FIVE ESTUARIES OFFSHORE WIND FARM

OFFSHORE CONNECTION SCENARIO

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CONTENTS

DEFINITION OF ACRONYMS

Term	Definition
DCO	Development Consent Order
DESNZ	Department for Energy Security and Net Zero
EACN	East Anglia Connection Node
ES	Environmental Statement
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ECC	Export Cable Corridor
ExA	The Examining Authority
VE	Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm
VE OWFL	Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm Ltd
Galloper	Galloper Offshore Wind Farm
MW	Megawatts
NSIP	Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project
OCSS	Offshore Coordination Support Scheme
OTNR	Offshore Transmission Network Review

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 THE PROJECT

1.1.1 Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm Limited (the Applicant) has submitted an application to the Planning Inspectorate on behalf of the Secretary of State, for a Development Consent Order (DCO) for the Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm (herein referred to as Five Estuaries or VE) under section 37 of the Planning Act 2008.

1.1.2 VE is the proposed extension to the operational Galloper Offshore Wind Farm. The project includes provision for the construction, operation, maintenance and decommissioning of an offshore wind farm located approximately 37 kilometres off the coast of Suffolk at its closest point in the southern North Sea; including up to 79 wind turbine generators and associated infrastructure making landfall at Sandy Point between Frinton-on-Sea and Holland-on-Sea, the installation of underground cables, and the construction of an electrical substation and associated infrastructure near to the existing Lawford Substation to the west of Little Bromley in order to connect the development to National Grid's proposed East Anglia Connection Node (EACN) substation, being developed as part of the Norwich to Tilbury project, which would be located nearby. All onshore connection infrastructure would be located in the administrative area of Tendring District Council, within Essex County Council. VE will have an overall capacity of greater than 100 Megawatts (MW) and therefore constitutes a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) under the Section 15(3) of the Planning Act 2008.

1.2 PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

1.2.1 The purpose of this document is to describe VE's approach to consideration of offshore grid connection options that may come forward as a result of coordinated work through the Offshore Transmission Network Review (OTNR) and the associated Offshore Coordination Support Scheme (OCSS). This will include the proposed consenting approach for such options.

1.3 BACKGROUND

1.3.1 The basis of the Five Estuaries DCO application is for an onshore connection to the proposed National Grid EACN substation as provided by National Grid Electricity System Operator (ESO) in 2020. The development of the Export Cable Corridor (ECC) and the VE substation has been progressed over the last four years on this basis. Further details of how the location for the grid connection point was determined are set out in the Site Selection and Alternatives Chapter (Volume 6, Part 1, Chapter 4).

1.3.2 Throughout the development process extensive coordination with the neighbouring North Falls Offshore Wind Ltd project has taken place. Both parties signed a 'good neighbour agreement' in summer 2023, which has enabled closer liaison, information sharing and joint planning. The primary goal of this coordination is to reduce any potential impacts of building the onshore connection to the national electricity transmission network for the two projects. This meant that Five Estuaries sought to identify suitable options for the Project's onshore infrastructure that could accommodate either the Five Estuaries project alone or co-location with North Falls.

1.3.3 Through coordination, we have been able to:

- Almost fully align the onshore export cable corridors;
- Identify possible shared works accesses and construction compounds;
- Exchange data and share surveys e.g. ecology and archaeology;
- Agree on a shared location for each project's substation and identify possible shared access and screening concepts;
- Increase the coordination of engagement with landowners;
- Share our navigational risk assessments and measures to ensure vessel coordination during construction; and
- Exchange information on project design at an early stage to carry out cumulative seascape, landscape and visual impact assessments.

1.3.4 This coordination has enabled the two projects to work together to minimise impacts on the local community and the environment by reducing the project footprint and construction impacts and where possible, develop joint approaches to mitigation of environmental impacts. Further details on the coordination between the two projects and with the Norwich to Tilbury reinforcement project can be found in the Coordination Document (Volume 9, Report 30).

1.3.5 Throughout the development the Project has remained committed to exploring the potential for an offshore connection to the national electricity transmission network as part of the government's Offshore Transmission Network Review (OTNR) process; a government initiative launched in 2020 to review the approach to the design and delivery of offshore transmission. The OTNR process concluded in May 2023 and the organisations involved, along with the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ), are now implementing the findings to deliver a coordinated offshore transmission regime for Great Britain. A summary of the outputs from the review was published by the government in July 2023.

1.3.6 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 exploring the feasibility of two coordination options between the two offshore wind farms and Sea Link - an offshore reinforcement to the national grid. This process is being carried out in parallel to the base case development for Five Estuaries, an onshore connection into the proposed EACN substation, which is part of National Grid's Norwich to Tilbury Reinforcement Project. , Notably, an offshore connection is not a viable or deliverable alternative at this time.VE will continue to develop coordinated plans for an onshore connection as a base case, aligned with existing regulations and commercial conditions to provide an onshore connection. Thus, ensuring no delay to our planned grid connection date and therefore continuing to support the UK Government's target to deploy 50 GW of offshore wind by 2030.

2 OFFSHORE COORDINATION

2.1 OFFSHORE TRANSMISSION NETWORK REVIEW

2.1.1 The Offshore Transmission Network Review (OTNR) is a government initiative launched in 2020 to review the approach to the design and delivery of offshore transmission to ensure it is consistent with the government's significantly increased ambition for delivery of offshore wind. The British Energy Security Strategy extended the government's offshore wind delivery target of 40 GW by 2030 originally set out in its Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution, to an ambition of up to 50 GW by 2030.

2.1.2 The OTNR was led by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), now the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ), with support from a range of government and industry project partners including:

- The Crown Estate
- Crown Estate Scotland
- The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
- Marine Scotland
- The Marine Management Organisation
- The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
- National Grid Electricity System Operator
- Ofgem
- The Welsh Government
- The Scottish Government.

2.1.3 A key outcome from the review process was the publication of the Future Framework, the key objectives of which were as follows:

- Address current barriers to deployment upfront
- Facilitate early planning of network infrastructure
- Reduce environmental and community impacts
- Reduce overall costs, including considering and minimising costs to the end consumer
- Streamline processes to ensure infrastructure is brought forward in a coordinated way.

2.1.4 The OTNR concluded in May 2023, and the organisations involved, including the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, are now implementing the review findings to deliver a coordinated offshore transmission regime for Great Britain.

2.1.5 Under this framework, one of the OTNR initiatives was the setting up of the Early Opportunities workstream to work with developers that already had existing grid connection offers to explore coordinated grid connection solutions. Four Pathfinder projects – exploration of innovative new ways to operate the electricity system and keep costs down for consumers - were announced as part of this process in July 2022.

2.1.6 Although VE was not one of these projects, five projects in East Anglia including VE, confirmed their commitment to exploring coordinated network designs and identifying potential future Pathfinder projects. The other projects involved were National Grid Electricity Transmission (Sea Link), National Grid Ventures (EuroLink and Nautilus) and North Falls. The parties involved signed a joint statement to this effect on 7 July 2022. The statement is included as Annex 1 to this document.

2.2 OFFSHORE COORDINATION SUPPORT SCHEME

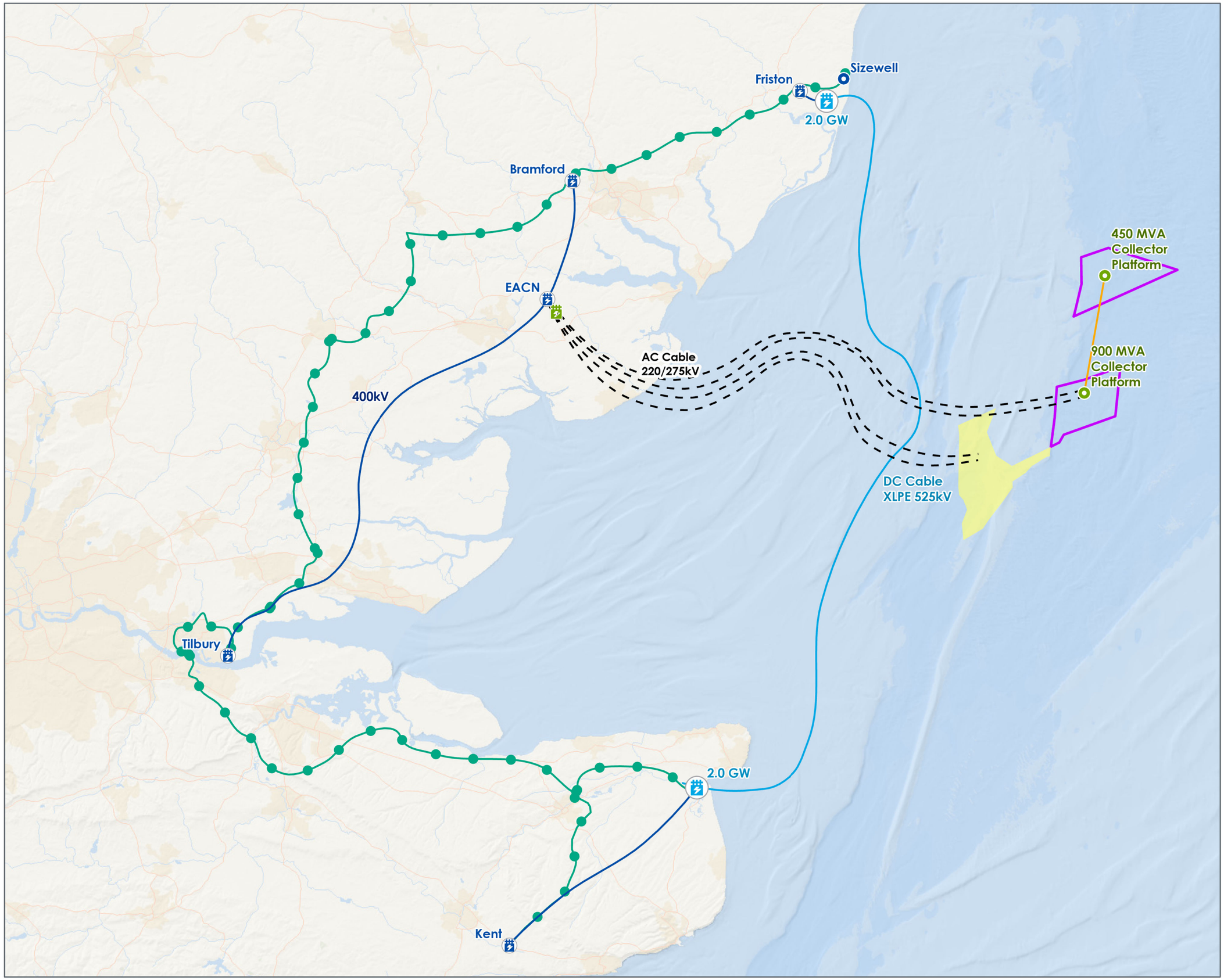
2.2.1 In April 2023 the government announced a further initiative; the Offshore Coordination Support Scheme (OCSS), as part of the British Energy Security Strategy. A key aim of the OCSS is to provide grants to offshore energy developers to explore project opportunities for coordinated offshore transmission infrastructure.

2.2.2 The application scheme for grant funding opened in December 2022 and Five Estuaries, North Falls and Sea Link formed a consortium to apply for grant funding in February 2023.

2.2.3 In December 2023 the government announced that the consortium had been successful in receiving grant funding, the only initiative within the UK to be awarded this funding. The project will receive an initial sum of up to £1.7 million funding to explore the feasibility of a coordinated offshore solution. DESNZ will evaluate the findings of the feasibility study and determine whether to proceed with a more detailed evaluation study for which a potential sum of up to £11.7million of further funding could be awarded in financial year 2024/2025. The consortium will use the funding to explore coordination options between the two offshore wind farms and the Sea Link offshore reinforcement to the national grid. If the coordinated design were to be taken forward by developers, it would be the first of its kind in the UK. A statement released by the consortium on award of this funding is included as Annex 2 to this document.

2.2.4 The currently proposed National Grid Sea Link project is a Suffolk to Kent offshore point to point high-voltage direct current (HVDC) link. The Sea Link project is intended for system reinforcement purposes and was not designed for a connection with the two offshore wind farms. Thus, if Sea Link were used for offshore connection purposes, National Grid would need to construct additional reinforcement infrastructure to address its intended purpose.

2.2.5 **Figure 1 Illustrative baseline project positions – Sea Link, North Falls and Five Estuaries** below, presents an illustrative representation of the base case for each of the consortium projects i.e. with the two wind farms not connected to the Sea Link project- and connecting to the national grid via the proposed EACN onshore connection.



LEGEND

- Five Estuaries Site Boundary
- North Falls Site Boundary
- Onshore Substation - Transmission Operator
- Onshore Converter Station
- Onshore Substation - Wind Farm Developer
- MVA Collector Platform
- POI
- AC Cable - WF Developer
- AC Cable - Transmission Operator
- DC Cable - Sea Link
- Existing Transmission Network
- Inter Array Cable

NOTE:
This drawing is for illustrative purposes only and as such no warranties are given or liabilities of any kind are assumed with respect to the accuracy of such information.

0 5 10 20
Kilometers

PROJECT TITLE:

FIVE ESTUARIES OFFSHORE WIND FARM

DRAWING TITLE:

Illustrative Baseline Project Positions - Sea Link, North Falls & Five Estuaries

VER	DATE	REMARKS	Drawn	Checked
1	21/03/2024	For Issue	JB	KS

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FIVE ESTUARIES
OFFSHORE WIND FARM

2.2.6 The first step for the consortium is to prepare an initial feasibility study for two alternative options that would allow the wind farms to connect into Sea Link. The study will look at engineering and technical feasibility, physical and environmental constraints, commercial and regulatory implications, programme and consenting approaches. The study report is expected to be submitted to DESNZ at the end of March 2024 who will make a decision on whether to proceed with a more detailed assessment.

2.2.7 The first step for the consortium is to prepare an initial feasibility study for two alternative options that would allow the wind farms to connect into Sea Link. The study will look at engineering and technical feasibility, physical and environmental constraints, commercial and regulatory implications, programme and consenting approaches. The study report is expected to be submitted to DESNZ at the end of March 2024 who will make a decision on whether to proceed with a more detailed assessment.

2.2.8 The key focus of the work under the OCSS is to evaluate two alternative options that would allow Five Estuaries and North Falls to connect into the Sea Link project. The options currently under evaluation are as follows:

- **Option 1**: Sea Link is initially built and commissioned (Stage 1) as a two-ended HVDC link with an additional loop of cable close to the array area for the North Falls Offshore Wind Farm Ltd project. At a future date when an offshore converter platform is built near the additional cable loop, Sea Link would be taken out of service, cut, and recovered at the loop. It would then be connected into the offshore converter platform to form a three-ended HVDC link (Stage 2) before connecting the offshore wind farms (Stage 3).
- **Option 2**: Sea Link is initially built and commissioned as a two-ended HVDC link with an HVDC switching platform in the middle (Stage 1). At a future date when an offshore converter platform is built, Sea Link would be taken out of service to connect the switching platform with the offshore converter platform. This would form a three-ended HVDC link (Stage 2) before connecting the offshore wind farms (Stage 3).

2.2.9 As noted above if either of these options to enable the two offshore wind farms to connect into the Sea Link project were to be developed, then the original purpose of Sea Link as a grid reinforcement link would no longer be possible as the wind farms would take the majority, if not all of the available capacity.

2.2.10 All three projects involved in the consortium are at fairly advanced stages in their own right. They are also at differing stages in terms of the development and consenting process which does present a number of challenges with respect to the level of information available from each project.

2.2.11 This OCSS process is being carried out in parallel to the base case development for Five Estuaries with an onshore connection into the proposed EACN substation. Notably an offshore connection is not a viable or deliverable alternative at this time.

3 NATIONAL POLICY CONTEXT

3.1.1 Under the Planning Act 2008, National Policy Statements (NPSs) set out national policy against which proposals for major infrastructure projects will be assessed. The Examining Authority (ExA) will have regard to NPSs in its examination of applications for development consent, and the relevant SoS must also have regard to them when making decisions. The 2023 revised NPSs came into force on 17 January 2024, superseding the NPSs designated in July 2011.

3.1.2 The NPSs of relevance to the proposed development, designated in November 2023, comprise:

- **Overarching NPS for Energy (EN-1)**[i] – Provides the primary basis for decisions on applications for nationally significant energy infrastructure. EN-1 sets out national policy for energy infrastructure and has the effect, in combination with the relevant technology specific NPSs, of providing the primary basis for decision making under the Planning Act 2008;
- **NPS for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3)**[ii] – Provides the primary basis for decisions on applications for renewable energy infrastructure, defined as energy from biomass and/ or waste (>50 MW), offshore wind (>100 MW) or onshore wind (>50 MW); and
- **NPS for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (EN-5)**[iii] – Provides the primary basis for decisions on applications for electricity networks infrastructure defined as above-ground electricity lines of 132 kV and above, or other infrastructure for electricity networks that is associated with an NSIP.

3.1.3 The NPSs establish a policy expectation for undertakers of individual projects to collaborate with other major infrastructure project undertakers in close proximity or where there are direct overlaps with projects. More specifically:

"Paragraph 3.3.58: Given the urgent need for new electricity infrastructure and the time it takes for electricity NSIPs to move from design conception to operation, there is an urgent need for new (and particularly low carbon) electricity NSIPs to be brought forward as soon as possible, given the crucial role of electricity as the UK decarbonises its economy." (NPS EN-1).

"Paragraph 2.8.48: Applicants are encouraged to work collaboratively with those other developers and sea users on co-existence/co-location opportunities, shared mitigation, compensation and monitoring where appropriate. Where applicable, the creation of statements of common ground between developers is recommended. Work is ongoing between government and industry to support effective collaboration and find solutions to facilitate to greater co-existence/co-location." (NPS EN-3).

"Paragraph 2.8.87: Where appropriate, applicants are also encouraged to consider monitoring collaboratively with other developers and sea users. Work is ongoing between government and industry to support effective collaboration and the development of monitoring at a strategic level." (NPS EN-3).

[i] Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy - EN-1 (publishing.service.gov.uk)
[ii] National Policy Statement for renewable energy infrastructure (EN-3) (publishing.service.gov.uk)
[iii] Electricity Networks National Policy Statement - EN-5 (publishing.service.gov.uk)

"Paragraph 2.8.217: Where several developers are likely to have cumulative impacts on the same species or feature it may be appropriate to collaborate on mitigation and compensation measures…" (NPS EN-3).

"Paragraph 2.8.225: Where cumulative impacts on subtidal habitats are predicted as a result of multiple cable routes, applicants for various schemes are encouraged to work together to ensure that the number of cables crossing the subtidal zone is minimised and installation/ decommissioning phases are coordinated to ensure that disturbance is reasonably minimised." (NPS EN-3).

"Paragraph 2.8.235: Where cumulative impacts on subtidal habitats are predicted as a result of multiple cable routes, applicants for various schemes are encouraged to work together to ensure that the number of cables crossing the subtidal zone is minimised and installation/ decommissioning phases are coordinated to ensure that disturbance is reasonably minimised." (NPS EN-3).

"Paragraph 2.7.1: EN-1 explains in Section 4.10 that the Planning Act 2008 aims to create a holistic planning regime, such that the cumulative effects of the same project can be considered together. Co-ordinated applications typically bring economic efficiencies and reduced environmental impact." (NPS EN-5).

"Paragraph 2.12.6: … a more co-ordinated approach to designing offshore transmission is expected to be adopted compared with the previous standard approach of radial routes to shore. This applies to spatially close groups of offshore windfarms, subsea 'onshore' transmission or bootstraps, interconnectors and multi-purpose interconnectors." (NPS EN-5).

"Paragraph 2.13.1: The strategic network designs such as those led or enabled by National Grid Electricity System Operator (ESO) will usually form the basis for identifying proposals for co-ordinated transmission. This includes the Holistic Network Design (HND) for offshore-onshore transmission prepared by ESO." (NPS EN-5).

"Paragraph 2.13.4: It is recognised that proposed projects which have progressed through strategic network design exercises have been considered for strategic co-ordination through those exercises. However, any opportunities for subsequent local co-ordination between projects, irrespective of whether they have been through those exercise, should be considered in project development. This is in addition to considerations on co-ordinating delivery in construction…" (NPS EN-5).

"Paragraph 2.13.10: The identification of co-ordinated solution options, and any radial option, should consider the criteria for designs to be deliverable and operable38, economic and efficient, minimise impact on the environment and minimise impact on the local communities. Options should seek to identify the most appropriate balance between these criteria." (NPS EN-5).

"Paragraph 2.13.11: The coordinated solutions assessed should seek to be ambitious in the degree of co-ordination, wherever possible. This includes taking account of geographically proximate projects including opportunities to connect wind farms and multi-purpose interconnectors and/or bootstraps with each other that are planned or foreseen in the near future. Evidence should demonstrate that this has been considered in the assessment of options." (NPS EN-5).

"Paragraph 2.13.14: Co-ordinated transmission proposals, including multi-purpose interconnectors and other types of offshore transmission (see Glossary), are

expected to reduce the overall environmental and community impacts associated with bringing offshore transmission onshore compared to an uncoordinated, radial approach. These reduced impacts could, for example, relate to: fewer landing sites and reduced landfall impacts; reduced overall cable length and impacts; and fewer cable corridors and reduced impacts from these." (NPS EN-5).

"Paragraph 2.13.16: For onshore infrastructure, reduced impacts could, for example, relate to fewer or co-located substations and converter stations and transmission lines as well as demonstrating how environmental and community impacts have been avoided as far as possible." (NPS EN-5).

"Paragraph 2.13.17: Applicants are expected to be able to indicate how co-ordination including reduction in impacts have been considered drawing on work of others, including that led or enabled by National Grid Electricity System Operator (ESO)." (NPS EN-5).

3.1.4 Further detail on compliance of the project proposals with the NPS requirements for collaboration and coordination is set out in the Planning Statement (Volume 9, Report 1) and Policy Compliance Document (Volume 9, Report 2).

4 CONSENTING STRATEGY

4.1.1 The base case position for Five Estuaries remains the progression of the radial onshore connection to the National Grid EACN substation as per our existing grid connection offer.

4.1.2 We will continue to develop coordinated plans with North Falls for our base case, aligned with existing regulations and commercial conditions to provide an onshore connection. Thus, ensuring no delay to our planned grid connection date and therefore continuing to support the UK Government's 2030 targets for the deployment of 50 GW of offshore wind by 2030.

4.1.3 In circumstances where there is a viable and available coordinated offshore connection VE have considered how consenting could be approached making the most use of the information in this current application, including all of the environmental assessment undertaken in support of the application.

4.1.4 The offshore chapters in the environmental statement to be submitted in the VE DCO application have been structured so that the assessment for the wind farm array is separate to that of the export cable corridor. This would make it straightforward to consider the array separately if there was a need to do this under circumstances where a viable offshore connection option such as Sea Link became available.

4.1.5 Under such circumstances there would be a need to obtain an additional consent to connect the VE array to the proposed offshore connection point/converter station for the Sea Link project. The likely position of a connection point for this would be in the proposed array area for the North Falls project. The project proposes that connection from its wind farm to this connection point is achieved under a separate Marine Licence.

4.1.6 The cable route between the proposed VE array and the potential location for an offshore converter station would utilise the same offshore area as the current VE export/interconnector cable route corridor. This area has been surveyed and the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) work done for VE covers this area in full. The EIA has concluded no significant effects on the environment or sea users in this area. Therefore, it can be assumed that applying for a Marine Licence would be a relatively standard and straightforward procedure and the consenting would be uncontentious.

4.1.7 In effect this means that the VE array would be consented by the current DCO application and the export cables to a new offshore connection (should it become viable) would be consented via a separate marine licence. The project has also considered future amendments to the DCO (both post submission and post consent award) as potential consenting routes but consider that the Marine Licence approach would be the most appropriate consenting solution given the current regime for material and non-material amendments to DCOs.

4.1.8 As mentioned earlier the current Sea Link project under development does not include the necessary components to allow for the connection of offshore wind farms and the feasibility of this option is currently the subject of a study under the OCSS. One of the components of this study will be the environmental and consenting considerations. The onshore and offshore environmental impacts of the currently proposed Sea Link project are presented in the Sea Link Preliminary Environmental Information Report published in October 2023.

5 NEXT STEPS

5.1.1 VE has committed to work with the consortium partners on the OCSS project to explore the potential for connection to the Sea Link project. The next step in this process is the submission of an initial feasibility report to DESNZ at the end of March 2024. DESNZ will use this to help determine the next steps in this process.

5.1.2 National Grid Electricity System Operator (NGESO) published a report on 12 March 2023 that explores the effects on the East Anglia region if North Falls and Five Estuaries connect offshore to Sea Link. The study considers a number of factors including cost to consumers, deliverability and operability, impact on the environment and local communities and it also identifies a variety of options for necessary additional infrastructure works. NGESO's report and the consortium's feasibility study will be evaluated by DESNZ and will inform its decision on whether to grant the second tranche of funding to the consortium in the 2024-25 financial year.

5.1.3 The consortium has no bearing or influence on NGESO's findings nor DESNZ's decision whether to grant a second tranche of funding. As part of the activity being supported by the OCSS, Five Estuaries and the other partner organisations of the consortium will need to consider what milestones in the respective projects' programmes represent points at which each project could take a decision to progress with a co-ordinated offshore connection solution. Equally they will also have to consider milestones in the programmes after which changing to an offshore connection option stops being viable e.g. for reasons associated with long lead procurement items or supply chain and most critically achieving the 2030 dates for operation in line with government targets and the urgent need for low carbon electricity, and security of supply.

6 ANNEX 1 - JOINT STATEMENT FROM NORTH FALLS, FIVE ESTUARIES AND NATIONAL GRID: COMMITMENT TO EXPLORING COORDINATED NETWORK DESIGNS IN EAST ANGLIA

Joint statement from North Falls, Five Estuaries and National Grid: Commitment to exploring coordinated network designs in East Anglia - Published 7 July 2022

Onshore and offshore energy infrastructure are critical to delivering on the ambition for the UK to be Net Zero by 2050. As responsible developers, owners and operators of renewable generation and transmission infrastructure, we strongly support the government's ambition to make the UK the world leader in offshore wind. Delivering government ambitions of 50GW of offshore wind by 2030 will create green skilled jobs, strengthen UK security of supply, provide clean renewable power to fight climate change and help to reduce energy bills for British consumers.

National Grid Electricity Transmission (Sea Link), National Grid Ventures (Nautilus and EuroLink), North Falls (offshore wind farm) and Five Estuaries (offshore wind farm) are working together and exploring the potential for offshore coordination as part of the Offshore Transmission Network Review (OTNR) "Early Opportunities" workstream, with a view to identifying a future Pathfinder Project.

Offshore coordination of these projects could reduce, but not avoid, the need for coastal onshore infrastructure in east Suffolk and southern East Anglia and significant reinforcement of onshore infrastructure, such as the East Anglia Green project, is key to enabling a clean low carbon future irrespective of where energy comes ashore.

Whilst we welcome the progress the OTNR has made and recent publications from BEIS and the energy regulator, Ofgem, on enabling regulatory and policy changes, currently, the detailed commercial, regulatory and legislative frameworks needed to realise offshore coordination are not yet fully in place. We are working with the Government and Ofgem as they continue to progress the changes needed to enable greater coordination between these projects. So as not to impact the Government's 2030 offshore wind ambition, we continue to progress, in parallel, consent for grid infrastructure projects based on the existing regime.

North Falls
Five Estuaries
National Grid

7 ANNEX 2 - JOINT STATEMENT FROM NORTH FALLS AND FIVE ESTUARIES OFFSHORE WIND FARMS AND NATIONAL GRID: PROJECTS WELCOME FUNDING TO ENABLE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPLORE COORDINATION FEASIBILITY

Joint statement from North Falls and Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farms and National Grid: Projects welcome funding to enable opportunity to explore coordination feasibility - Published December 2023

National Grid Electricity Transmission (Sea Link), North Falls (Offshore Wind Farm) and Five Estuaries (Offshore Wind Farm) have been working together to explore the potential for offshore coordination as part of the Offshore Transmission Network Review (OTNR) "Early Opportunities" workstream. The projects acting together in a consortium led by North Falls welcome the decision from the Department of Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) to provide grant funding through the Offshore Coordination Support Scheme ("OCSS"). The aim of the scheme is to develop and explore the feasibility of coordinated options for offshore transmission infrastructure.

The consortium applied for OCSS grant funding in February 2023. Following the grant announcement, the consortium will now undertake a series of studies and assessments to determine the feasibility, challenges and solutions to enable a co-ordinated offshore connection. This work will consider the economics, engineering & regulatory challenges, logistics and programme delivery aspects. The first step will be a high-level feasibility study which is expected to be available before the end of March 2024.

All three participating projects are delighted to have been awarded the grant funding. This support enables the projects to consider an alternative coordinated connection whilst, in parallel, continuing to progress existing radial proposals to ensure no delay in building the much-needed infrastructure to support the UK's net zero targets (should the offshore coordination be determined as not deliverable). As beneficiaries of the grant, we will be required to share key learnings on how a coordinated offshore transmission approach could work.

The consortium strongly support the Government's ambition to make the UK the world leader in offshore wind. The delivery of the UK Government's ambition of 50GW of offshore wind by 2030 will create green skilled jobs, strengthen UK security of supply, provide clean renewable power to fight climate change and help to reduce energy bills for British consumers.

North Falls
Five Estuaries
National Grid

FIVE ESTUARIES
OFFSHORE WIND FARM

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