

Norfolk Boreas Offshore Wind Farm

Chapter 7

Technical Consultation

Environmental Statement

Volume 1

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Glossary of Acronyms

DCLG	Department for Communities and Local Government
DCO	Development Consent Order
EEA	European Economic Area
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EIFCA	Eastern Inshore Fisheries Conservation Authority
EPP	Evidence Plan Process
ES	Environmental Statement
ETG	Expert Topic Group
EU	European Union
HRA	Habitat Regulations Assessment
IDB	Internal Drainage Board
IPC	Infrastructure Planning Commission
MMO	Marine Mammal Organisation
NPS	National Policy Statement
NSIP	Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project
PEI	Preliminary Environmental Information
PEIR	Preliminary Environmental Information Report
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
SoCC	Statement of Community Consultation
SoCG	Statement of Common Ground
TWT	The Wildlife Trusts
UK	United Kingdom
VWPL	Vattenfall Wind Power Limited
WDC	Whale and Dolphin Conservation
WFD	Water Framework Directive

Glossary of Terminology

Evidence Plan Process	A voluntary consultation process with specialist stakeholders to agree the approach to the EIA and information to support the HRA.
Landfall	Where the offshore cables come ashore at Happisburgh South.
Necton National Grid substation	The grid connection location for Norfolk Boreas and Norfolk Vanguard.
Norfolk Vanguard	Norfolk Vanguard offshore wind farm, sister project of Norfolk Boreas.
Offshore cable corridor	The corridor of seabed from the Norfolk Boreas site to the landfall site within which the offshore export cables will be located.
Onshore cable route	The up to 35m working width within a 45m wide corridor which will contain the buried export cables as well as the temporary running track, topsoil storage and excavated material during construction.
Onshore infrastructure	The combined name for all onshore infrastructure associated with the project from landfall to grid connection.
Onshore project substation	A compound containing electrical equipment to enable connection to the National Grid. The substation will convert the exported power from HVDC to HVAC, to 400kV (grid voltage). This also contains equipment to help maintain stable grid voltage.
The Applicant	Norfolk Boreas Limited
The project	Norfolk Boreas Wind Farm including the onshore and offshore infrastructure.

7 TECHNICAL CONSULTATION

7.1 Introduction

1. This chapter of the Environmental Statement (ES) outlines the approach taken to consultation relating to the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the Norfolk Boreas Offshore Wind Farm project (herein ‘the project’).
2. This chapter outlines the technical consultation which has taken place to inform the EIA. Technical consultation is consultation with statutory and non-statutory bodies that has informed and focused the approach to, or particular technical aspect of, the EIA. Using the term "technical consultation" distinguishes it from all other aspects of consultation that have taken place in relation to the project and specifically focuses on consultation relating to the EIA. Consultation in relation to the EIA includes statutory consultation (i.e. scoping and consultation undertaken in accordance with Section 42 of the Planning Act 2008 as amended (herein ‘the Planning Act’), see section 7.2.1) and in accordance with Regulation 12 of the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (herein known as ‘the EIA Regulations’), and non-statutory consultation (e.g. through the Evidence Plan Process (EPP), see section 7.3.2).
3. A summary of relevant technical consultation responses and the account taken of them by Norfolk Boreas Limited is given in each technical chapter of the ES. Where feedback has informed the site selection or project design this is outlined in Chapter 4 Site Selection and Assessment of Alternatives and Chapter 5 Project Description respectively.
4. A description of all consultation, including technical, community, landowner, other stakeholders and statutory consultation under Sections 42, 47 and 48 of the Planning Act, is provided in the Consultation Report (document reference 5.1) which forms part of the Development Consent Order (DCO) application. A Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) was published in October 2018 in accordance with Section 47 of the Planning Act. Consultation undertaken following publication of the SoCC is considered to be ‘formal’ under the Planning Act. Prior to publication of the SoCC, the consultation undertaken was considered as ‘informal’ under the Planning Act.
5. Consultation is a continuous process throughout the development of the project and stakeholders will continue to be consulted post DCO application, where appropriate. The chapters of this ES have been prepared taking into account responses to consultation to date as outlined above. Where necessary, in order to allow finalisation of the submission, a cut-off of the 20th March 2019 has been used for consultation information to be incorporated in the ES; this coincided with Deadline 5

of the Norfolk Vanguard Examination. Consultation after this date have been given due consideration and incorporated where possible, however if this is not possible it will be used to inform the ongoing development of the project including during the post application and examination phases.

6. Norfolk Boreas Limited recognises that effective and meaningful consultation is an integral part of its development activities and is committed to ensuring an open and transparent approach to its consultation and engagement activities.
7. Vattenfall Wind Power Limited (VWPL) (the parent company of Norfolk Boreas Limited) is also developing Norfolk Vanguard, a 'sister project' to Norfolk Boreas. Norfolk Vanguard's development schedule is approximately one year ahead of Norfolk Boreas and as such the DCO application was submitted in June 2018.
8. The two projects have been developed strategically together with much of their infrastructure being co-located including:
 - A joint offshore cable corridor;
 - The same cable landfall location;
 - A joint onshore cable route;
 - Co-located onshore project substations; and
 - The same grid connection point at the Necton National Grid Substation
9. Due to this strategic development, much of the consultation (with S42, S47 and S48 stakeholders) undertaken as part of Norfolk Vanguard is also relevant to Norfolk Boreas. This consultation has directly influenced a number of decisions with regard to the design and location of Norfolk Boreas. Further information is provided in Chapter 4 Site selection and Alternatives and the technical consultation undertaken for Norfolk Vanguard is detailed in Chapter 7 of the Norfolk Vanguard Environmental Statement (Norfolk Vanguard Limited, 2018).
10. Furthermore, understanding and information pertinent to Norfolk Boreas which emerges during the examination of the Norfolk Vanguard DCO application also adds to the development and assessment for Norfolk Boreas, and is reflected in the ES (up to the 20th March 2019 deadline).

7.2 Policy and Guidance

7.2.1 The Planning Act

11. As detailed in Chapter 3 Policy and Legislative Context, the project is defined under Part 3, Section 15(3) of the Planning Act 2008 as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP). Norfolk Boreas Limited has therefore undertaken pre-

application consultation in accordance with the requirements of the Planning Act 2008 and the EIA Regulations.

12. The relevant sections of Part 5, Chapter 2 of the Planning Act 2008 are:
- Section 42 – Duty to consult;
 - Section 43 – Local authorities for the purpose of section 42(1)(b);
 - Section 44 – Categories for purposes of section 42(1)(d);
 - Section 45 – Timetable for consultation under section 42;
 - Section 46 – Duty to notify the Secretary of State of proposed application;
 - Section 47 – Duty to consult local community;
 - Section 48 – Duty to publicise; and
 - Section 49 – Duty to take account of responses to consultation and publicity.

7.2.2 National Policy Statements

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

7.2.3 EIA Regulations

14. Consultation is explicitly referenced in the EIA Directive (85/337/EEC) and is a key element of the EIA Regulations.
15. The EIA Directive (2014/52/EU) was published in the European Union's (EU) Official Journal in April 2014. Directive 2014/52/EU amends Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment.
16. Under Article 3(2) of the Directive, transposed by Regulation 37, the EIA Regulations 2017, where an ES is submitted or where a scoping opinion has been sought before 16th May 2017, the project can benefit from transitional provisions to continue under the provisions of the EIA Regulations 2009. Norfolk Boreas Limited submitted a request for a scoping opinion on the 8th May 2017. Whilst it is considered that the project benefits from the transitional arrangements, in order to ensure the EIA is of high quality and undertaken in accordance with best practice, Norfolk Boreas Limited has voluntarily sought to comply with the EIA Regulations 2017 in the preparation of this ES.

17. The EIA Regulations set out a process by which statutory stakeholders are to be notified about the intention to submit an ES and consulted on the information to be provided in the ES. It places a duty on these stakeholders to enter into consultation with the promoter of an EIA development and to provide any environmental information they hold that is relevant to the preparation of the ES. The EIA Regulations also make provisions for the local community to be informed and consulted about the EIA development.
18. The EIA Regulations place a greater emphasis on consultation especially with regard to the content of the ES, whereas the NPS highlight specific topics and stakeholder groups to consult. As such, Norfolk Boreas Limited's approach to consultation has been informed by both the NPS and the EIA Regulations to ensure a thorough and robust consultation programme.
19. For the project, the relevant sections of the EIA Regulations relating to pre-application consultation are:
 - Regulation 8(1)(b) - Notify the Secretary of State in writing that the applicant proposes to provide an ES (note, however, that the initial notification made in October 2016 to the Secretary of State was made pursuant to Regulation 6(1)(b) of the EIA Regulations 2009);
 - Regulation 10 - Application for a Scoping Opinion;
 - Regulation 11- Procedure to facilitate preparation of ES;
 - Regulation 12 - Consultation statement requirements;
 - Regulation 13 - Pre-application publicity under section 48 (duty to publicise); and
 - Regulation 32 - Development with significant transboundary effects.

7.2.4 Planning Inspectorate Advice Notes

20. The Planning Inspectorate has published a series of advice notes in relation to NSIPs. The advice notes are non-statutory but provide advice and information on a range of issues potentially arising throughout the application process.
21. Norfolk Boreas Limited's approach to consultation has been informed by a range of the Planning Inspectorate's Advice Notes, with particular reference to:
 - Advice Note 3: EIA Consultation and Notification (August 2017);
 - Advice Note 7: Environmental Impact Assessment: Preliminary Environmental Information, Screening and Scoping (December 2017);
 - Advice Note 10: Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) (November 2017); and
 - Advice Note 14: Compiling the Consultation Report (April 2012).

7.2.5 Guidance

22. Norfolk Boreas Limited's approach to consultation has also been informed by the following guidance documents:
- Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), March 2015 Planning Act 2008 - Guidance on the pre-application process; and
 - Infrastructure Planning Commission (IPC), 29 March 2010. IPC Guidance Note 1 on Pre-Application Stages (Chapter 2 of the Planning Act 2008). Revision 1.

7.3 Approach to EIA Consultation

23. Norfolk Boreas Limited has conducted an iterative EIA consultation process for the project. The process described in this chapter is documented in full in the Consultation Report (document reference 5.1).
24. In order to inform this ES, consultation on the project has been conducted on an informal (non- statutory) basis (e.g. through the EPP, see section 7.3.2) since 2016 and on a formal (statutory) basis following the publication of the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) (consultation period 7th November to 9th December 2018) as the EIA and project design processes has progressed.

7.3.1 Overview

25. In 2016 VWPL notified the Secretary of State of its intention to undertake an EIA and provide an ES in respect of Norfolk Vanguard and Norfolk Boreas. Initial meetings were also held with a number of organisations to introduce the project.
26. Norfolk Boreas Limited (VWPL at that time) commenced non-statutory technical consultation via the EPP (see section 7.3.2) in February 2017.
27. In May 2017, Norfolk Boreas Limited (VWPL at that time) submitted a Scoping Report to the Planning Inspectorate. The Secretary of State then issued the Norfolk Boreas Scoping Opinion in June 2017.
28. Since scoping, Norfolk Boreas Limited has continued to engage in technical consultation via the EPP (section 7.3.2) as well as undertaking community consultation (the details of which are presented within the Consultation Report (document reference 5.1) which forms part of the DCO application.

7.3.2 Evidence Plan Process

29. Norfolk Boreas Limited have consulted with stakeholders on a non-statutory basis through the EPP which started in February 2017. Key consultation from this process is recorded in the relevant chapters of the ES.

30. The EPP is a mechanism to help agree the information to be provided to the Planning Inspectorate as part of the DCO application, such that the project can show compliance with the EIA Regulations and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.
31. The EPP aimed to assist all parties in the process during the evolution of the proposed DCO application, by:
 - Giving greater certainty to all parties on the amount and range of evidence to be presented within the application;
 - Providing structure and enhancing the efficiency of discussions to allow identification of key environmental and consenting issues;
 - Enabling time and resource requirements to be planned and optimised for all parties;
 - Helping address and agree issues earlier in the pre-application stage where possible so that robust, streamlined decisions could be taken, and additional data could be collected as required; and
 - Providing a platform to debate advice on particular topics between multiple agencies / stakeholders.
32. The EPP does not replace or duplicate existing requirements and has been structured to fit with the Planning Act 2008 DCO application process, including the statutory pre-application consultation processes.
33. Norfolk Boreas Limited have undertaken the majority of EIA technical consultation through the EPP. Technical consultation that was undertaken outside the EPP is detailed in section 7.3.3. The EPP also covered HRA consultation, which has influenced the Information to Support HRA report (document reference 5.3) submitted as part of the DCO application.
34. While the EPP was intended to provide a positive tool in the consenting process, the involvement of statutory consultees in agreeing any methodologies was done on a 'without prejudice basis' and did not fetter their ability to make independent comments at the statutory consultation stage of the project. It was recognised that input to the EPP was at an officer-level (or other role level as applicable) and may not have influenced the final comments made at the statutory consultation stages by elected members or board members.
35. As Norfolk Boreas and Norfolk Vanguard are being progressed together (section 7.1) early consultation through the Norfolk Vanguard EPP included discussions around both projects. Further detail is provided in Chapter 7 Technical consultation of the Norfolk Vanguard ES (Norfolk Vanguard Limited, 2018).

36. At the time of writing the Norfolk Vanguard project was under examination and as a result there were changes and clarifications being provided for that project at various different examination deadlines. As the projects are similar in location and design with strategic development of the onshore infrastructure, many of these changes and clarifications may also be required for Norfolk Boreas. However, in order to finalise the Norfolk Boreas DCO submission it has been necessary to impose a date beyond which information from the Norfolk Vanguard examination could not be incorporated into the Norfolk Boreas application. The 20th March 2019, which was the Norfolk Vanguard examination Deadline 5 was chosen as the cut off point. Beyond this date no further material changes have been made to the Norfolk Boreas application unless they could easily be incorporated without impacting the submission programme. The 20th March 2019 deadline was agreed with EPP members during the final round of expert topic group meetings, and with the planning inspectorate during a meeting held on the 4th February 2019.

7.3.2.1 Expert Topic Groups

37. The EPP is divided into several Expert Topic Group (ETG) areas which follow the majority of topics covered by the EIA and HRA.
38. To discuss the technical detail of these topics, separate groups of experts from relevant bodies are convened. These groups had the following functions:
- Agree the relevance, appropriateness and sufficiency of data for a specific assessment (including both site specific and contextual) and determine whether to continue or halt specific survey work and / or analysis);
 - Agree the methods for data analysis;
 - Agree assessment scenarios for the ES;
 - Agree methods for assessment(s) (including where possible interpretation of impact and levels of significance and potential mitigation or management measures); and
 - Agree whether and when to change the evidence requirements and collect additional evidence, including how these should be collected and analysed, updating the plan and timetable as necessary.
39. The process is iterative with each group working through the above functions, reaching agreements as far as possible during the pre-application period. Statements of Common Ground (SoCG) are being prepared where applicable, and any outstanding areas of disagreement will be noted in the relevant SoCG and (if appropriate) will be deliberated during examination.
40. Stakeholders with experience relevant to each topic were invited to join the ETG and following their responses the members of the ETG groups were agreed.

41. A breakdown of the various groups and which organisations are represented is provided in Table 7.1. The table is organised into offshore and onshore ETGs. Where applicable (and agreed upon with ETG members) some ETGs were combined where similar topics were to be discussed with similar stakeholders. Although the EPP was not part of the statutory consultation, it provides the audit trail for the EIA process and associated decision-making.

Table 7.1 Expert Topic groups and organisations represented

ETG	Organisations represented
Offshore	
Marine Physical Processes (nearshore and offshore)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural England; • Marine Management Organisation (MMO); • Cefas (as directed by the MMO); • Environment Agency; • North Norfolk District Council
Marine Water and Sediment Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural England; • MMO; • Cefas (as directed by the MMO); • Environment Agency
Benthic and Intertidal Ecology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural England; • MMO; • Cefas (as directed by the MMO); • Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (EIFCA); • The Wildlife Trusts; • Environment Agency
Marine Mammal Ecology;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural England; • MMO; • Cefas (as directed by the MMO); • Whale and Dolphin conservation (WDC) • The Wildlife Trusts (TWT);
Fish and Shellfish Ecology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural England; • MMO; • Cefas (as directed by the MMO); • EIFCA • The Wildlife Trust
Offshore Ornithology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural England • RSPB
Offshore Archaeology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic England • Norfolk County Council - Archaeologist;
Onshore	
Onshore Ecology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment Agency • Natural England; • Norfolk Wildlife Trust; • Norfolk County Council – Terrestrial Ecologist; • Breckland Council– Terrestrial Ecologist; • North Norfolk District Council– Terrestrial Ecologist;
Ground Conditions and Contaminated Land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment Agency; • Anglian Water • Internal Drainage Board/ Water Management Alliance (WLMA)

ETG	Organisations represented
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Norfolk County Council • North Norfolk District council
Water Resources and Flood risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment Agency; • Norfolk County Council - Lead Local Flood Authority; • Internal Drainage Board/ WLMA • Anglian Water; • Natural England
Traffic and Transport;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highways England; • Norfolk County Council - Highway Authority; • Broadland District Council - Environmental Health Officer; • Breckland Council - Environmental Health Officer; • North Norfolk District Council - Environmental Health Officer
Air Quality and Noise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Norfolk County Council – Public Health; • Broadland District Council - Environmental Health Officer; • Breckland Council - Environmental Health Officer; • North Norfolk District Council - Environmental Health Officer
Health, Socio-Economics and Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broadland District Council - Environmental Health Officer • Breckland Council - Environmental Health Officer; • North Norfolk District Council - Environmental Health • Norfolk County Council - Public Health; • Norfolk County Council – Economic Development • Norfolk County Council – Employment and skills manager
Onshore Archaeology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Norfolk County Council - Archaeologist; • Historic England
Landscape and Land Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Norfolk County Council – Landscape; • Broadland District Council– Landscape; • Breckland Council– Landscape; • North Norfolk District Council– Landscape; • Norfolk County Council; and • Natural England.

7.3.2.2 Consultation

42. A summary of the consultation held under the EPP is provided in Table 7.2. Due to the fact that there has been significant consultation under the Norfolk Vanguard EPP, much of which relates to, or is directly relevant to, Norfolk Boreas, the general approach has been to streamline consultation to reduce the requirement for members to travel to meetings. Where possible, method statements have been agreed by correspondence, with meetings only held where agreement cannot be reached on specific matters. This approach reflects the wishes of the members of the ETGs.

Table 7.2 Overview of meetings under the EPP

Date	Activity	Consultees
16 th February 2017	Meeting to agree the offshore geophysical and environmental survey methodology	MMO and Natural England
4 th March 2017	Letter exchange by email to agree the approach to Norfolk Boreas marine site investigation approach for Archaeology	Historic England
8 th May 2017	Early provision of the Norfolk Boreas Scoping report	Norfolk County Council, Natural England and the MMO.
16 th June 2017	Email consultation gaining approval of intertidal survey methodology	Natural England
July to August 2017	Agreement of Terms of Reference for the Norfolk Boreas EPP	The Steering Group (The Planning Inspectorate, Norfolk County Council, MMO and Natural England).
15 th August 2017	Invitation to the Norfolk Boreas EPP for onshore topics.	Anglian Water, Environment Agency, Breckland Council, Broadland District Council, Internal drainage boards (or Water management alliance), Natural England, Norfolk County Council (Various officers), Norfolk Wildlife Trust, North Norfolk District Council, and Historic England.
29 th September 2017	Email consultation gaining approval that no further wintering bird surveys would be required	Natural England
23 th October 2017	Consultation on reporting of initial Benthic and contaminant sample analysis and confirmation that an appropriate number of samples had been analysed.	Natural England and the MMO (with Cefas as statutory advisors)
21 st November 2017	Invitation to the Norfolk Boreas EPP for offshore topics.	Environment Agency, MMO (and Cefas as statutory advisors), North Norfolk District Council, The Wildlife Trusts, Whale and Dolphin Conservation, EIFCA, RSPB and Historic England.
January / February 2018	Consultation on the following Method Statements: Onshore Ecology; Ground Conditions and Contaminated Land; Onshore Water Quality, WFD and Flood Risk; Traffic and Transport; Air Quality and Noise; Health; Socio Economics and Tourism; Landscape; and Land use.	Anglian Water, Environment Agency, Breckland Council, Broadland District Council, Internal drainage boards (or Water management alliance), Natural England, Norfolk County Council (Various officers), Norfolk Wildlife Trust, North Norfolk District Council and Highways England
February / March 2018	Agreement of the Marine Physical Processes, Marine Water and sediment quality, Fish and Shell Fish Ecology and Offshore Ornithology Method Statements	Environment Agency, MMO (and Cefas as statutory advisors), North Norfolk District Council, The Wildlife Trusts, Whale and Dolphin Conservation, EIFCA, RSPB

Date	Activity	Consultees
8 th March 2018	Onshore and Offshore Archaeology ETG meeting to agree Method Statements	Historic England and Norfolk County Council
12 th March 2018	Benthic and Intertidal Ecology ETG meeting to agree Method Statement	Natural England, MMO, The Wildlife Trusts, EIFCA and The Environment Agency.
14 th March 2018	Marine Mammal ETG meeting to agree Method Statement	Natural England, MMO, WDC and The Wildlife Trusts
10 th May 2018	Consultation on the results of the Geotechnical Archaeological analysis.	Historic England
21 st May 2018	Traffic and Transport ETG meeting to agree Method Statement	Highways England and Norfolk County Council
21 st May to August 2018	Consultation on the results of the offshore Geophysical Archaeological analysis.	Historic England
1 st February 2019	Onshore and Offshore Archaeology ETG meeting to agree comments on the PEIR and way forward for ES and SoCG	Historic England and Norfolk County Council
7 th February 2019	Water Resources and Flood Risk ETG meeting to agree comments on the PEIR and way forward for ES and SoCG	Environment Agency, the Water Management Alliance , Natural England, Anglian Water
18 th February 2019	Onshore Ecology and Ornithology Risk ETG meeting to agree comments on the PEIR and way forward for ES and SoCG	Environment Agency and Natural England
21 st February 2019	Marine Mammal ETG meeting to agree comments on the PEIR and way forward for ES and SoCG	Natural England, MMO, WDC and The Wildlife Trusts
21 st February 2019	Marine Physical Processes, marine water and sediment quality, Benthic ecology and Fish Ecology ETG meeting to agree comments on the PEIR and way forward for ES and SoCG	Natural England, MMO, The Wildlife Trusts, EIFCA and The Environment Agency.
27 th February 2019	Ornithology ETG meeting to agree comments on the PEIR and way forward for ES and SoCG	RSPB and Natural England

43. In addition to the consultation activities presented above, Norfolk Boreas Limited has met with the Planning Inspectorate, Norfolk County Councils' Planning Officer and planning leads from the relevant District Councils throughout the development of the project to provide updates and to seek advice on subjects including the project programme, approach to the EIA and drafting the application documents.

7.3.2.3 Habitat Regulations Assessment consultation

44. Norfolk Boreas Limited has also consulted specifically on the HRA through the EPP, in line with the Planning Inspectorate's Advice Note 10: HRA (January 2017). This note advises that the applicant commences consultation with the relevant statutory and non-statutory nature conservation bodies at the earliest point in the pre-application process. The Norfolk Boreas HRA Screening Report was issued to Natural England, the MMO, The Wildlife Trusts, Whale and Dolphin Conservation (WDC), the Environment Agency, Cefas, North Norfolk District Council, the RSPB and the Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (EIFCA) along with the PEIR in October 2018.
45. The Benthic and Intertidal Ecology Method Statement, submitted to the ETG group members listed in Table 7.1, contained a screening for Natura 2000 sites with benthic features and a methodology for HRA assessment. This was consulted on as part of the Method Statement consultation in March 2018 (Table 7.2). The approach to screening for marine mammals and offshore ornithology sites was also consulted on as part of Method Statements.
46. On-going dialogue with the nature conservation bodies has continued throughout the EPP as the HRA process is progressed and the Norfolk Boreas HRA was provided to the EPP in March 2019. Following review from members of the EPP, the HRA was updated and comments were captured in the agreement logs.

7.3.3 Other Technical Consultation

47. Consultation for EIA topic areas for which there are alternative established consultation processes have been undertaken outside the EPP and the details of these are provided in the relevant technical chapters, namely:
 - Commercial Fisheries (Chapter 14);
 - Shipping and Navigation (Chapter 15); and
 - Aviation and Radar (Chapter 16).

7.4 Transboundary Consultation

48. Under the Espoo Convention (1991), where a development is likely to cause 'significant adverse transboundary impact', relevant European Economic Area (EEA) Member States should be notified as early as possible, giving them the opportunity to participate in relevant EIA procedures. The Planning Inspectorate provided transboundary notification to EEA States regarding Norfolk Boreas on the 21st July 2017. Four EEA States confirmed that they wish to participate in the procedure for examining the application: Netherlands, Germany, France and Belgium; whilst Denmark confirmed that they did not.

7.5 Statements of Common Ground

49. Following the submission of the DCO application, Norfolk Boreas Limited will endeavour to develop and agree SoCGs with relevant consultees to assist the Planning Inspectorate in understanding which issues have been agreed and which remain unresolved. Where consultees have participated in the EPP the SoCG will build on the agreement logs which have documented the consultation thus far.

7.6 Summary

50. This chapter, and that outlined in the Consultation Report (document reference 5.1), details the comprehensive and transparent pre application consultation in relation to the EIA process undertaken with a wide range of technical stakeholders. This engagement has built on that which has already been undertaken by VWPL and Norfolk Vanguard Limited, which presented information describing both projects together and which stimulated dialogue and responses relevant to both projects.
51. The aim of the consultation process is to meet and exceed the requirements of the Planning Act 2008 and EIA Regulations whilst being as effective as possible with stakeholder input. To this end the project has taken into account relevant advice and guidance published by the Planning Inspectorate and relevant United Kingdom (UK) Government departments.
52. Stakeholders have been engaged in the development process from an early stage. Norfolk Boreas Limited acknowledge and appreciate the involvement of stakeholders and corresponding influence on the design of the project (as outlined in Chapter 4 Site Selection and Assessment of Alternatives) and the EIA.
53. Consultation responses have been carefully documented and considered in the ongoing development of the project. Responses which are considered relevant to this ES, and the regard Norfolk Boreas Limited has had to them, are included in each technical chapter of the ES.

7.7 References

Norfolk Boreas Limited (2018). Norfolk Boreas Offshore Wind Farm Preliminary Environmental Information Report. Available online at <https://corporate.vattenfall.co.uk/projects/wind-energy-projects/vattenfall-in-norfolk/norfolkboreas/documents/preliminary-environmental-information-report/>. Accessed 16/01/2019.

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