



Maritime &  
Coastguard  
Agency

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16<sup>th</sup> January 2023

Your ref: EN010117

Dear Sir/Madam

**Application by Rampion Extension Development Limited (RED) for an Order Granting Development Consent for a new offshore windfarm, Rampion 2, with up to 90 wind turbine generators, offshore substations and electricity transmission infrastructure.**

**Planning Act 2008 – Section 88 and 89 and The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 – Rules 4, 6, 9 and 13.**

### **Examination Timetable – Deadline 1 – Written Representation**

The MCA's remit for Offshore Renewable Energy Installations (OREIs) is to ensure that the safety of navigation is preserved, and our Search and Rescue (SAR) capability is maintained, whilst progress is made towards government targets for renewable energy. The Navigation Risk Assessment (NRA), the shipping and navigation chapter of the Environmental Impact Report and draft DCO have been reviewed and we would like to comment as follows:

#### **Summary**

MCA is content with the Formal Safety Assessment process the applicant has taken in assessing risks to shipping and navigation.

Engagement with stakeholders regarding various issues that were identified at the Scoping and Preliminary Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) stages have proved effective in refining the project Red Line Boundaries and final areas of construction of Rampion 2 Offshore Windfarm. The changes made have reduced the significance of the effects around port entry, aggregate and dredging activities, recreational use and interaction with traffic exiting the Dover Strait Traffic Separation Scheme (TSS). The intended mitigation measures as highlighted in table 13-14 of Chapter 13, Shipping and Navigation are deemed adequate in their aims to reduce hazards to As Low As Reasonably Practicable (ALARP).

Comments have been provided on conditions within the DCO under Schedules 11 and 12 later in the response.

## **6.2.13 Environmental Statement Chapter 13 – Shipping and Navigation (APP-054) and 6.4.13.1 Environmental Statement Appendix 13.1 – Navigation Risk Assessment (APP-155).**

Rampion Extension Development Limited (RED) has undertaken a detailed Navigation Risk Assessment (NRA) in accordance with MCA guidance MGN (Marine Guidance Note) 654 and NRA risk assessment methodology. We are satisfied that appropriate traffic data has been collected in accordance with MGN 654. This includes two 14-day marine vessel traffic surveys carried out in August 2020 and November 2020 with secondary datasets from 2 additional 14-day marine vessel traffic surveys carried out in June 2022 and December 2022. These were used to validate the vessel traffic survey data, with the last of these ensuring there is sufficient MGN 654 compliant survey data. This is also supplemented by 12 months of AIS data from 2019.

Key and appropriate stakeholders were identified, and the MCA is content that suitable consultation took place via a hazard identification workshop and dedicated meetings. A completed MGN 654 Checklist has been provided as part of the NRA, and we are content the recommended NRA process has been followed.

We would like to comment as follows on the NRA and Shipping & Navigation Chapter of the EIA Report:

### **1. Navigable Sea Room**

The changes to the Red Line Boundary (RLB) as presented in Figure 6.1 of the NRA have led to an overall increase in the navigable sea room available in the vicinity of The Dover Strait TSS to the south, Inshore Traffic Zone (ITZ) to the east and the approaches to the Solent to the west. In addition, as noted in paragraph 371 of the NRA and although not formally designated as a navigation corridor, the introduction of a structures exclusion zone (NRA Figure 17.1) compliant with MGN 654 to the west of Rampion 1 is welcomed by the MCA.

Guidance from MGN 654 has been used to show the minimum width required for the 3.6NM long corridor and 1.3NM as a worst-case scenario is compliant. The inclusion of this structures exclusion zone and the reduction in the western boundary in proximity to Owers Bank and in particular the Owers south cardinal mark, has been welcomed by key stakeholders. MCA is content with these changes and agrees with the assessment and conclusion that it will not pose an unacceptable navigational risk.

### **2. Shipping and Navigation Mitigation Measures**

In response to MCA queries at the PEIR stage we are content that adequate focus has now been given to increased vessel grounding risks as addressed in chapter 13, sections 13.9-13.11 and section 19.1.4 of the NRA. Consideration has also been given to the effects of reduction of depth in relation to Chart Datum of any scour protection and cable installation and associated works, with a Cable Specification and Installation Plan (CSIP) and Cable Burial Risk Assessment (CBRA) as embedded mitigations C-41 and C-45 respectively.

Additionally, it should be noted that the requirement for an Emergency Response Cooperation Plan (ERCoP), as referenced in Table 13-14 of the ES Chapter 13 Shipping and Navigation, will be secured in the DCO/DML under the condition for complying with MGN 654. There will not be a specific condition for the completion of an ERCoP.

The list of mitigation measures in Table 24-1 of the NRA and Table 13-14 of the Shipping and navigation ES Chapter is relevant and appropriate and will serve to reduce identified risks to ALARP.

### **3. Layout Design**

The turbine layout design must be compliant with MGN 654 and it will require MCA and Trinity House approval prior to construction to minimise the risks to surface vessels, including rescue boats, and search and rescue aircraft operating within the site. MCA will seek to ensure all structures are aligned in straight rows and columns with a minimum of two lines of orientation. Mitigation C-86 in table 13-14 of Chapter 13 and Table 24-1 of the NRA, confirms the intention to continue discussions with the MCA and Trinity House. Further advice will be provided once the layout discussions have started.

### **4. Marking and Lighting.**

MCA will seek to ensure the turbine numbering system follows a 'spreadsheet' principle and is consistent with other windfarms in the UK. All lighting and marking arrangements will need to be agreed with MCA and Trinity House. The MCA requires all aviation lighting to be visible 360° and compatible with night vision imaging systems, as detailed in CAP 764 and MGN 654 Annex 5.

### **5. Emergency Response and Search and Rescue.**

There is an expectation that the presence of wind farms will increase the likelihood of the requirement for emergency response, not just from navigational incidents but from other incidents such as medical evacuation or pollution. A SAR checklist based on the requirements in MGN 654 Annex 5 will need to be completed in agreement with MCA before construction starts. This will include the requirement for an approved Emergency Response Co-operation Plan (ERCoP).

During SAR discussions, particular consideration will need to be given to the implications of the site size and location. Attention should be paid to the level of radar surveillance, AIS and shore-based VHF radio coverage and give due consideration for appropriate mitigation such as radar, AIS receivers and in-field, Marine Band VHF radio communications aerial(s) (VHF voice with Digital Selective Calling (DSC)) that can cover the entire wind farm sites and their surrounding areas. It will be expected that RED will provide this AIS and VHF capability to the MCA with direct access to HM Coastguard systems.

Chapter 9 of the NRA regarding lessons learned within the offshore industry references SAR helicopter trials at the North Hoyle offshore wind farm in 2005. This is now a dated document and while references may still be made, there may be more benefit in referring to documents written by the MCA in 2019, titled: "MCA report following aviation trials and exercises in relation to offshore windfarms" and "MCA report following aviation trials at Hornsea Project 1 windfarm".

A minor note in way of clarification is that the UK is now divided into six districts and 18 areas. Paragraph 143 of the NRA refers to these areas as '*geographical regions*'. Full list of the areas is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coastguard-rescue-service-areas-and-stations>.

Section 9.6.2 of the NRA references incidents in European offshore wind farms which although not in the UK, does show that vessels are interacting with windfarms/turbines. We would recommend that an allision/collision per windfarm would be a more accurate representation rather than per turbine, as presented in paragraph 155, since it is the presence of the windfarm which the NRA is addressing.

#### **6. Construction scenarios.**

We would expect to see some form of linear progression of the construction programme avoiding disparate construction sites across the development area, and the consent needs to include the requirement for an agreed construction plan to be in place ahead of any works commencing.

#### **7. Cable Routes.**

Export cable routes, cable burial protection index and cable protection are issues that are yet to be fully developed but the commitment to Cable Specification and Installation Plan (CSIP) and Cable Burial Risk Assessment (CBRA) as embedded mitigations C-41 and C-45 respectively are welcomed. As a reminder however due cognisance needs to address cable burial and protection, particularly close to shore where impacts on navigable water depth may become significant. Any consented cable protection works must ensure existing and future safe navigation is not compromised. It is noted in Table 4-14 in Volume 2 Chapter 4, that the export cables will be High Voltage Alternate Current (HVAC) which is expected to have no impact on electro-magnetic fields and ships' magnetic compasses.

#### **8. Safety Zones.**

The requirement and use of safety zones as detailed in the application as embedded mitigation C-56 in table 13-14 of chapter 13 is noted, and MCA will comment on the safety zone application once submitted, as a statutory consultee. Safety zones during the construction, maintenance and decommissioning phases are supported. A detailed justification would be required for a 50m operational safety zone, with significant evidence from the construction phase in addition to the baseline NRA required supporting the case. Safety zones triggered by a Service Operation Vessel connecting to a wind turbine will not be supported.

### **Draft Development Consent Order (DCO) (APP-019)**

We would like to comment on the draft conditions in the Deemed Marine Licences as follows:

#### Schedule 11:

- 5(12) move to Schedule 12 and amend to:
  - *In case of buried cables becoming exposed on or above the seabed, the undertaker must within three days following identification of a cable exposure, notify mariners, regional fisheries contacts and the Kingfisher Information Service of Seafish of the location and extent of exposure. Copies of all notices must be provided to the MMO, MCA, Trinity House, and the UKHO within 5 days.*
- 9 (8) Amend to:
  - *All dropped objects must be reported to the MMO, UKHO and HMCG using the Dropped Object Procedure Form as soon as reasonably practicable and no later than 6 hours of the undertaker becoming aware of an incident. Immediate notification should be made*

*to HM Coastguard via telephone where there is a perceived danger or hazard to navigation. On receipt of the Dropped Object Procedure Form, the MMO may require relevant surveys to be carried out by the undertaker (such as side scan sonar) if reasonable to do so and the MMO may require obstructions to be removed from the seabed at the undertaker's expense if reasonable to do so.*

- 13(1) the condition implies there must be a safety zones application. This is not a mandatory requirement and suggest it can be removed.
- 14 remove reference to ERCoP. Amend to:
  - *No part of the authorised project may commence until the MMO, in consultation with the MCA, has confirmed in writing that the undertaker has taken into account and, so far as is applicable to that stage of the project, adequately addressed all MCA recommendations as appropriate to the authorised project contained within MGN654 "Offshore Renewable Energy Installations (OREIs) – Guidance on UK Navigational Practice, Safety and Emergency Response Issues" and its annexes.*
- 16(2)(a) amend to:
  - *A swath bathymetric survey to IHO Order 1a of the area within the Offshore Order Limits extending to an appropriate buffer around the site, must be undertaken. This should fulfil the requirements of MGN654 and its supporting 'Hydrographic Guidelines for Offshore Renewable Energy Developers', which includes the requirement for the full density data and reports to be delivered to the MCA and the UKHO for the update of nautical charts and publications. This must be submitted as soon as possible, and no later than [three months] prior to construction. The Order Limit shapefiles must be submitted to MCA. The Report of Survey must also be sent to the MMO.*
- 24 amend to:
  - *The undertaker must submit a close out report to the MMO, MCA, UKHO and the relevant statutory nature conservation body within three months of the date of completion of construction. The close out report must confirm the date of completion of construction and must include the following details:*
    - *the final number of installed wind turbine generators;*
    - *as built plans; and*
    - *latitude and longitude coordinates of the centre point of the location for each wind turbine generator and offshore platform, substation, booster station and meteorological mast; provided as Geographical Information System data referenced to WGS84 datum.*

#### Schedule 12:

- 5(8) add MCA for receiving notices.
- 5(9) add MCA for receiving notifications.
- 5(11) replace with wording from Schedule 11 Condition 5(12).
- 9(8) amend to:
  - *All dropped objects must be reported to the MMO, UKHO and HMCG using the Dropped Object Procedure Form as soon as reasonably practicable and no later than 6 hours of the undertaker becoming aware of an incident. Immediate notification should be made*

*to HM Coastguard via telephone where there is a perceived danger or hazard to navigation. On receipt of the Dropped Object Procedure Form, the MMO may require relevant surveys to be carried out by the undertaker (such as side scan sonar) if reasonable to do so and the MMO/NRW/MS/DAERA may require obstructions to be removed from the seabed at the undertaker's expense if reasonable to do so.*

- 13 remove condition. Safety zones do not apply to cables.
- 14 remove reference to ERCoP. Amend to:
  - *No part of the authorised project may commence until the MMO, in consultation with the MCA, has confirmed in writing that the undertaker has taken into account and, so far as is applicable to that stage of the project, adequately addressed all MCA recommendations as appropriate to the authorised project contained within MGN654 "Offshore Renewable Energy Installations (OREIs) – Guidance on UK Navigational Practice, Safety and Emergency Response Issues" and its annexes.*
- 16(2)(a) amend to:
  - *A swath bathymetric survey to IHO Order 1a of the cable routes within the Offshore Order Limits extending to an appropriate buffer around the site, must be undertaken. This should fulfil the requirements of MGN654 and its supporting 'Hydrographic Guidelines for Offshore Renewable Energy Developers', which includes the requirement for the full density data and reports to be delivered to the MCA and the UKHO for the update of nautical charts and publications. This must be submitted as soon as possible, and no later than [three months] prior to construction. The Order Limit shapefiles must be submitted to MCA. The Report of Survey must also be sent to the MMO.*
- 18 add the following post-construction hydrographic survey requirement:
  - *The undertaker must conduct a swath bathymetric survey to IHO Order 1a of the installed export cable route and provide the data and survey report(s) to the MCA and UKHO. The MMO should be notified once this has been done, with a copy of the Report of Survey also sent to the MMO. This should fulfil the requirements of MGN654 and its supporting 'Hydrographic Guidelines for Offshore Renewable Energy Developers', which includes the requirement for the full density data and reports to be delivered to the MCA and the UKHO for the update of nautical charts and publications.*
- 24 amend to:
  - *The undertaker must submit a close out report to the MMO, MCA, UKHO and the relevant statutory nature conservation body within three months of the date of completion of construction. The close out report must confirm the date of completion of construction and must include the following details:*
    - *latitude and longitude coordinates of the inter array and export cable routes; provided as Geographical Information System data referenced to WGS84 datum.*

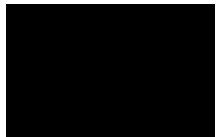
MCA contact details in Schedules 11 and 12 Parts 1 to be amended to:

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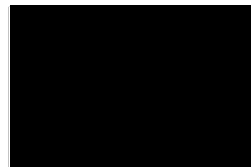
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The Applicant has provided a comprehensive overview of the risk. The comments detailed above are to highlight items to be addressed by the applicant in consultation with the MCA and navigation stakeholders to ensure the risk to the safety of navigation and the impact on SAR capability remains low.

Yours Sincerely,



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