mitigation. Table 27.10 of Volume 1, Chapter 27: Landscape and Visual Assessment provides a summary of the potential effects during the construction, O&M and decommissioning phases of the Project, with embedded mitigation summarised in Section 9.5. During development, the applicant has sought to bury cables.

6.23.7 NPS EN-1 states that all proposed energy infrastructure is likely to have visual effects for many receptors around proposed sites. The [SoS] will have to judge whether the visual effects on sensitive receptors outweigh the benefits of the Project. In response to this, the potential effects of the temporary and permanent elements of the Project on landscape and visual receptors have been assessed in the PEIR.

6.23.8 The Landscape and Visual Assessment draws conclusions on the effects to physical

landscape, landscape character, and visual amenity. With regard to the Physical Landscape, it is concluded that the landfall and onshore ECC will not have a significant effect on the coastal land and the onshore ECC and OnSS will not have a significant effect on agricultural land and hedgerows. During the construction phase, where hedgerows are removed there will be a short-term and medium-term effect as these will be replaced post construction and will reach their original height in three to five years or five to ten years (depending on their original height). In addition, where trees and hedgerow trees are removed during construction, the effect will be significant and long-term as the replacement of tree species can only be done after decommissioning, due to restrictions on planting over the cables.

- 6.23.9 In terms of Landscape Character, the overall effect of the construction and operation of the OnSS in all three indicative locations will be not significant. However, there will be significant localised effects related to the removal trees, taller hedgerows, and hedgerow trees. For Further details on the extent of the significant effects is provided in Volume 1, Chapter 28: Landscape and Visual Assessment. Furthermore, no significant effects on landscape character will arise as a result of the construction of the onshore ECC or at landfall or as a result of operational effects associated with these components of the onshore infrastructure.
- 6.23.10 Regarding Visual Amenity, the assessment concluded that the OnSS is the component of the onshore infrastructure with greatest potential to give rise to significant visual effects, owing to its large-scale and modern appearance which will be at variance with the predominantly rural character of the three potential search areas. Four to five viewpoints have been selected for each of the three indicative OnSS locations.
- 6.23.11 The assessment found that, during the construction and operational phases, the effect of the OnSS on most of these viewpoints would be significant, in relation to scale and appearance of the OnSS, but also the open and exposed nature of the flat and low-lying farmed landscapes where these three search areas occur. These significant effects all typically occur within the first 1 or 2km, denoting the extent to which an accumulation of small-scale rural features, such as trees, hedgerows, farmsteads and embankments reduce the extent and level of visibility beyond these close ranges. For some of the viewpoints significantly affected the effect can be reduced during the operational phase, within approximately 15-years through mitigation planting which will grow to screen visibility of the OnSS. Further details on each viewpoint are discussed in Volume 1, Chapter 28: Landscape and Visual Assessment. Furthermore, in respect of the construction of the landfall and the onshore ECC, the occurrence of significant effects on visual receptors will typically be localised and for that reason a detailed assessment of these effects will require defined locations, and this will therefore be undertaken as part of the DCO application.
- 6.23.12 The assessment of Onshore Landscape and Visual Impacts has had regard to the relevant requirements for assessment set out in EN-1 and EN-3 and is carried out in accordance with those requirements. The construction, O&M and decommissioning of the Project will be carried out in accordance with the relevant NPSs and other identified material planning policy matters.
- 6.23.13 The PEIR indicates that whilst the onshore elements of the Project will give rise to significant residual landscape and visual effects as a result of the proposed onshore OnSS the LVIA has assessed that there are limited residual effects to the landscape and visual resource as a result of the landfall and onshore cable ECC. It is of importance to note that all developments

of this scale are likely to give rise to some effects on landscape character and visual amenity.

6.23.14 Whilst the Project may lead to temporary significant adverse effects during construction, this is balanced against the significant benefit of the Project in the delivery of renewable energy. This combined with any long-term effects being mitigated as far as reasonably practicable through planting, it is concluded that, overall, this should not be given great weight against the substantial benefit of the Project when considering the overall planning balance.

6.24 Socio-Economic Characteristics

6.24.1 This topic is assessed in Volume 1, Chapter 29: Socio-Economic Characteristics. References to sections and tables within Section 6.24 refer to Volume 1, Chapter 29: Socio-Economic Characteristics.

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-1

6.24.2 Table 6.56 sets out the relevant National Policy Statements from NPS EN-1 related to Socio-Economic Characteristics and provides detail to where they are addressed by the project.

Table 6.56 National Policy Statements: NPS EN-1 related to Socio-Economic Characteristics

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.12.3	The assessment should consider all relevant socio-economic effects, which may include the creation of jobs and training opportunities.	The effects of the Project's construction activity on employment are considered in Volume 1, Chapter 29: Socio-Economic Characteristics. Employment effects associated with O&M activity are assessed in Section 29.7. The employment effects during the decommissioning phase are assessed in Section 29.7.
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.12.3	The assessment should consider all relevant socio-economic effects, which may include the provision of additional local services and improvements to local infrastructure, including the provision of educational and visitor facilities.	The socioeconomic effects upon the provision of additional local services and improvements to local infrastructure are assessed within Volume 1, Chapter 29: Socio-Economic Characteristics.
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.12.3	The assessment should consider all relevant socio-economic effects, which may include effects on tourism.	The effects on tourism and recreation are addressed under in Section 29.7
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.12.3	The assessment should consider all relevant socio-economic effects, which may include the impact of a changing influx of workers during the different construction, O&M	All relevant socio-economic effects during the construction phase are considered in section 29.7. Effects during the O&M phase are considered in section 29.7 of the PEIR Chapter. Effects during the

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
	and decommissioning phases of the energy infrastructure.	decommissioning phase are considered in section 29.7.
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.12.3	The assessment should consider all relevant socio-economic effects, which may include cumulative effects – if development consent were to be granted to for a number of projects within a region and these were developed in a similar timeframe, there could be some short-term negative effects, for example, a potential shortage of construction workers to meet the needs of other industries and major projects within the region.	Addressed under the cumulative effects section of the PEIR Chapter (see section 29.8).
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.12.6-5.12.7	[The Inspectorate] should have regard to the potential socio-economic effects of new energy infrastructure identified by the applicant and from any other sources that [the Inspectorate] considers to be both relevant and important to its decision. It should be reasonable for [the Inspectorate] to conclude that little weight is to be given to assertions of socio-economic effects not supported by evidence (particularly in view of the need for energy infrastructure as set out in this NPS).	The Project assessment provides evidence for assessments of socio-economic effects as far as it is possible to do at this stage. All relevant socio-economic effects during the construction, O&M, and decommissioning phase are considered in Volume 1, Chapter 29: Socio-Economic Characteristics.
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.12.8	The assessment should consider any relevant positive provisions the applicant has made or is proposing to make to mitigate impacts (for example through planning obligations) and any legacy benefits that may arise as well as any options for phasing development in relation to socio-economic impacts.	Provisions made to boost local capture of socio-economic effects are outlined as part of the additional enhancement measures and strategies discussed in Volume 1, Chapter 29: Socio-Economic Characteristics.

6.24.3 Table 6.57 sets out the relevant National Policy Statements from the draft NPS EN-1 related to Socio-Economic Characteristics and provides detail to where they are addressed by the project.

Table 6.57 National Policy Statements: Draft NPS EN-1 related to Socio-Economic Characteristics

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.13.3	Whilst not currently policy, the draft NPS has relevancy with regards the low carbon industry and socio economics states the assessment should consider inter alia: the contribution to the development of low-carbon industries at the local and regional level as well as nationally.	The construction, O&M and decommissioning of the Project has potential to support the development of low carbon industries (wind energy in particular, but also other energy types with similar supply chains), including associated supply chains. The potential contribution of the Project is considered in Volume 1, Chapter 29, for construction, O&M, and for the decommissioning phase.
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.13.3	Any indirect beneficial impacts for the region hosting the infrastructure, in particular in relation to use of local support services and supply chains.	Any indirect beneficial impacts for the region have been noted within Volume 1, Chapter 29: Socio-Economic Characteristics.
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 5.13.9	The [SoS] may wish to include a requirement that specifies the approval by the local authority of an employment and skills plan detailing arrangements to promote local employment and skills development opportunities, including apprenticeships, education, engagement with local schools and colleges and training programmes to be enacted.	The Project has engaged with local schools in Lincolnshire, including attendance at Careers Fair at John Spendluffe School, Lincolnshire (30th March 2023) to promote employment opportunities. Following consent, actions to ensure the skills and employment benefits that the Project can help deliver locally and nationally will be set out within the Supply Chain Plan required under the CfD supply chain process (Volume 1, Chapter 29: Socio-Economic Characteristics).

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-3

6.24.4 Table 6.58 sets out the relevant National Policy Statements from NPS EN-3 related to Socio-Economic Characteristics and provides detail to where they are addressed by the project.

Table 6.58 National Policy Statements: NPS EN-3 related to Socio-Economic

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-3 Policy Paragraph 2.6.160 and 2.6.158	Consideration should be given to potential economic impacts on recreational and commercial users of the sea.	The economic impacts of recreational users of the sea are considered in Section 29.71.7. The economic impacts of potential commercial users of the sea are considered in Chapter 12: Infrastructure and Other Marine Users.

Other Policy Considerations

6.24.5 No other policy considerations were identified for socio-economic characteristics.

Consideration for the SoS

6.24.6 Parts 2 and 3 of EN-1 set out matters relevant to socio-economic effects at a national level. It is recognised that:

"Energy is vital to economic prosperity and social well-being and so it is important to ensure that the UK has secure and affordable energy".

6.24.7 It is recognised in NPS EN-1 that producing the energy required by the UK will require significant infrastructure, including large scale projects.

6.24.8 Part 4 of NPS EN-1 sets out a series of general principles that will be taken into account when reaching a decision. NPS EN-1 paragraph 4.13 requires that the following matters relevant to Socio-Economics are taken into account when considering any proposed development:

"Its potential benefits including its contribution to meeting the need for energy infrastructure, job creation and any long-term or wider benefits; and

its potential adverse impacts, including any long-term and cumulative adverse impacts, as well as any measures to avoid, reduce or compensate for any adverse impacts".

6.24.9 Paragraph 4.1.4 of NPS EN-1 states that in reaching a decision, the SoS should have regard to:

"Environmental, social and economic benefits and adverse impacts at national, regional and local levels".

6.24.10 NPS EN-1 paragraphs 5.12.6 to 5.12.9 set out matters the [SoS] should have regard to in reaching a decision, including proposed mitigation, specifically in respect of socio-economic matters. It is confirmed that the [SoS] must have regard to potential socio-economic effects and give limited weight to assertions not backed up by evidence. Regard should also be had to any positive provisions proposed to make or mitigate impacts and any legacy benefits that may arise.

6.24.11 Table 29.28-29.55 of the Socio-Economics Chapter of the PEIR provides a summary of the potential effects during the construction, O&M and decommissioning phases of the Project, as well as additional proposed enhancement or mitigation measures. The conclusions of the assessment are that the worst-case long-term scenario would be a minor beneficial effect in socio-economic terms, given the provision of jobs and investment in local and UK supply chain. In the short term, there are potential limited-duration adverse effects predicted for the local tourism economy which are associated with the construction phase, and which reduce following completion of construction.

6.24.12 The assessment of Socio-Economics has had regard to the relevant requirements for assessment set out in NPS EN-1 and NPS EN-3 and is being carried out in accordance with those requirements.

6.24.13 The construction, O&M and decommissioning of the Project will be carried out in accordance with the relevant NPSs and other identified material planning policy matters.

6.24.14 Minor beneficial effects on socio-economics should be considered in addition to the substantial benefits of the Project as a whole. It should be also considered that these minor beneficial effects represent a worst case, and that other possible more likely scenarios, such as use of a local port (Port of Grimsby) would lead to greater beneficial effects.

6.25 Human Health

6.25.1 This topic is assessed in Volume 1, Chapter 30: Human Health. References to sections and tables within Section 6.25 refer to Volume 1, Chapter 30: Human Health.

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-1

6.25.2 Table 6.59 sets out the relevant National Policy Statements from NPS EN-1 related to Socio-Economic Characteristics and provides detail to where they are addressed by the project.

National Policy Statements: NPS EN-1 related to Socio-Economic Characteristics

Table 6.59 National Policy Statements: NPS EN-1 related to Human Health

Policy	Summary	Where is this addressed?
EN-1 Policy Paragraph 4.13	Energy production has the potential to impact on the health and well-being (“health”) of the population. Access to energy is clearly beneficial to society and to our health as a whole. However, the production, distribution and use of energy may have negative impacts on some people’s health. As described in the relevant sections of this NPS and in the technology specific NPSs, where the proposed project has an effect on human beings, the ES should assess these effects for each element of the Project, identifying any adverse health impacts, and identifying measures to avoid, reduce or compensate for these impacts as appropriate. The impacts of more than one development may affect people simultaneously, so the applicant and [the Inspectorate] should consider the cumulative impact on health. The direct impacts on health may include increased traffic, air or water pollution, dust, odour, hazardous waste and substances, noise, exposure to radiation, and increases in pests. New energy infrastructure may also affect the composition, size and proximity of the local population, and in doing so have indirect health impacts, for example if it in some way affects access to key public services, transport or the use of open space for recreation and physical activity.	Impacts to health are assessed in sections 7.1-7.4. Direct impacts to health are outlined in Volume 1, Chapter 30: Human Health.

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-3

6.25.3 No relevant policy requirements for public health have been identified in NPS EN-3.

6.25.4 NPS EN-5 Para 2.10.2 recognises that:

'All overhead power lines produce EMFs, and these tend to be highest directly under a line and decrease to the sides at increasing distance. Although putting cables underground eliminates the electric field, they still produce magnetic fields, which are highest directly above the cable (paragraph 2.10.12). EMFs can have both direct and indirect effects on human health. The direct effects occur in terms of impacts on the central nervous system resulting in its normal functioning being affected. Indirect effects occur through electric charges building up on the surface of the body producing a microshock on contact with a grounded object, or vice versa, which, depending on the field strength and other exposure factors, can range from barely perceptible to being an annoyance or even painful.'

How has this been addressed?

6.25.5 The potential effects of EMF are described in Volume 1, Chapter 30.

National Policy Statement: NPS EN-5

6.25.6 No relevant policy requirements for Human Health have been identified in NPS EN-5.

Other Policy Considerations

6.25.7 No other policy considerations were identified for human health.

Considerations for the SoS

6.25.8 Paragraphs 4.13.1 to 4.13.5 of NPS EN-1 set out matters relevant to Public Health. It is recognised that:

"Access to energy is beneficial to society and human health as a whole".

6.25.9 It is recognised in NPS EN-1 that producing energy required by the UK requires significant infrastructure, including large scale projects.

6.25.10 Where the proposed project has an effect on human beings, EN-1 states that the ES should assess these effects for each element of the Project, identifying any adverse health impacts, and identify measures to avoid, reduce or compensate for these impacts as appropriate.

6.25.11 NPS EN-1 recognises that:

"Generally, those aspects of energy infrastructure which are most likely to have a significantly detrimental impact on health are subject to separate regulation (for example air pollution) which will constitute effective mitigation of them, so that it is unlikely that health concerns will either constitute a reason to refuse consent or require specific mitigation under the Planning Act 2008. However, the [SoS] will want to take account of health concerns when setting requirements relating to a range of impacts such as noise".

6.25.12 Where relevant, these potential effects are assessed under the relevant Chapters, such as Volume 1, Chapter 19: Onshore Air Quality and Volume 1, Chapter 26: Noise and Vibration.

- 6.25.13 Section 2.10 of NPS EN-5 considers the potential for EMF to arise as a result of new power transmission projects, and suggest an approach to mitigation for EMF effects, where they might occur. The applicant has considered the potential for the generation of EMFs as a result of the onshore components of the Project. EMF has been scoped out of assessment following receipt of the Scoping Opinion.
- 6.25.14 The assessment of Health has had regard to the relevant requirements for assessment and is being carried out in accordance with those requirements.
- 6.25.15 The construction, O&M and decommissioning of the Project will be carried out in accordance with the relevant NPSs and other identified material planning policy matters. The environmental information and assessment carried out for the Project demonstrates that there is no conflict with any of the conditions set out by the NPSs which would lead to a refusal of development consent on the grounds of Public Health.
- 6.25.16 The PEIR prepared for the Project indicates that there are no anticipated significant effects with regard to public health. Effects on public health should therefore not weigh against the substantial benefits of the Project when considering the planning balance of the Application.

7 Balance of Considerations and Overall Conclusions

- 7.1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared to assist the Secretary of State with the determination of the DCO application for the Project.
- 7.1.2 The Planning Statement has given an overview of the project description, site selection and consultation process and detailed the planning policy context against which this DCO application should be decided.
- 7.1.3 The Project will support the UK in its transition to a low carbon economy, helping meet the ambition of 50GW of offshore wind by 2030 and net zero emissions by the year 2050. The Needs Statement that supports this DCO application (see Volume 1, Chapter 2: Need, Policy and Legislative Context) explains in detail the UK's commitment to decarbonisation and should be read alongside this Planning Statement.
- 7.1.4 An increase in the amount of renewable energy generated by offshore wind will contribute to better energy security and the resilient network required to meet future demand.
- 7.1.5 The Project will be a necessary part of the future generation mix, and as such will make a valuable contribution in the direction of adopted UK Government policy and achievement of decarbonisation commitments.
- 7.1.6 With the energy sector contributing approximately 21% of all Greenhouse Gas in the UK³ and the urgent need to replace polluting generating stations, such as coal, the Project will play a critical role in helping to reduce carbon emissions.
- 7.1.7 Alongside the overall environmental benefits, further development in the offshore wind sector can contribute to a skilled, diverse workforce and strengthen the existing manufacturing base. Offshore wind is a highly skilled industry, which is well placed to create jobs and boost earning power in regions across the UK which require economic growth.
- 7.1.8 There is a large amount of policy support for offshore windfarms in the NPSs and also the East Inshore and East Offshore Marine Plan. The NPSs provide the basis against which the DCO application should be assessed against as stated by Section 104 of the 2008 Act.
- 7.1.9 NPS EN-1 sets out that given the level and urgency of need for energy infrastructure, the decision maker should start with a presumption in favour of granting consent to applications for energy NSIPs unless more specific policies set out in relevant NPSs clearly indicate that consent should be refused, or the adverse impacts will outweigh the benefits. The Project has been developed to limit any adverse impacts in line with the NPSs as demonstrated in the policy analysis.
- 7.1.10 When taking into account the evidence presented in the PEIR and this Planning Statement, it is not considered that there are any adverse impacts that outweigh the benefits associated with the Project. It has been demonstrated that the Project is in accordance with both national and local planning policy.

³ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1051408/2020-final-greenhouse-gas-emissions-statistical-release.pdf

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