

**Response to Request by the Secretary of State for Comments on the
Application for the Proposed Hornsea Project Two Offshore Wind Farm
for
The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds**

21 April 2016

Planning Act 2008 (as amended)

In the matter of:

**Application by SMartWind for an Order granting Development Consent for the
Hornsea Offshore Wind Farm – Project Two**

**Planning Inspectorate Ref: EN010053
Registration Identification Ref: 10031166**



The RSPB has carefully considered the request for information issued by the Secretary of State on 7th April 2016.

We confine our response to the second issue – Ornithology.

The RSPB is grateful for the Secretary of State's decision to consult on the potential implications of the Hornsea Project Two scheme for the proposed extension of Hamford Water Special Protection Area (SPA) to protect foraging Little Tern at sea. The RSPB notes that both the SPA and the proposed extension lie on the Essex coast.

Little Terns usually feed within 2km of the nesting colony, and the maximum foraging distance recorded is 11km from the colony (Thaxter, C.B., Lascelles, B., Sugar, K., Cook, A.S., Roos, S., Bolton, M., Langston, R.H. and Burton, N.H., (2012). Seabird foraging ranges as a preliminary tool for identifying candidate Marine Protected Areas. *Biological Conservation*, 156, pp.53-61).

Due to the relatively short distances travelled by foraging Little Terns, the RSPB thinks it extremely unlikely that the Hamford Water SPA and pSPA population will be affected by either the cabling or the operation of the Hornsea project 2 scheme. Moreover we did not raise concerns about the potential impacts of the Hornsea Project Two scheme upon the significantly closer nesting colony at Easington, north of Spurn Point, which is only approximately 13km from the nearest location of the intertidal cable works.

On the basis of the distance from the proposed SPA extension to the Hornsea Project Two scheme's location and cabling route the RSPB is satisfied that there will not be a likely significant effect upon the proposed extension to the Hamford Water SPA and its species, and consequently does not raise any concerns.