

Norfolk Boreas Offshore Wind Farm

Consultation Report

Appendix 27.4 Natural England's response to project design change early consultation

Applicant: Norfolk Boreas Limited
Document Reference: 5.1.27.4
Pursuant to APFP Regulation: 5(2)(q)

Date: June 2019
Revision: Version 1
Author: Copper Consultancy

Photo: Ormonde Offshore Wind Farm

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Date: 03 December 2018
Our ref: 10570 Consultation 265273
Your ref: PB5640-002-003



David Tarrant
Haskoning DHV UK Ltd.
74/2 Commercial Quay,
Commercial Street,
Leith,
Edinburgh
EH6 6LX,

BY EMAIL ONLY

Dear David,

Statutory Consultation under Section 42 of the Planning Act 2008 and Regulation 11 of the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2009

Thank you for the Norfolk Boreas Offshore Wind Farm, Project Design Update Briefing Note received on the 08 November 2018 requesting Natural England's advice regarding the adjustment to the Area of Lease (AfL) and red line boundary.

Natural England welcomes the design decision to use a HVDC solution, as a HVDC transmission would reduce the maximum number of export cables from the six required for a HVAC transmission to two, thus reducing the area and duration of seabed disturbance across the Haisborough Hammond and Winterton SAC, during construction and operation phases of the proposed development.

Natural England notes that the change to AfL is required in order to cover 'the gap' between Norfolk Boreas and Norfolk Vanguard East, across which cables will be laid. 'The gap' is not currently included in the AfL for either project. 'The gap' lies within the candidate Southern North Sea SAC, designated for the Annex II species Harbour porpoise, as such we would expect any potential impact pathways from the development within the gap to be assessed within the Environmental Impact Assessment of Vanguard and Boreas. In relation to the potential requirement to undertake further surveys in 'the gap' between the projects/arrays, it is our understanding that due to the buffer included within the survey designs there is some data covering the gap and the immediate vicinity. We note that preconstruction surveys of the area will be conducted as part of the DCO.

Natural England has no objection to the change to AfL being proposed. We note that Norfolk Boreas Ltd are planning to conduct a 'non-statutory targeted consultation' over a 30-day period in January and February 2019. Natural England recognises the importance of the pre-application stage of the consenting regime and we welcome the opportunity to engage at this stage. As such we seek to make this process as effective as possible. Natural England have therefore provided this letter of comfort under DAS in order to engage early in the process and are happy for Vattenfall to share this with relevant interested parties.

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment and landscape is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development. Pursuant to an authorisation made on the 9th December 2013 by the JNCC under paragraph 17(c) of Schedule 4 to the NERC Act 2006, Natural England is authorised to exercise the JNCC's functions as a statutory consultee in respect of applications for offshore renewable energy installations in offshore waters (0-200nm) adjacent to England.

If you have any questions regarding the above comments or want to discuss further any of the issues we have raised please do not hesitate to contact Tamara Rowson at Natural England on the details provided below.

Yours sincerely,

[Redacted signature block]