FIVE ESTUARIES
OFFSHORE WIND FARM

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ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

VOLUME 6, PART 1, CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

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Revision	A
APFP Regulation	5(2)(a)
Date	March 2024

Project	Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm
Sub-Project or Package	Environmental Statement
Document Title	Volume 6, Part 1, Chapter 1: Introduction
Application Document Number	6.1.1
Revision	A
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Document Reference	005024189-01

Revision	Date	Status/Reason for Issue	Originator	Checked	Approved
A	Mar 2024	ES	GoBe	VE OWFL	VE OWFL

CONTENTS

TABLES

FIGURES

DEFINITION OF ACRONYMS

Term	Definition
AfL	Agreements for Lease
BEIS	Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
DCO	Development Consent Order
EACN	East Anglia Connection Node
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ES	Environmental Statement
ECC	Export Cable Corridor
VE	Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm
VE OWFL	Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm Ltd
Galloper	Galloper Offshore Wind Farm
GW	gigawatts
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment
IEMA	Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment
MW	Megawatts
NSIP	Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project
O&M	Operational and maintenance
OSPs	Offshore Substation Platforms
OTNR	Offshore Transmission Network Review
PINS	Planning Inspectorate
PEIR	Preliminary Environmental Information Report
RLB	Red Line Boundary
SoS	Secretary of State
SoCC	Statement of Community Consultation
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
TCE	The Crown Estate
WTGs	Wind Turbine Generators

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 FIVE ESTUARIES OFFSHORE WIND FARM

1.1.1 This chapter of the Environmental Statement (ES) has been drafted by GoBe Consultants Ltd. and introduces the Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm project (hereafter referred to as VE), the company that is developing the project, Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm Ltd (hereafter 'the Applicant') and the purpose and structure of the ES.

1.1.2 VE is a proposed extension project to the operational Galloper Offshore Wind Farm project (Galloper) off the coast of Suffolk (Figure 1.1). The new wind farm would include up to 79 Wind Turbine Generators (WTGs), across two separate sea bed areas in the southern North Sea and create enough energy each year to power hundreds of thousands of homes. VE will create job opportunities, support the UK Government's ambitions for up to 50 GW of electricity generated from offshore wind by 2030 and help meet the objectives of the UK Energy Security Strategy. Galloper consists of 56 WTGs and supplies electricity to approximately 380,000 households annually. A 60-strong team operates and maintains the wind farm from a state-of-the-art, purpose-built Operations & Maintenance (O&M) facility in Harwich International Port.

1.1.3 VE's WTGs will be situated within two array areas to the east of Galloper. The array areas will be located approximately 37 km off the coast of Suffolk, England. Extension projects, such as VE, are considered to represent a significant opportunity to reduce the cost of offshore wind power generation by harnessing the experience gained from constructing and operating an Offshore Wind Farm (OWF) neighbouring the site, as well as having access to existing datasets and environmental studies. This is an increasingly important driver in the highly competitive UK electricity market, which aims to deliver the best possible value to the consumer.

1.1.4 VE will have an overall capacity of greater than 100 Megawatts (MW) and therefore constitutes a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) under Section 15(3) of the Planning Act 2008. Such projects require a Development Consent Order (DCO) to be granted by the relevant UK Secretary of State (SoS); in this case, the SoS for Energy Security and Net Zero. Further information regarding the DCO application process can be found in Volume 6, Part 1, Chapter 2: Policy and Legislation.

1.2 ABOUT THE APPLICANT

1.2.1 VE is a joint venture development, referred to collectively as Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm Ltd (the Applicant, as previously noted). The Five Estuaries project partners are RWE (33.3%), a Macquarie-led consortium (25%), ESB (20.9%) and Sumitomo Corporation (20.9%). RWE is leading the development of the project on behalf of the project partners.

1.2.2 RWE is a leading partner in the delivery of the UK's Net Zero ambitions and energy security and is contributing to the UK's build-out target for offshore wind of 50 GW by 2030. RWE is already involved in ten operational OWFs across the UK. RWE is developing nine OWF projects in the UK, representing a combined potential installed capacity of around 9.8 GW, with RWE's pro rata share amounting to 7 GW. RWE is also constructing the 1.4 GW Sofia OWF project in the North Sea off the UK's east coast. RWE's unparalleled track record of more than 20 years in offshore wind has resulted in 19 offshore wind farms in operation, with a goal to triple its global offshore wind capacity from 3.3 GW today to 10 GW in 2030.

1.2.3 The company intends to maintain the pace of investment in the UK and invest around €8 billion net in the UK in new green technologies and infrastructure in the years from 2024 to 2030.

1.2.4 By the end of 2023, community benefits from UK onshore and offshore wind farm projects operated by RWE in the UK had invested more than £38 million into local communities. Each year, wind farm projects operated by RWE across the UK invest more than £5 million into community funds that support local community initiatives, with funding decisions made by local representatives.

1.2.5 RWE Renewables owns a stake in several operational OWFs on the East Coast of England, including Galloper (353 MW) and Greater Gabbard (504 MW). These generate enough low-carbon renewable energy each year to power the equivalent of over 780,000 UK homes. These two projects have led to the creation of 15 skilled apprentice opportunities, around 180 long-term skilled jobs to support the operation and maintenance of the OWFs, and around £3 billion in project investment overall. The teams have worked extensively with schools and educational institutes, as well as teachers and pupils along the East Coast, to deliver numerous career insight sessions and STEM presentations to promote knowledge of the renewables industry and associated job opportunities.

1.2.6 RWE is also actively involved in industry bodies including RenewableUK, EnergyUK and the East of England Energy Group. Over recent years, RWE has supported numerous supply chain and industry events via sponsorship and speaking opportunities, and participation in meet-the-buyer events, business breakfasts, awards and sponsorship. This activity is ongoing, including participation in the recently launched East Wind – the East of England's Offshore Wind Cluster forum.

1.2.7 The UK will continue to be a key focus in RWE's strategy to grow its renewables business and to become carbon neutral by 2040.

1.3 PROJECT OVERVIEW

PROJECT BACKGROUND

1.3.1 In February 2017, The Crown Estate (TCE) offered developers of operating OWFs the opportunity to apply for project extensions. Eight applications were received, including VE, which met the specified criteria. In August 2019, TCE published a plan-level Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) which assessed the potential impacts of the proposed projects on relevant nature conservation sites of the European Natura 2000 network. Seven of the eight extension projects, including VE, proceeded to the award of leasing rights as part of the 2017 extensions round. The Agreements for Lease (AfLs) for these projects were awarded in summer 2019.

1.3.2 On 5 October 2021, the Applicant submitted a scoping report (VE OWFL, 2021) to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) and received a formal scoping opinion on 12 November 2021 (PINS, 2021). PINS issued its transboundary screening document on behalf of the SoS in June 2022. This is provided in Volume 6, Part 1, Annex 3.2: Transboundary Screening for the purposes of regulation 32 of the 2017 EIA Regulations.

1.3.3 The Applicant engaged in post-scoping, pre-application consultation with both statutory and non-statutory consultees (including via the Evidence Plan, which comprised a series of regular consultation meetings with key stakeholders on technical matters), as well as with the public through public engagement exercises, which included two live events in Lawford and Frinton-on-Sea, Essex and a hybrid virtual exhibition from 30 June to 12 August 2022. An interim consultation response was issued by VE to the community in Autumn 2022.

1.3.4 On 14 March 2023, the Applicant published a Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) in the format of a draft ES that formed the basis of the project information submitted for statutory consultation under Sections 42, 47 and 48 of the Planning Act 2008. This consultation period was open for eight weeks between 14 March 2023 and 12 May 2023 and included ten public in-person events and two webinars. Consultation feedback received has been carefully considered as the project design has been finalised and the documentation has been updated to form the final ES that accompanies the DCO (including deemed marine licence) application. A comprehensive account of all consultation undertaken to assist in the development of VE is included in The Consultation Report (see Volume 5, Report 1: The Consultation Report).

1.3.5 The Applicant has therefore prepared this ES with a view to addressing consultation feedback, so far as practical, received under Sections 42, 47 and 48 of the Planning Act.

PROJECT DETAIL

1.3.6 VE's offshore WTGs will be connected via subsea cables to Offshore Substation Platforms (OSPs) that will transform the voltage and transmit the power generated via further subsea cables within the offshore Export Cable Corridor (ECC) to a landfall compound located at Sandy Point, to the north west of the golf course, adjacent to Short Lane between Holland-on-Sea and Frinton-on-Sea on the Essex coast.

1.3.7 In order for VE to connect to the National Grid, the proposed National Grid Norwich to Tilbury Reinforcement Project and the associated East Anglia Connection Node (EACN) substation must be operational. National Grid has defined a construction and operational zone within which their EACN substation will be situated. This is adjacent to the VE Onshore Substation (OnSS) zone. VE will connect to the EACN via onshore underground cable circuits installed between the landfall to VE's onshore substation and onwards to the grid connection at the EACN.

More information on the project design is provided in Volume 6, Part 2, Chapter 1: Offshore Project Description and Volume 6, Part 3, Chapter 1: Onshore Project Description. VE's proposed Order Limits are presented in Figure 1.1.

OFFSHORE CONNECTION SCENARIO

1.3.8 The current project design includes an offshore ECC to shore, and associated onshore infrastructure, to facilitate power export from the Array Areas to the national electricity grid. Five Estuaries has been actively engaged in the Offshore Transmissions Network Review (OTNR); a government initiative launched in 2020 to review the approach to the design and delivery of offshore transmission. Having concluded in May 2023, the organisations involved along with the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) are now implementing its findings to deliver a coordinated offshore transmission regime for Great Britain.

1.3.9 Subsequently, Five Estuaries, along with North Falls and Sea Link (National Grid Electricity Transmission), applied as a consortium for grant funding as part of the Offshore Coordination Support Scheme (OCSS). The projects are currently in early stages exploring the feasibility of coordination options between the two offshore wind farms and an offshore reinforcement to the national grid. This process is being carried out in parallel to the base case development for Five Estuaries with an onshore connection into the proposed EACN substation, part of National Grids Norwich to Tilbury Reinforcement Project, as an offshore connection is not a viable or deliverable alternative at this time. Further details on the OTNR and OCSS process are outlined in Volume 9, Report 29: Offshore Connection Scenario

340000 360000 380000 400000 420000 440000 460000

5800000 5780000 5760000 5740000 5720000 5700000

N

LEGEND

- Proposed Order Limits
- Galloper Offshore Wind Farm

0 2,500 5,000 10,000

Meters

Data Source:
Esri, Garmin, GEBCO, NOAA NGDC, and other contributors

PROJECT TITLE:

FIVE ESTUARIES OFFSHORE WINDFARM

DRAWING TITLE:

Five Estuaries Proposed Order Limits

VER	DATE	REMARKS	Drawn	Checked
1	06/12/2023	For Information	BPHB	FK

DRAWING NUMBER: 1.1

SCALE:	PLOT SIZE:	DATUM:	PROJECTION:
1:400,000	A3	WGS84	UTM31N

FIVE ESTUARIES
OFFSHORE WIND FARM

1.4 PURPOSE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

1.4.1 The ES comprises a suite of documents that set out the findings of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) to support the DCO (including deemed marine licence(s)) application. The EIA aims to assess likely significant effects on the community and environment. The ES has been prepared in accordance with the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 as relevant to NSIPs, and the Marine Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2007 as relevant to marine licensing in English waters.

1.4.2 The ES has been scoped according to a scoping opinion received from the PINS on behalf of the SoS. In addition, feedback from PEIR consultation has been considered and used to inform the design of VE as well as the content of this ES.

1.5 THE PROJECT TEAM AND STRUCTURE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

1.5.1 RWE is responsible for developing the ES for VE. RWE is supported by a specialist EIA consultant, GoBe Consultants Ltd and its team of technical experts and sub-consultants. In addition, Burges Salmon LLP is providing dedicated legal advice throughout the process.

1.5.2 GoBe Consultants' EIA activities are accredited by the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) under the EIA Quality Mark Scheme, which demonstrates GoBe's commitment to ensuring EIAs are undertaken at a high quality and in accordance with best practice.

1.5.3 Table 1.1 below identifies the organisations that have contributed to the relevant sections of the assessment alongside the structure of the ES.

Table 1.1: Structure of the ES.

Document	Title	Lead Author
Part 1: Introductory Chapters and Annexes		
1.1	Chapter 1: Introduction	GoBe Consultants
1.2	Chapter 2: Policy and Legislation	GoBe Consultants
1.3	Chapter 3: EIA Methodology	GoBe Consultants
1.3.1	Annex 3.1: Cumulative Effects Assessment	GoBe Consultants
1.3.2	Annex 3.2: Transboundary Screening for the purposes of regulation 32 of the 2017 EIA Regulations	The Planning Inspectorate
1.4	Chapter 4: Site Selection and Alternatives	GoBe Consultants
1.5	Chapter 5: Non-Technical Summary	GoBe Consultants
1.6	Chapter 6: Scoping Report and Scoping Opinion	GoBe Consultants / PINS
Part 2: Offshore Chapters		
2.1	Chapter 1: Offshore Project Description	GoBe Consultants
2.1.1	Annex 1.1: Detailed Offshore Project Design Envelope	GoBe Consultants
2.2	Chapter 2: Marine Geology, Oceanography and Physical Processes	ABPmer
2.3	Chapter 3: Marine Water and Sediment Quality	GoBe Consultants
2.4	Chapter 4: Offshore Ornithology	MacArthur Green
2.5	Chapter 5: Benthic Subtidal and Intertidal Ecology	GoBe Consultants
2.6	Chapter 6: Fish and Shellfish Ecology	GoBe Consultants
2.7	Chapter 7: Marine Mammal Ecology	SMRU Consulting
2.8	Chapter 8: Commercial Fisheries	Poseidon

Document	Title	Lead Author
2.9	Chapter 9: Shipping and Navigation	Anatec
2.10	Chapter 10: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment	OP-EN
2.11	Chapter 11: Offshore Archaeology and Cultural Heritage	Maritime Archaeology
2.12	Chapter 12: Infrastructure and Other Marine Users	GoBe Consultants
2.13	Chapter 13: Military and Civil Aviation	Osprey
Part 3: Onshore Chapters		
3.1	Chapter 1: Onshore Project Description	SLR
3.2	Chapter 2: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment	OP-EN
3.3	Chapter 3: Socioeconomics, Tourism and Recreation	Quod
3.4	Chapter 4: Onshore Biodiversity and Nature Conservation	SLR
3.5	Chapter 5: Ground Conditions and Land Use	SLR
3.6	Chapter 6: Hydrology and Flood Risk	SLR
3.7	Chapter 7: Onshore Archaeology and Cultural Heritage	Wessex Archaeology
3.8	Chapter 8: Traffic and Transport	SLR
3.9	Chapter 9: Airborne Noise and Vibration	SLR
3.10	Chapter 10: Air Quality	SLR
Part 4: Project Wide		
4.1	Climate Change	SLR
4.1.1	Greenhouse Gas Assessment	SLR
4.2	Human Health and Major Disasters	SLR

Document	Title	Lead Author
4.2.1	Human Health Baseline	SLR
4.2.2	Human Health Literature Review	SLR
4.3	Inter-Relationships	GoBe Consultants
Part 5: Offshore Annexes		
5.2.1	Annex 2.1: Physical Processes Baseline Technical Report	ABPmer
5.2.2	Annex 2.2: Physical Processes Model Design and Validation	ABPmer
5.2.3	Annex 2.3: Physical Processes Technical Assessment	ABPmer
5.2.4	Annex 2.4: Main Array and Export Cable Route - Environmental Features Report	Fugro
5.4.1	Annex 4.1: Offshore Ornithology Technical Report	McArthur Green
5.4.2	Annex 4.2: Seabird Abundance by Month	McArthur Green
5.4.3	Annex 4.3: Seabird Densities by Month	McArthur Green
5.4.4	Annex 4.4: Seabird Abundances by Survey	McArthur Green
5.4.5	Annex 4.5: Seabird Densities by Survey	McArthur Green
5.4.6	Annex 4.6: Seabird Peak Seasonal Abundances	McArthur Green
5.4.7	Annex 4.7: Seabird Peak Seasonal Densities	McArthur Green
5.4.8	Annex 4.8: Collision Risk Modelling Inputs and Outputs	McArthur Green
5.4.9	Annex 4.9: Seabird Distributions Recorded in Aerial Surveys	McArthur Green
5.4.10	Annex 4.10: Collision Risk Modelling Comparison of Modelling Results	McArthur Green
5.4.11	Annex 4.11: Design Based Bootstrap Variance Estimates	McArthur Green

Document	Title	Lead Author
5.4.12	Annex 4.12: Digital Video Aerial Surveys of Seabirds and Marine Mammals at Five Estuaries: Annual Report March 2019 to February 2021	McArthur Green
5.4.13	Annex 4.13: Digital Video Aerial Surveys of Seabirds and Marine Mammals at Five Estuaries: Annual Report for March 2019 to February 2020	HiDef
5.4.14	Annex 4.14: Migratory Collision Risk Modelling	GoBe Consultants
5.4.15	Annex 4.15: Apportioning Note	GoBe Consultants
5.4.16	Annex 4.16: Population Viability Analysis	GoBe Consultants
5.5.1	Annex 5.1: Main Array - Benthic Ecology Monitoring Report	Fugro
5.5.2	Annex 5.2: Export Cable Route and Intertidal Benthic Ecology Monitoring Report	Fugro
5.6.1	Annex 6.1: Fish and Shellfish Ecology Technical Baseline Report	GoBe Consultants
5.6.2	Annex 6.2: Underwater Noise Technical Report	Subacoustech
5.6.2.1	Annex 6.2.1: Landfall Impact Piling Modelling	Subacoustech
5.6.3	Annex 6.3: Spawning Herring Heatmaps (International Herring Larval Survey Data)	GoBe Consultants
5.6.4	Annex 6.4: Herring Seasonal Restriction Note	GoBe Consultants
5.7.1	Annex 7.1: Marine Mammals Baseline Characterisation	SMRU
5.8.1	Annex 8.1: Commercial Fisheries Technical Baseline Report	Poseidon
5.11.1	Annex 11.1: Offshore Archaeology and Cultural Heritage Technical Report	Maritime Archaeology
Part 6: Onshore Annexes		
6.1.1	Annex 1.1: Obstacle Crossings Register	VEOWF
6.3.1	Annex 3.1 Full Time Equivalent Employment and Gross Value Added Headlines	Quod
6.3.2	Annex 3.2 Community Facilities within 5km of the Onshore Order Limits	Quod

Document	Title	Lead Author
6.4.1	Annex 4.1: Great Crested Newt Survey Report: Additional Ponds	SLR
6.4.2	Annex 4.2: Breeding Bird Survey: North of A120	SLR
6.4.3	Annex 4.3: Breeding Bird Survey: South of A120	SLR
6.4.4	Annex 4.4 Onshore Landfall Area Breeding Bird Surveys 2022	SLR
6.4.5	Annex 4.5 Onshore Cable Route: Non-breeding Bird Surveys 2022-23	SLR
6.4.6	Annex 4.6: Wintering Bird Data Analysis in relation to Onshore Works	SLR
6.4.7	Annex 4.7: Bat Survey Report: North of A120	SLR
6.4.8	Annex 4.8: Roosting Bats Tree Survey Report: South of A120	SLR
6.4.9	Annex 4.9: Bat Activity Survey Report: South of A120	SLR
6.4.10	Annex 4.10: Bat Survey Report: Additional Trees South of A120	SLR
6.4.11	Annex 4.11: Badger Survey Report: North of A120	SLR
6.4.12	Annex 4.12: Dormouse Survey Report: North of A120	SLR
6.4.13	Annex 4.13: Dormouse Survey Report: South of A120	SLR
6.4.14	Annex 4.14: Otter and Water Vole Survey Report: North of A120	SLR
6.4.15	Annex 4.15: Otter and Water Vole Survey Report: South of A120	SLR
6.4.16	Annex 4.16: Reptile Survey Report: North of A120	SLR

Document	Title	Lead Author
6.4.17	Annex 4.17: Reptile Survey Report: South of A120	SLR
6.4.18	Annex 4.18 Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm Onshore Biodiversity Net Gain Indicative Design Stage Report	SLR
6.4.19	Annex 4.19: Statutory Designated Sites Qualifying or Notified Features	SLR
6.4.20	Annex 4.20: Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm: GCN District Level Licencing Impact Assessment and Conservation Payment Certificate (unsigned) and associated documents	SLR
6.4.21	Annex 4.21: CONFIDENTIAL Protected Species Report and Figures	SLR
6.4.22.1	Annex 4.22.1 Five Estuaries Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Part 1	SLR
6.4.22.2	Annex 4.22.2 Five Estuaries Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Part 2	SLR
6.4.22.3	Annex 4.22.3 Five Estuaries Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Part 3	SLR
6.4.23	Annex 4.23: Preliminary Environmental Information Reports - Habitat and Hedgerow and Great Crested Newt Reports	SLR
6.4.24	Annex 4.24: Five Estuaries Preliminary Environmental Information Report - Wintering Birds Landfall Report	SLR
6.4.25	Annex 4.25: North Falls Ecology Reports	McArthur Green, WFE, RHDHV, Hopkins Ecology
6.6.1	Annex 6.1 Ground Water Risk Assessment	SLR
6.7.1	Annex 7.1: Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment	Wessex Archaeology
6.7.2	Annex 7.2: Onshore Geophysics	Wessex Archaeology
6.7.3	Annex 7.3: Geoarchaeological Desk Based Assessment	Wessex Archaeology

Document	Title	Lead Author
6.7.4	Annex 7.4: Archaeological and Geoarchaeological Monitoring of Ground Investigation Works	Wessex Archaeology
6.7.5	Annex 7.5: Onshore Cultural Heritage: GPA3 Exercise and Technical Note - Offshore Array	Wessex Archaeology
6.7.6	Annex 7.6: Onshore Cultural Heritage: GPA3 Exercise and Technical Note - Onshore Project Area	Wessex Archaeology
6.7.7	Annex 7.7: Onshore Archaeological and Geoarchaeological Monitoring of Ground Investigation (Onshore ECC)	Wessex Archaeology
6.7.8	Annex 7.8: Archaeological and Palaeolithic Evaluation Phase 1	Wessex Archaeology
6.7.9	Annex 7.9: Archaeological and Palaeolithic Evaluation Phase 2	Wessex Archaeology
6.7.10.1	Annex 7.10.1: Cultural Heritage Wirelines and Viewpoints - Part 1	OP-EN
6.7.10.2	Annex 7.10.2: Cultural Heritage Wirelines and Viewpoints - Part 2	OP-EN
6.7.10.3	Annex 7.10.3: Cultural Heritage Wirelines and Viewpoints - Part 3	OP-EN
6.8.1	Annex 8:1: Traffic and Transport Baseline Report - Part 1	SLR
6.8.2	Annex 8:2: Traffic and Transport Baseline Report - Part 2	SLR
6.9.1	Annex 9.1: Onshore Airborne Noise Baseline Noise Survey	SLR
6.9.2	Annex 9.2: Onshore Airborne Noise Construction Sound Power Details	SLR
6.10.1	Annex 10.1: Construction Dust Assessment Methodology	SLR
6.10.2	Annex 10.2: Non-Road Mobile Machinery Emissions Assessment	SLR
6.10.3	Annex 10.3: Offshore Activities Assessment	SLR
6.10.4	Annex 10.4: Road Traffic Dispersion Modelling Methodology	SLR

Document	Title	Lead Author
Part 7: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Annexes		
7.10.1	Annex 10.1: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Methodology	OP-EN
7.10.2	Annex 10.2: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Viewpoint Assessment	OP-EN
7.10.3	Annex 10.3: Seascape, Landscape and Visual Figures and Photomontages	OP-EN
7.2.1	Annex 2.1 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Figures	OP-EN
7.2.2	Annex 2.2 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Photomontages	OP-EN
Part 8: Lesser Black Backed Gull Compensatory Areas Environmental Impact Assessment		
8.1	Lesser Black Backed Gull Compensatory Areas Environmental Impact Assessment	GoBe Consultants
8.2	Lesser Black Backed Gull Flood Risk Assessment	SLR
8.3	Lesser Black Backed Gull Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment	OP-EN
8.4	Lesser Blacked Backed Gull Ecological Impact Assessment	SLR

1.6 CONSULTATION

1.6.1 It is a statutory requirement for promoters of NSIPs to engage in pre-application consultation with communities that may be affected by the proposed development, certain prescribed organisations (including local authorities), and persons with an interest in the land.

1.6.2 The Applicant carried out a multi-stage iterative consultation process, to manage the tension between consulting at a stage when feedback could influence VE's design and providing enough information for meaningful consideration of the potential impacts.

1.6.3 The Applicant held three stages of consultation:

- Stage 1: Non-statutory consultation – 30 June to 12 August 2022
- Stage 2: Statutory consultation – 14 March to 12 May 2023
- Stage 3: Focused consultation – 5 December 2023 to 31 January 2024

1.6.4 The Applicant has a statutory duty to consider the responses received to statutory elements of consultation. More information about all consultation stages and how the Applicant has had regard to comments is included in Volume 5, Report 1: Consultation Report.

STAGE 1 (NON-STATUTORY) CONSULTATION

1.6.5 From 30 June to 12 August 2022, the Applicant carried out an initial stage of pre-application consultation on the project. Members of the public, landowners, and statutory bodies were invited to comment on early proposals, so that feedback could be used to inform the development of the project.

1.6.6 Stage 1 consultation focuses on the onshore aspects of the project. Two public in-person events were held to support the consultation.

1.6.7 A total of 139 responses were received in the Stage 1 consultation.

STAGE 2 (STATUTORY) CONSULTATION

1.6.8 The Applicant's second consultation ran from 14 March 2023 to 12 May 2023 and fulfilled the statutory duty to consult under section 42, 47 and 48 of the Planning Act 2008.

1.6.9 The PEIR was published as part of the Stage 2 consultation. It helped to set out the potential benefits and impacts associated with the construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning phases of the project, to help consultees respond in an informed manner to the statutory consultation. The PEIR was produced to comply with VE's duty to consult on preliminary environmental information.

1.6.10 A total of 698 responses were received in the Stage 2 consultation. The Applicant held Expert Topic Group (ETG) meetings to further discuss statutory consultation comments and responses. Where deemed appropriate, some of these ETG meetings were held jointly with North Falls OWF. In having regard to those responses, the Applicant has incorporated additional information requested into the ES, as well as enacting design changes to VE.

STAGE 3 (STATUTORY AND NON-STATUTORY) CONSULTATION

1.6.11 Between 5 December 2023 and 31 January 2024, the Applicant carried out its third stage of consultation on two aspects of the project; HRA habitat compensatory measures consultation and a targeted land interest consultation.

1.6.12 HRA Habitat compensatory measures consultation was held on proposals to improve the habitat for lesser black-backed gulls in East Suffolk, to compensate for a potential impact from proposed offshore wind turbines. This consultation included full statutory consultation under section 42 of the Planning Act, and non-statutory consultation with the local community.

1.6.13 Targeted land interest consultation was held with those with an interest in the land affected by changes to the onshore proposals in Tendring District, Essex, that had been made since the Stage 2 Statutory Consultation (14 March to 12 May 2023). This consultation was carried out under section 42(1)(d) of the Planning Act. Relevant statutory consultees were engaged on the changes as part of the ETG process.

1.6.14 A total of 21 responses were received in response to the HRA Habitat compensatory measures consultation, and 20 responses were received in response the Targeted land interest consultation.

1.7 DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY

1.7.1 The documents described in Table 1.1 are publicly available online.

1.7.2 The ES presents the findings of the EIA and consultation and how it has shaped VE. It also describes the site-selection and design processes that have led to the design envelope.

1.7.3 A non-technical summary of this ES provides an overview of the technical topic assessments, as well as the site-selection process that has led to the design envelope.

1.7.4 Physical hard copies of the non-technical summary are available on request by contacting:

- **Email:** fiveestuaries@rwe.com
- **Telephone:** 0333 880 5306

1.8 REFERENCES

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FIVE ESTUARIES
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