

Date: 16 May 2023  
Our ref: Case: 13622  
Your ref: EN010098



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BY EMAIL ONLY

Dear Sir/Madam,

## **Planning Act 2008 and The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010**

### **Application by Ørsted Hornsea Project Four Limited (“the Applicant”) for an Order granting Development Consent for the proposed Hornsea Project Four Offshore Wind Farm (“Hornsea Project Four”)**

The following constitutes Natural England’s formal statutory response to the Secretary of State’s Request for Information (RFI) dated 20<sup>th</sup> April 2023. To inform this response Natural England have reviewed the following documents from the Applicant’s 17<sup>th</sup> April response to RFI dated 20<sup>th</sup> March 2023:

- G2.7 Outline Offshore Operations and Maintenance Plan
- F2.15 Outline Cable Specification and Installation Plan
- G12.2 Revised Ornithological Figures
- G12.1 Applicant’s Response Letter to RFI dated 20 March 2023

The Secretary of State has invited all Interested Parties to comment on the information submitted in response to SoS’s previous information requests. Natural England’s comments provided here are in relation to the following two requests made of the Applicant in RFI dated 20<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

- 4. In relation to collision impacts on the gannet and kittiwake features of the Flamborough and Filey Coast SPA, the Applicant is requested to provide revised mortality estimates by applying Natural England’s interim avoidance rates to the collision risk models for the Project alone; and to confirm the updated in combination totals and any changes to the counterfactual growth rate (CFGR) and counterfactual population size (CFPS) figures for these species.**

Natural England have reviewed the revised ornithology assessments provided by the Applicant and concur that they have applied the interim avoidance rates and are in line with SNCB advice. We welcome the resulting reduction in predicted impacts but note that our conclusions with respect to adverse effects on integrity (AEOI) at Flamborough and Filey Coast SPA remain unchanged. Our AEOI conclusions are set out in our end of Examination submission as regards kittiwake [REP7-104], and in our RFI response dated 9<sup>th</sup> March 2023 for gannet.

- 6. With regards to adverse effects on the red-throated diver and common scoter features of the Greater Wash SPA: the Applicant is requested to confirm whether it will include all measures recommended in Natural England's 'Best Practice Protocol for Vessels in Red-throated Diver SPAs' in the Vessel Management Plan.**

Natural England have reviewed and are aligned with the best practice protocol submitted by the Applicant. We welcome the Applicant's commitment to adopting the protocol in full, and as a result confirm to DESNZ that Hornsea Four will not make a contribution to in-combination effects on the Greater Wash SPA.

For any queries relating to the content of this letter please contact me using the details provided below.

Yours faithfully,

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