



THE PLANNING ACT 2008

THE INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING (EXAMINATION PROCEDURE) RULES
2010

Rampion Two Offshore Wind Farm

Appendix K6 to the Natural England Deadline 6 Submission

Natural England's Final Principal Areas of Disagreement Summary Statement

For:

The construction and operation of the Rampion 2 Offshore Windfarm located approximately
13km off the Sussex coast in the English Channel.

Planning Inspectorate Reference EN010117

01 August 2024

Appendix K Principal Areas of Disagreement Summary Statement (PADSS)

Glossary of Acronyms and Abbreviations

AEoI	Adverse Effect on Integrity
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
CBRA	Cable Burial Risk Assessment
CHAONB	Chichester Harbour Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
DBBC	Double Big Bubble Curtains
ES	Environmental Statement
FFC	Flamborough and Filey Coast
FLL	Functionally Linked Land
HDD	Horizontal Directional Drilling
IoWAONB	Isle of Wight Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
MCZ	Marine Conservation Zone
MEEB	Measures of Equivalent Environmental Benefit
NAS	Noise Abatement Systems
NE	Natural England
SDNP	South Downs National Park
SHC	Sussex Heritage Coast
SPA	Special Protection Area
TTS	Temporary Threshold Shift

In our final version of the PADSS, the first three columns are unchanged from the PADSS submitted alongside our relevant representation. We have added a column to state if the concerns have been addressed throughout the examination process and have also included a risk rating column.

The principal issue in question	The brief concern held by Natural England which will be reported on in full in WR / LI	What needs to; • change, or • be included, or • amended so as to overcome the disagreement	Has the concern been addressed?	RAG
Flamborough and Filey Coast Special Protection Area (FFC SPA) - in-combination impacts on kittiwake	Kittiwake – the additional impact from Rampion 2 risk furthering adverse effects from existing and proposed windfarms	Flamborough and Filey Coast Special Protection Area (FFC SPA) - in-combination impacts on kittiwake	This issue is resolved . Whilst an adverse effect on integrity (AEol) cannot be ruled out from Rampion 2 in-combination with other projects, we consider the proposed compensatory measures are proportionate to the impact, provided NE advice on the required level of provision is followed.	
Flamborough and Filey Coast SPA – in-combination impacts on guillemot and razorbill and Farne Islands SPA – guillemot.	The effects of Rampion 2 incombination with other projects on these qualifying features need to be fully considered	A full in-combination assessment of impacts on these qualifying features is required.	This issue is resolved . Whilst an AEol cannot be ruled out in-combination with other projects, we consider the proposed compensatory measures have the potential to provide benefits that are proportionate to the impact.	
Coastal Processes	Sea defences at Climping have failed in recent storms, causing further	We advise further consideration needs to be	This remains unresolved . Further geotechnical data is required to inform a	

	coastal erosion and flooding. It is imperative that landfall HDD burial depths and cable protection options are adequately interrogated to future proof the asset integrity and minimise the need for future cable protection in the coastal zone.	given to this within the assessment.	detailed HDD feasibility study and CBRA. The CBRA submitted at D5 is currently insufficient. We understood the Applicant will provide this post consent, but given the level of risk we consider it inappropriate to defer proper consideration of these issues to a later date.	
Black seabream (<i>Spondyliosoma cantharus</i>) in Kingmere Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) - impacts of piling on underwater noise levels	Natural England does not agree with that there will be no significant risk of hindering the achievement of the conservation objectives of Kingmere MCZ due to Temporary Threshold Shift (TTS) and behavioural impacts due to piling noise.	Piling activities from 1st March to 31st July inclusive have the potential to hinder the conservation objectives of Kingmere MCZ for black seabream, and therefore a full seasonal restriction is needed.	This issue remains unresolved . We continue to advise the only way to ensure the conservation objectives of the Kingmere MCZ are not hindered is a full piling restriction of 01 March to 31 July inclusive. We remain concerned that the modelling locations do not represent the WCS for the MCZ, please see App XX We also advise that the proposals for MEEB are unlikely to result in any meaningful benefit for black bream.	
Short snouted seahorse (<i>Hippocampus hippocampus</i>) features of MCZs – impacts of piling on underwater noise levels	Natural England does not agree with that there will be no significant risk of hindering the achievement of the conservation	Further evidence is required on the modelling impacts and the efficacy of noise abatement measures.	This is resolvable if the Applicant is able to field-test and evidence that a reduction in the region of 15dB is deliverable during	

	objectives in relation to Beachy Head West MCZ (TTS and behavioural impacts due to piling), and Beachy Head East MCZ, Selsey Bill and the Hounds MCZ and Bembridge MCZ (behavioural impacts).		the ‘worst-case’ environmental conditions at the site, we would be in a position to conclude that the conservation objectives of the four seahorse MCZs will not be hindered due to TTS and behavioural impacts from underwater noise generated from piling.	
Impacts on priority habitats and species in the intertidal and subtidal environment.	Habitats of Principal Importance (including but not limited to <i>Sabellaria spinulosa</i> , chalk, and peat and clay exposures), Annex I habitats (stony reef, bedrock reef) and black seabream nests could be affected. It is currently unclear whether the proposed mitigation will be effective.	We advise that geotechnical information is collected to inform a Cable Burial Risk Assessment (CBRA) and is submitted into the Examination. Comprehensive pre-construction surveys will also need to be agreed with Natural England to inform mitigation proposals.	This issue remains unresolved as it is contingent on detailed geotechnical surveys being undertaken post consent to inform a CBRA. The CBRA submitted at D5 is currently insufficient.	
Significant seascape impacts on the South Downs National Park (SDNP), including the Sussex Heritage Coast (SHC).	Critical issues remain around the magnitude of impact due to size, proximity, and lateral spread of the turbines that will cause harm to the statutory purposes of the SDNP and SHC.	No turbines should be constructed in the eastern array/Zone 6. Reduce the combined horizontal extent (lateral spread) of turbines associated with the combined R1 and R2 schemes. Further impact assessment is needed to clarify specific impacts on the SDNP and SHC.	This issue remains unresolved : we maintain that fundamental design changes are required to lessen the major harm to both the SDNP and SHC. We advise that the Project has not satisfactorily demonstrated how the project proposes to enable the Secretary of State to	

			<i>further the statutory purposes of the SDNP (in accordance with section 245 of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023) in light of the predicted seascape impacts.</i>	
Significant seascape impacts on the Isle of Wight Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (IoWAONB) and Chichester Harbour Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (CHAONB)	Critical issues remain around the potential for the lateral spread of the turbines to cause harm to the statutory purposes of the AONBs	Further assessment of the westward expansion is required when considering the effects on the seascape setting of the CHAONB and the eastern portions of IoWAONB	This issue remains unresolved . Our concerns have not been addressed.	
Significant landscape impacts on SDNP due to onshore cable installation	Natural England advises that due to the substantial lack of credible and detailed evidence in relation to the mitigation proposed, the assessment of effects as set out in the LVIA cannot be relied upon, and that there will be significant residual adverse landscape and visual effects on the SDNP and on its special qualities, setting or integrity.	Further information needs to be provided to evidence that the proposed mitigation measures are feasible and effective.	This remains unresolved . Further geotechnical data is required to inform a detailed HDD feasibility study. It is understood this will be provided post consent. It should be noted that if HDD is found to be unfeasible, the DCO makes no provision for alternative installation methods. Should HDD indeed be unfeasible, it will likely require a material change to the DCO and an updated assessment of impacts.	
Terrestrial Ecology and Nature Conservation –	Natural England has major concerns regarding the feasibility of Horizontal	Geotechnical information needs to be provided to understand the feasibility	This remains unresolved . Further geotechnical data is required to inform a	

feasibility of trenchless techniques	Directional Drilling (HDD) and therefore its likely effectiveness in mitigating impacts.	and effectiveness of this approach.	detailed HDD feasibility study. It is understood this will be provided post consent. It should be noted that if HDD is found to be unfeasible it will likely be considered a material change to the DCO.	
Impacts on Arun Valley SPA and Ramsar site – loss of functionally linked land (FLL) used by waterbirds.	There is the risk of a temporary loss of FLL (during the construction phase) lasting for several years longer than predicted before it is returned to its previous agricultural condition	We advise that this extended timeframe needs to be further assessed with the ES.	We confirm this matter is resolved .	
Impacts on Arun Valley SPA and Ramsar site – requirement for water neutrality.	Natural England advise that development proposals within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone area that would lead to an increase in water demand will need to demonstrate and robustly evidence ‘water neutrality.’	An assessment of water neutrality is required.	We confirm this matter is resolved .	

Natural England's risk rating with colour coding

<p>Purple</p> <p>Note for Examiners and/or competent authority. May relate to DCO/DML.</p>	
<p>Red</p> <p>Natural England considers that unless these issues are resolved it will have to advise that (in relation to any one of them, and as appropriate) it is not possible to ascertain beyond reasonable scientific doubt that the project will not affect the integrity of an SAC/SPA and/or significantly hinder the conservation objectives of an MCZ and/or damage or destroy the interest features of a SSSI and/or comply fully with the Environmental Impact Assessment requirements.</p> <p>Addressing these concerns <u>may</u> require the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• new baseline or survey data; and/or• significant revisions to baseline characterisation and/or impact modelling and/or• significant design changes; and/or• significant mitigation <p>Natural England feels that issues given Red status are so complex, or require the provision of so much outstanding information, that they are unlikely to be resolved during the Examination, and respectfully suggests that they be addressed beforehand.</p>	
<p>Amber</p> <p>Natural England does not agree with the applicant's position or approach and consider that this could make a material difference to the outcome of the decision-making process for this project.</p> <p>Natural England considers that these matters <u>may</u> be resolved through:</p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provision of additional evidence or justification to support conclusions; and/or • revisions to impact assessment methodology and/or assessment conclusions; and/or • minor to moderate revisions to impact modelling; and/or • well-designed mitigation measures that are adequately secured through the draft DCO/dML and/or • amendments to draft plans <p>If these issues are not addressed or resolved by the end of the Examination, then they may become a Red risk as set out above.</p>	
<p>Yellow</p> <p>Natural England doesn't agree with the Applicant's position or approach. We would ideally like this to be addressed but are satisfied that for <u>this particular project</u> it is unlikely to make a material difference to our advice or the outcome of the decision-making process. However, we reserve the right to revise our opinion should further evidence be presented.</p> <p>It should be noted by interested parties that just because these issues/comments are not raised as significant concerns in this instance, it should not be understood or inferred that Natural England would be of the same view in other cases or circumstances.</p>	
<p>Green</p> <p>Natural England is in broad agreement with the Applicant's approach and has no significant outstanding concerns. As above, we reserve the right to revise our opinion should new evidence be presented.</p>	