



NORTH FALLS

Offshore Wind Farm

ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

Appendix 4.2 Site Selection and Assessment
of Alternatives Consultations Responses

Document Reference: 3.3.1.2
Volume: 3.3
APFP Regulation: 5(2)(a)
Date: July 2024
Revision: 0

Project Reference: EN010119



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Project	North Falls Offshore Wind Farm
Document Title	Environmental Statement Appendix 4.2 Site Selection and Assessment of Alternatives Consultation Responses
Document Reference	3.3.1.2
APFP Regulation	5(2)(a)
Supplier	Royal HaskoningDHV
Supplier Document ID	PB9244-RHD-ES-ZZ-RP-YE-0219

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Revision	Date	Status/Reason for Issue	Originator	Checked	Approved
0	July 2024	Submission	RHDHV	NFOW	NFOW

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Glossary of Acronyms

AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
BTO	British Trust for Ornithology
CAA	Civil Aviation Authority
CEA	Cumulative Effect Assessment
CSZ	Core Sustenance Zone
DCO	Development Consent Order
DIO	Defence Infrastructure Organisation
DESNZ	Department for Energy Security and Net Zero
EACN	East Anglia Connection Node
ECC	Essex County Council
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ES	Environment Statement
FLL	Functional Linked Land
GCN	Great Crested Newt
HDD	Horizontal Directional Drilling
HER	Historic Environment Record
HHA	Harwich Haven Authority
LBPC	Little Bromley Parish Council
LNR	Local Nature Reserve
MCA	Maritime and Coastguard Agency
MCZ	Marine Conservation Zone
MCZA	Marine Conservation Zone Assessment
MoD	Ministry of Defence
MMO	Marine Management Organisation
NBN	National Biodiversity Network
NGET	National Grid Electricity Transmission
N2T	Norwich to Tilbury
OTE	Outer Thames Estuary
OTNR	Offshore Transmission Network Review
OWFs	Offshore Wind Farm/s
PRoWs	Public Rights of Way
RAG	Red Amber Green
RIAA	Report to Inform Appropriate Assessment
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
RTD	Red throated dive
RYA	Royal Yachting Association
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SAR	Search and rescue
SLVIA	Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

SPA	Special Protection Area
SPZ	Special Protection Zone
TH	Trinity House
TSS	Traffic Separation Scheme
VEOWL	Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm Limited

Glossary of Terminology

Array area	The offshore wind farm area, within which the wind turbine generators, array cables, platform interconnector cable, offshore substation platform(s) and/or offshore converter platform will be located.
Haul road	The track along the onshore cable route used by construction traffic to access different sections of the onshore cable route.
horizontal directional drill (HDD)	Trenchless technique to bring the offshore export cables ashore at landfall. The technique will also be the primary trenchless technique used for installation of the onshore export cables at sensitive areas of the onshore cable route.
Landfall	The location where the offshore export cables come ashore at Kirby Brook.
National Grid connection point	The grid connection location for the Project. National Grid are proposing to construct new electrical infrastructure (a new substation) to allow the Project to connect to the grid, and this new infrastructure will be located at the National Grid connection point.
Onshore cable corridor(s)	Onshore corridor(s) considered at PEIR within which the onshore cable route, as assessed at ES, is located.
Onshore cable route	Onshore route within which the onshore export cables and associated infrastructure would be located.
Onshore project area	The boundary within which all onshore infrastructure required for the Project will be located (i.e. landfall; onshore cable route, accesses, construction compounds; onshore substation and cables to the National Grid substation).
Onshore substation	A compound containing electrical equipment required to transform and stabilise electricity generated by the Project so that it can be connected to the National Grid.
Onshore substation zone	The area considered at PEIR, within which the onshore substation will be located
Temporary construction compound	Area set aside to facilitate construction of the onshore cable route. Will be located adjacent to the onshore cable route, with access to the highway where required.
The Applicant	North Falls Offshore Wind Farm Limited (NFOW).
The Project or 'North Falls'	North Falls Offshore Wind Farm, including all onshore and offshore infrastructure.

1 Introduction

1. This appendix provides a full account of consultation received to date in relation to site selection and assessment of alternatives and sets out how the feedback has been addressed within Environmental Statement (ES) Chapter 4 Site Selection and Assessment of Alternatives (Document Reference: 3.1.6).
2. Consultation with regard to site selection and assessment of alternatives has been undertaken in line with the general process described in ES Chapter 6 EIA Methodology (Document Reference: 3.1.8). The key elements to date have included site selection expert topic group meetings, scoping and consultation on the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR). The feedback received has been considered in preparing the ES. Table 1 provides a summary of how the consultation responses received to date have influenced the approach that has been taken.
3. Full details of the consultation process are presented in the Consultation Report as part of the Development Consent Order (DCO) application (Document Reference: 4.1).

Table 1 Consultation responses

Consultee	Date / Document	Engagement	Stakeholder responses / comments	Where addressed in the ES
Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) Trinity House (TH)	May 2018	A consultation event held with marine consultees around the initial array boundaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TH and MCA highlighted a major issue with the western part of the northern section of the array boundary, which at that time overlapped the Sunk Traffic Separation Scheme (TSS) North traffic lane and buffer zone [shown in Figure 4.1, Volume II]. • A Recommended Route for ferries in the array area which is no longer used by ferries was discussed. • Potential mitigation measures were reviewed. Consistency with what is already built in terms of layouts was highlighted as important, both to allow for SAR [search and rescue] access 	<p>In response to feedback from the MCA and TH, the northern array boundary was removed. Discussed further in Section 4.4 of ES Chapter 4 Site Selection and Assessment of Alternatives (Document Reference: 3.1.6).</p> <p>The recommended ferry route and shipping mitigation is discussed further in ES Chapter 15 Shipping and Navigation (Document Reference: 3.1.17).</p> <p>Layout principles, including Search and Rescue (SAR) lanes are also discussed in ES Chapter 15 Shipping and Navigation (Document Reference: 3.1.17).</p>
Ministry of Defence (MoD) Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) National Federation of Fishermen's Organisations Natural England Suffolk Coast and Heath Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)	November 2018	A consultation event (led by The Crown Estate) appraising constraints around the area sought for the array areas from North Falls	<p>Comments were raised regarding the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detection of turbines by air defence radar • Requirement for aviation warning lighting • Cumulative impacts with fishermen • Impacts on designated sites • Visual impacts • Cumulative effects of underwater noise • Displacement of international vessels/ navigation safety • Impacts on coastal process due to export cables • Socio-economic impacts 	<p>These issues are addressed in the following ES chapters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detection of turbines by air defence radar – ES Chapter 17 Aviation and Radar (Document Reference: 3.1.19); • Requirement for aviation warning lighting – ES Chapter 17 Aviation and Radar (Document Reference: 3.1.19); • Cumulative impacts with fishermen – ES Chapter 14 Commercial Fisheries (Document Reference: 3.1.16); • Impacts on designated sites – European sites are assessed in the Report to Inform Appropriate Assessment (RIAA) (Document

Consultee	Date / Document	Engagement	Stakeholder responses / comments	Where addressed in the ES
<p>The Wildlife Trusts</p> <p>Chamber of Shipping</p> <p>Historic England</p> <p>Whale and Dolphin Conservation</p> <p>Suffolk County Council</p> <p>Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cumulative/in-combination effects on ornithology • Comments from stakeholders that export cables should have been included in The Crown Estate's consultation 	<p>Reference: 7.1.1) and the Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) is assessed in the Marine Conservation Zone Assessment (MCZA Stage 1 Report) (Document Reference: 7.3);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual impacts – ES Chapter 29 Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (SLVIA) (Document Reference: 3.1.31); • Cumulative effects of underwater noise – ES Chapter 11 Fish and Shellfish Ecology (Document Reference: 3.1.13) and ES Chapter 12 Marine Mammals (Document Reference: 3.1.14); • Displacement of international vessels / navigation safety – ES Chapter 15 Shipping and Navigation (Document Reference: 3.1.17); • Impacts on coastal process due to export cables – ES Chapter 8 Marine Geology Oceanography and Physical Processes (Document Reference: 3.1.10); • Socio-economic impacts – ES Chapter 31 Socio-Economics (Document Reference: 3.1.33); and • Cumulative / in-combination effects on ornithology – ES Chapter 13 Offshore Ornithology (Document Reference: 3.1.15). <p>With regards to comments that export cables should have been included in The Crown Estate's consultation, The Crown Estate produced a Cable</p>

Consultee	Date / Document	Engagement	Stakeholder responses / comments	Where addressed in the ES
				Route Protocol as part of the plan-level Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) process. This protocol has been adhered to during the selection of the North Falls offshore cable corridor (discussed further in Section 4.7 of ES Chapter 4 Site Selection and Assessment of Alternatives (Document Reference: 3.1.6)).
Harwich Haven Authority (HHA) Historic England Natural England MCA Marine Management Organisation (MMO) MoD (Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO)) Port of Felixstowe Port of London Authority RSPB Royal Yachting Association (RYA)	January – February 2021	Consultation on five offshore cable corridor options (see Figure 4.9 (Document Reference: 3.2.2), and Section 4.7).	HHA were opposed to an offshore cable corridor which would pass through the pilot boarding and entrance to the Harwich Deep Water Channel. Historic England noted that there was insufficient information available at the stage of selecting the offshore	The selection and refinement of the offshore cable corridor in response to the feedback received is discussed in Section 4.7 of ES Chapter 4 Site Selection and Assessment of Alternatives (Document Reference: 3.1.6). Consideration of the Trinity House buoyage and navigable water depths and feedback from RYA is considered in the Navigational Risk Assessment, ES Appendix 15.1 (Document Reference: 3.3.16).

Consultee	Date / Document	Engagement	Stakeholder responses / comments	Where addressed in the ES
Trinity House The Wildlife Trusts			cable corridor, which was prior to undertaking geophysical surveys. ¹	
MCA Trinity House HHA Natural England	February 2021	Individual presentations of offshore cable corridor site selection process to date, refinement process and written consultation.	Natural England noted that their preference was likely to be the northern route (B) since it avoids sites designated for benthic features (although noting, as with the other proposed routes, this northern route will have some impact on the Outer Thames Estuary Special Protection Area (SPA)).	
HHA	February – March 2021	Consultation responses provided by stakeholders.	MCA preferred the southern options, with advice provided on how the options could be improved (discussed via meeting).	

¹ Note that although the Cable Route Protocol was devised to provide a framework for the identification of offshore transmission infrastructure, The Crown Estate's Cable Route Identification & Leasing Guidelines (2021) 'strongly encourages' use of the same site selection process outlined in the Cable Route Protocol during the identification of onshore transmission infrastructure.

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<p>Historic England</p> <p>Natural England</p> <p>MCA</p> <p>MMO</p> <p>MoD (DIO)</p> <p>Port of Felixstowe</p> <p>Port of London Authority</p> <p>RSPB</p> <p>RYA</p> <p>Trinity House</p> <p>The Wildlife Trusts</p>			<p>MMO – no response.</p> <p>MoD stated they had no concerns with any of the route options.</p> <p>Port of Felixstowe were opposed to a cable corridor which passes through the Sunk Pilot Area and approaches to Harwich Haven and the Port of Felixstowe, particularly in the South Shipwash area.</p> <p>Port of London Authority stated that of the 5 routes proposed, route South A posed the least risk to safety of navigation. The Port of London Authority was strongly opposed to North A and B, and South B routes and slightly opposed to the central route RSPB – no response</p> <p>RYA raised no preference of the route options and provided advice on aspects to be included in the Navigational Risk Assessment</p> <p>Trinity House raised concerns regarding the proximity of potential cable corridors to Trinity House buoyage. It was suggested any cable should be at least 200m from such buoyage, however, there may be an option for Trinity House to temporarily move / remove a buoy (with early consultation), to allow for cable laying activities to take place. The other main concern relates to navigable water depth reduction caused by cable protection. Trinity House recommends any reduction to navigable water depths within shipping lanes should be avoided.</p> <p>The Wildlife Trusts welcome an offshore cable corridor that avoids Kentish Knock East MCZ and Margate and Long Sands Special Area of Conservation (SAC).</p>	

Consultee	Date / Document	Engagement	Stakeholder responses / comments	Where addressed in the ES
HHA Historic England Natural England MCA MMO MoD (DIO) Port of Felixstowe Port of London Authority RSPB RYA Trinity House The Wildlife Trusts	March 2021	Communication by North Falls Offshore Wind Farm Limited (NFOW) to key stakeholders of the selected offshore cable corridor taking into account the feedback outlined above.	Harwich Haven Authority responded with concerns which were subsequently discussed by meeting (see below) No further responses were received from other stakeholders in response to this communication.	See Section 4.7 of ES Chapter 4 Site Selection and Assessment of Alternatives (Document Reference: 3.1.6), and ES Chapter 5 Project Description (Document Reference: 3.1.7).
HHA	March 2021	Meeting to discuss feedback on the offshore cable corridor	Harwich Haven Authority advised that they were due to start dredging the approach channel adjacent to the selected corridor. The Authority would be more content if the final route was within southern half of the current 1km cable corridor width.	While it is not yet possible to commit to reducing the offshore cable corridor width adjacent to the Harwich Haven Authority's proposed dredging area, this request is noted and where practicable, this request will be accommodated.
Essex County Council	March / April 2021	Project update and communication by NFOW to key stakeholders of the initial	N/A	See Section 4.6 of ES Chapter 4 Site Selection and Assessment of Alternatives (Document Reference: 3.1.6), and ES Chapter 5 Project Description (Document Reference: 3.1.7).

Consultee	Date / Document	Engagement	Stakeholder responses / comments	Where addressed in the ES
Tendring District Council Natural England The Wildlife Trusts		site selection process of the landfall search area		
Natural England, Environment Agency, Historic England and Essex County Council	January 2022	Consultation on the site selection 'golden rules', i.e., those principles which underpin the site selection process, and the landfall site selection process.	<p>Essex County Council noted that Essex communities would only want disturbance once and it is Essex County Council's preference for North Falls and Five Estuaries to collaborate.</p> <p>Essex County Council noted that traffic and transport impacts should be more explicit in the substation golden rules.</p> <p>Natural England noted that noted that Hog's Fennel and the Fishers estuarine moth are key features of the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) at the landfall and should be avoided.</p> <p>Natural England raised concerns around sinkholes and frac-outs resulting from Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) works. Also advised that the applicant would need to be certain of there being no possibility of sinkholes or assess the potential impact of them within the EIA.</p> <p>Environment Agency referred to a Natural England study on Martlesham Creek (Deben Estuary) where a mud breakout smothered bird feeding grounds.</p> <p>Environment Agency requested that groundwater aquifer/resources be considered within the Golden Rules as stresses on water supply is increasingly becoming an issue with development in the south-east.</p>	See Sections 4.8, 4.9 of ES Chapter 4 Site Selection and Assessment of Alternatives (Document Reference: 3.1.6) and ES Appendix 4.1 (Document Reference: 3.3.1.1).

Consultee	Date / Document	Engagement	Stakeholder responses / comments	Where addressed in the ES
			<p>Comments from Natural England:</p> <p>We would advise that the North Falls Site Selection Principles should demonstrate consideration for avoiding all internationally and nationally designated sites.</p> <p>Similarly, locally designated and important sites should also be considered and avoided, where possible. Furthermore, we would also advise avoiding significant impacts to nationally designated landscapes, and also impacts to National Trails, coast paths, and Public Rights of Way (PRoWs). We would also wish to see consideration of the following key criteria: agricultural land, local strategies, and any Nature Recovery Networks. We would also wish to see climate change impacts and adaptations considered within the Golden Rules.</p> <p>Holland Haven Marshes SSSI is notified primarily for its watercourses and bodies, and as such should be safeguarded against pollution from any works that take place there. Please also see our comments below regarding the possibility of sinkholes, their impacts and contingency.</p> <p>Offshore cable corridor</p> <p>1.1 (2nd Bullet Point) "Avoid, or minimise direct impact to, designated/protected environmental sites, including SACs and MCZs, where possible". We note that this Principle does not mention SSSIs, SPAs, , Ramsar Sites etc, which we would wish to see included here.</p> <p>1.2 Other Offshore cable corridor Principles:</p>	

Consultee	Date / Document	Engagement	Stakeholder responses / comments	Where addressed in the ES
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We would wish to see the project avoid the use of any cable protection within any SAC, MCZ, or coastal SSSI, where possible • Be positioned to allow for climate change adaptation <p>Landfall</p> <p>2.1 (1st Bullet Point) “Avoid direct significant impacts to internationally and nationally designated areas (e.g., SACs, SPAs, and SSSIs etc.)” We note that this Principle does not mention Ramsar Sites, National Nature Reserves (NNRs) etc. Please include all internationally and nationally designated areas here.</p> <p>2.2 Other Landfall Principles</p> <p>There are a number of other principles which we would advise should be included for Landfall, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid significant impacts to nationally designated landscapes (i.e., Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)/National Parks/Heritage Coasts/Heritage Landscapes • Avoid impacts to National Trails, Coast Paths, and PROWs • Avoid significant impacts to mature woodland, historic, ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees • Be positioned to allow for climate change adaptation <p>Onshore cable corridor(s)</p>	

Consultee	Date / Document	Engagement	Stakeholder responses / comments	Where addressed in the ES
			<p>3.1 (3rd Bullet Point) “Avoid direct significant impacts to internationally and nationally designated areas (e.g., SACs, SPAs, and SSSIs etc.). We note that this Principle does not mention Ramsar Sites or NNRs etc. Please include all internationally and nationally designated areas here.</p> <p>3.2 (4th Bullet Point) “Avoid direct significant impacts to mature woodland and historic woodland.”</p> <p>This should also consider ancient woodland.</p> <p>3.3 Other Principles</p> <p>There are a number of other principles which we would advise should be included for the Onshore Cable Corridor(s), as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid locally designated and important sites (e.g., Local Wildlife Sites, LNRs) • Avoid significant impacts to nationally designated landscapes (i.e., AONB/National Park/Heritage Coast/Heritage Landscapes • Avoid impacts to National Trails, Coast Paths, and PRowWs • Consider any local strategies, Nature Recovery Networks etc. <p>Onshore substation</p> <p>4.1 The identification of potential onshore substation options should also adhere to the following principles:</p>	

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid locally designated and important sites (e.g., LNRs) • Avoid significant impacts to nationally designated landscapes (i.e., AONB/National Park/Heritage Coast/Heritage Landscapes) • Avoid impacts to National Trails, Coast Paths, and PRowS • Avoid best and most versatile agricultural land i.e., Agricultural land classification 3 • Consider any local strategies, Nature Recovery Networks etc. • Minimise the hedgerows • Minimise the loss of waterbodies • Avoid ancient woodland <p>We note that should landfall be located at Holland Haven Marshes SSSI, then the North Falls project propose to use HDD under the SSSI. The SSSI is a water-dependant site and, therefore, Natural England would prefer for any application to HDD under, rather than open trench through, this site. As frac outs or bentonite breakouts are reasonably commonplace during HDD operations, Natural England would expect North Falls to present a detailed Management Plan, with mitigation for any potential impacts, at the time of application. Please also refer to our earlier response to the Draft Minutes for the North Falls Site Selection Consultation Meeting (email sent 28 January 2022) regarding the possibility of sinkholes, their</p>	

Consultee	Date / Document	Engagement	Stakeholder responses / comments	Where addressed in the ES
			<p>potential impact, and including contingency for sink holes in any contingency plan.</p> <p>We would also wish the project to ensure that the features of interest of this SSSI will not be adversely affected by any project-related activities, and request that any grassland affected by the project should be restored after completion of any works.</p> <p>Comments from Historic England:</p> <p>We welcome that the electrical infrastructure will all avoid scheduled ancient monuments and listed buildings.</p> <p>We recommend the golden rules should also include avoidance of any non-designated heritage assets that are of the equivalent significance as scheduled ancient monuments and listed buildings but which are currently not designated, as identified by local authorities and Historic England.</p> <p>The project should also seek to minimise the impact (and thus harm) on all non-designated heritage assets, and in terms of the cumulative impact of other schemes (i.e., National Grid and/or Five Estuaries). This will be achieved by early assessment, and by early evaluation in the case of buried archaeological remains, to establish the significance of any archaeological remains that might be affected by the infrastructure.</p> <p>In terms of the permanent, 'built' (above ground and visible) infrastructure, and in terms of the cumulative</p>	

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			<p>impact of other schemes (i.e., National Grid and/or Five Estuaries), every effort should be made to avoid and/or minimise any impact on the setting of designated heritage assets, as well as on historic landscapes.</p> <p>In general, and in all cases, we would recommend that engineering solutions are sought, and used in the scheme, that minimise the extent of the required infrastructure, thus, to minimise the extent of any impacts on the historic environment.</p>	
Environment Agency Natural England Historic England Tendring District Council Essex County Council	April 2022	Consultation on onshore substation site selection process and initial outputs (up to short list).	<p>Natural England recommending considering the following datasets during the site selection process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great Crested Newt (GCN) Pond Survey 2017-19 data • GCN Class Survey Licence Returns • Granted European Protected Species Applications for the following: GCN, Bat, Cretacean, Invertebrate, other mammal (e.g., water vole/badger), plant and reptile • Habitats for UK Protected Species • British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) dataset (if available) • National Biodiversity Network (NBN) Atlas for protected species data • GCN Risk Zones – Natural England open data set • Local Biodiversity Information Service. • Core Sustenance Zones (CSZ) 	See Section 4.8 of ES Chapter 4 Site Selection and Assessment of Alternatives (Document Reference: 3.1.6).

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			<p>And to ensure the following key issues are considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Veteran Trees • Functional Linked Land (FLL) • GCN Risk Zones <p>And to consider the following opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity net gain • Green infrastructure • Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG) East and Essex Wildlife Trust <p>Historic England recommends that the historic environment record (HER) should be included in the RAG assessment.</p> <p>Essex County Council requested protected lanes be considered within the RAG assessment.</p> <p>Essex County Council Highways keen to engage on access studies.</p> <p>Essex County Council archaeology suggested portable antiquities be considered.</p>	
Environment Agency Natural England Historic England	June 2022	Consultation on onshore cable corridor(s) site selection process and initial outputs (up to short list).	Natural England's position that the main benefit of a shared corridor between North Falls and Five Estuaries would be to minimise disruption but acknowledged that as the projects are independent to construct at the same time may be more difficult than for other OWFs.	See Section 4.9 of ES Chapter 4 Site Selection and Assessment of Alternatives (Document Reference: 3.1.6).

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RSPB National Highways Tendring District Council Essex County Council			Essex County Council strongly advise combined consultation for both projects. Historic England pointed out that more sharing of infrastructure minimised the harm to the historic and archaeological environment.	
Tendring District Council	July 2023	PEIR Response	<p>It is the onshore implications that are of greatest concern to the Council. From Tendring District Council's perspective, it firmly believes that much greater consideration should be given to an offshore powerline route that would avoid the need for the cables to make landfall through / under the SSSI and LNR designations. Whilst the grounding of the cables through the SSSI / LNR would bring about temporary disruption that could be mitigated over time, it would also cause significant damage to the area and greatly affect the tourism industry during the construction period.</p> <p>These issues could all be resolved through a route around the coast as suggested in this and previous responses. The Council will not accept the need for the onshore elements of the North Falls scheme until such time that the alternative offshore route has been properly considered and duly discounted through a full and transparent process for Norwich to Tilbury.</p>	As discussed in Section 4.1.4 of ES Chapter 4 Site Selection and Assessment of Alternatives (Document Reference: 3.1.6), national grid has provided NFOW with a grid connection location for North Falls in the vicinity of Ardleigh, Essex. However, NFOW is committed to working with Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) to explore grid connection options and as such, NFOW has co-operated with the Offshore Transmission Network Review (OTNR) process. In addition, NFOW has applied to the Offshore Coordination Support Scheme (OCSS) in consortium with National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET) and Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm Limited (VEOWL) for an offshore connection to Sea Link, a marine cable between Suffolk and Kent proposed by NGET as part of their Great Grid Upgrade. The scheme is expected to run until March 2025, at which point a decision will then be made on the viability of the alternative connection option proposed. Therefore, radial transmission to an onshore connection location

Consultee	Date / Document	Engagement	Stakeholder responses / comments	Where addressed in the ES
				must be included in the North Falls DCO application.
Suffolk County Council	July 2023	PEIR Response	<p>This representation raises the following substantive issues in detail below:</p> <p>a) The Council's preference for a coordinated offshore centred approach.</p> <p>b) The need for seascape and landscape impacts and mitigation in respect of the Suffolk coast and its Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.</p> <p>c) The need for the promotor to consider community benefit and project legacy.</p> <p>d) Socio-economic impacts of the scheme and seeking further commitments to support local skills training measures.</p> <p>e) Impacts on tourism.</p> <p>f) The need to assess traffic and transport impacts, including upon Suffolk's transport system.</p> <p>g) A full assessment of cumulative impacts with other schemes.</p> <p>h) The level of consultation with communities in Suffolk by the promotor.</p>	<p>As above, an offshore connection is considered, however an onshore connection must also be included in the DCO application to align with the Project's connection location which has been provided by the national grid.</p> <p>Refinement of the North Falls array area in response to PEIR feedback, has led to the removal of the northern array area and therefore significantly reduced the impacts on the Suffolk coast and its Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (discussed further in ES Chapter 29 Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Document Reference: 3.1.31).</p> <p>Impacts on socio-economics, tourism and traffic are discussed in ES Chapters 31 (Document Reference: 3.1.33), 32 (Document Reference: 3.1.34) and 27 (Document Reference: 3.1.29), respectively.</p> <p>Cumulative effects are assessed in each technical chapter of the ES (Chapters 8 to 33, Volume 3.1).</p> <p>Consultation with communities is described in the Consultation Report (Document Reference: 4.1).</p>
Essex County Council	July 2023	PEIR Response	<p>The onshore cable route has been refined down following the initial Scoping Submission, and again following the previous non-stat consultation. The current route is wide enough to incorporate potential change within this area but is by its nature involves a wide tract of land which is</p>	<p>Noted. The route has been further refined since that presented in PEIR, from 204m (and wider in places) down to 90m (up to 130m at complex trenchless crossings). The cable swathe required during construction is also narrower – 72m – in areas of open cut trenching, therefore allowing some room</p>

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			capable of variation depending on detailed land use constraints.	for micro-siting within the 90m-wide route presented in the DCO Application. See ES Chapter 5 Project Description (Document Reference: 3.1.7) for further details.
Essex County Council	July 2023	PEIR Response	The consultation also shows that a link to the Grid is still to be decided subject to ongoing consultation, a position as set by National Grid and as shown in the recent non statutory consultation on Norwich to Tilbury (N2T), itself a separate Nationally Strategic Infrastructure Project (NSIP). Due to this connection point, it is therefore necessary to look at, by association linked, cumulative impacts between Norwich to Tilbury and the North Falls proposal.	Cumulative effects between North Falls and Norwich to Tilbury (and other schemes) has been considered each technical chapter of this ES.
Essex County Council	July 2023	PEIR Response	As a matter of public record ECC have responded raising strong objection to the Norwich to Tilbury (N2T) proposal, itself a DCO proposal that will link Norfolk to Tilbury and will run overground across Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex, save for an area of undergrounding within the Stour Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AoNB). ECC commented on non-statutory consultation in 2022.	Noted.
Essex County Council	July 2023	PEIR Response	ECC's clear preference is for a coordinated, offshore centred approach, delivered at pace, to minimise onshore infrastructure in Essex. In our response to the recent N2T non-statutory consultation, ECC concluded that NGET had not presented a comprehensive and conclusive set of evidence that the transmission objectives of this project cannot be met using the alternative of an offshore link or links. We reasonably concluded that with this there would clearly be significantly less harmful impacts on the terrestrial environment in Essex and the wider region as	As discussed above, the feasibility of an offshore connection is subject to the outcomes of the OCSS which is expected to conclude in March 2025. Therefore, radial transmission to an onshore connection location must be included in the North Falls DCO application.

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			well as the numerous communities affected by N2T ECC raised significant objection to N2T for numerous reasons, including but not limited to, it's intent to come overland into Lawford and then out of the same overland towards the north of Colchester.	
Essex County Council	July 2023	PEIR Response	ECC encourages North Falls to commit to its as stated intent to explore alternative solutions to provide offshore connection options other than by taking a landward route to Lawford. The benefits of this would be significant for North Falls and the Tendring peninsular, it would reduce significantly the projects own impact and the in-combination effects when considered alongside Five Estuaries and negate the need for N2T to enter Tendring to provide a substation connection.	As discussed above, NFOW is committed to exploring the potential for an offshore connection, however the feasibility of this option is subject to the outcomes of the OCSS which is expected to conclude in March 2025. Therefore radial transmission to an onshore connection location must be included in the North Falls DCO application.
Essex County Council	July 2023	PEIR Response	Also, it is currently unclear as to what the impacts of North Falls would be in conjunction with Five Estuaries. These are two alike developments and whilst they would have some impact on views of the Windfarm array in combination from the Clacton coast, the main impact of the same would come in the construction of the landward side of the developments. With two connection points, cable runs, construction works, haul roads, compounds and works proposed in connection with both developments it is not possible to assess what the in-combination effects of the same would be as the consultation documents fall short of making this clear.	At the time of drafting the PEIR, limited information was available regarding the development of the Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm ('Five Estuaries') project. Since then both projects have both undertaken joint studies to identify co-located infrastructure and shared detailed project design information. A detailed Cumulative Effect Assessment (CEA) with Five Estuaries has been undertaken within each technical chapter of this ES.
Essex County Council	July 2023	PEIR Response	ECC has long made the point that the developments as proposed on the Tendring peninsular are similar in type	NFOW and VEOWL have listened to Essex County Council's view on this matter and to the

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			<p>and extent, hence co-operation between the developments needs to be considered. The current draft National Policy Statement EN5, which is likely to be fully in place when NF is at Hearing, plays significant importance on the close co-ordination of onshore projects, in particular section 2.5 of the same which promotes co-ordination between applicants, particularly where the sensitivities of the landfall sites is sufficient, which is clearly the case with NF and the Tendring coast.</p>	<p>requirements of the revised EN-5 and have sought to co-ordinate where practicable. Both projects have both undertaken joint studies to identify co-located infrastructure and have shared detailed project design information and project data in order to ensure co-ordination as far as possible, and to minimise effects during onshore construction.</p>
Essex County Council	July 2023	PEIR Response	<p>As North Falls has received a connection offer from NGET at Lawford via N2T as a grid connection point, ECC considers it reasonable that at the present time North Falls have not presented evidence or assessment of alternative grid connection proposals, should N2T not be implemented as currently proposed. Until this work is completed, evidenced, and evaluated by ECC, our position on North Falls and this consultation, is one of a holding objection, due to lack of assessment of alternatives to a connection at Lawford.</p>	<p>It is noted the site selection process to identify the location of the Project's grid connection is undertaken by national grid through their Connection and Infrastructure Options Note (CION) process. NFOW have inputted into this process, but it is wholly administered by national grid, with decisions made by national grid alone. All the information on this pertaining to national grid's selection of the East Anglia Connection Node (EACN) onshore substation for the location of its grid connection offer to NFOW can be found in the following documents prepared by national grid:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design Development Report 2023 (NGET, 2023) • Strategic Options Backcheck and Review 2023 (NGET, 2023a) <p>Further details on the Project's connection to the national grid is detailed in Section 4.5 of ES Chapter 4 Site Selection and Assessment of Alternatives (Document Reference: 3.1.6).</p> <p>This chapter sets out site selection information pertaining to the infrastructure which has been</p>

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				within NFOW's control and for which NFOW is seeking consent.
Essex County Council	July 2023	PEIR Response	In terms of project co-ordination, it is important to stress that the Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm proposal is mentioned, and that co-ordination with many aspects of that proposal is being or will be undertaken including stakeholder construction, infrastructure and operational plans. There are many aspects where a collaborative approach between the 2 projects would be extremely beneficial to minimise disruption/visual impact especially if they work together and at the same time in the same area, including the new project onshore substation and cabling. The benefits of this are significant and the impact could potentially be lessened. However, any collaboration may represent additional harm and the impacts of this remain unproven at this time.	As noted above, a detailed CEA of the effects of developing both North Falls and Five Estuaries has been undertaken and is presented within each technical chapter of this ES.
Essex County Council	July 2023	PEIR Response	Although ECC recognises the challenge of achieving net zero as set out by Government, to meet ongoing energy security concerns, it also recognises its role in contributing to the government's climate change objectives. The NF proposal would, by means of its cumulative impact on the landward side of the proposal have a substantial, lasting and potentially seriously detrimental impacts on the residents of the local area, the landscape and environment, at its interface in Lawford in particular. ECC recognises that the impact of the cable laying operations are temporary, can be flexible to move away from historic assets, sensitive areas, areas of population and reduce ecological impacts, never the less the impact of the substation would be both significant and profound on the local area to its detriment.	Noted. The effects associated with the onshore substation have been assessed in detail within the technical chapters of this ES. Where significant effects have been predicted, mitigation has been proposed to reduce these effects as far as practicable.

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Essex County Council	July 2023	PEIR Response	It is noted that the intent of this consultation was to set out in a public forum what the proposals were, and canvas for opinions on the same. However, a significant amount of background information remains to be presented and there are a number of gaps in knowledge within the consultation. Whilst these have at least in part been shared with ECC and stakeholder prior to consultation this is missing from the public facing consultation. It is expected that further adjustments to the proposals are likely to be required as greater knowledge is gained of the potential environmental impacts. As this evidence is not presented in this consultation ECC is not in a position to comments on the route choice within the submission nor on the options for substation location and the necessary details are not submitted.	Noted. Options for the location of the onshore substation were presented within ES Chapter 4 Site Selection and Assessment of Alternatives of the PEIR document, which was available on the Project website during statutory consultation in summer 2023. These option, along with details of further site selection and project refinement, are presented within this ES chapter.
Essex County Council	July 2023	PEIR Response	Additionally, BEIS analysis has identified the incredible need for energy storage, in a decarbonised net zero energy system. This is due to the intermittent nature of renewable energy technologies such as offshore wind. Hence it is asked for confirmation as to the plans for the NF project also include battery storage or more innovative solutions such as green hydrogen production.	<p>Battery storage or green hydrogen production do not form part of the plans for the Project. This is due to a number of factors, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Project is possession of an export only grid offer from national grid, restricting what options could be included in term of energy balancing infrastructure; - Requirements set out in the grid connection offer by national grid; and - Challenges to Offshore Transmission Owner (OFTO) divestment.

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Anglian Water	July 2023	PEIR Response	Anglian Water notes the process for identifying the onshore project area and onshore substation siting options and acknowledge that the detailed design development work has been defined by three options for onshore electrical connection – consisting of cable route and onshore substation infrastructure, with landfall between Clacton-on-Sea and Frinton-on-Sea.	Noted.
Anglian Water	July 2023	PEIR Response	Anglian Water notes the broad corridor connecting the landfall search area to the onshore substation zone, which will accommodate any temporary works for both NFOW and VEOWL, temporary construction compounds and corridor flexibility. In retaining corridor flexibility around Thorpe-le-Soken and adding the temporary construction compounds to the onshore cable corridor; the approach taken avoids direct interfaces with our assets. The closest corridor option to Thorpe-le-Soken is therefore closest to our water recycling network but does not appear to intersect with our below ground wastewater network assets. Should this option be taken forward following the ongoing refinement of options to a final onshore cable route, we would seek to require Protective Provisions specifically to ensure Anglian Water's services are maintained and retained apparatus protected during construction. However, we welcome the acknowledgement in the PEIR that the cable corridor has been broadened to accommodate the necessary stand-off distances requested by utility companies.	<p>Following ongoing onshore cable route refinement since PEIR, the onshore cable route closer to Thorpe-le-Soken has been selected due to the environmental constraints associated with the alternative options near Hamford Water (see Section 4.9.4.2 of ES Chapter 4 Site Selection and Assessment of Alternatives (Document Reference: 3.1.6)).</p> <p>NFOW note Anglian Water have raised the possible interaction of an access track with existing Anglian Water assets, and will seek to continue discussion with Anglian Water regarding protective provisions within the DCO.</p>
BUUK Infrastructure – GTC Ltd	July 2023	PEIR Response	Processing your plans and details I have deduced that the onshore scoping boundary includes a lot of GTC assets within it. Is this area going to be developed or is just the	The Project does include onshore landfall, export cable installation and construction of an onshore substation within the onshore project area. The offer

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			offshore red line site boundary where construction will occur? Please note there are no GTC assets in the offshore red line boundary. If you would require the onshore asset plans, please let us know and we can forward them to you.	of additional asset plans is welcomed. We have undertaken a utilities search for the onshore project area and sought to avoid utilities assets where practicable. Where we do interact with these, the effects are assessed in ES Chapter 22 Land Use and Agriculture (Document Reference: 3.1.24).
Great Horkesley Parish Council	June 2023	PEIR Response	<p>Great Horkesley Parish Council supports the OffSET Task Force and the campaigns for an offshore grid.</p> <p>We fully support the concept of North Sea wind farms to generate abundant, cheap, clean electricity. Our strongly preferred approach is an upgrade to the offshore route. By doing so, the environmental damage and disruption that would be caused to East Anglia by the installation of onshore cables would be minimised.</p> <p>Great Horkesley Parish Council is pleased to learn that an offshore route is now to be considered and formally compared with the intrusive overland route, which it continues to oppose.</p>	The feasibility of an offshore connection is subject to the outcomes of the OCSS which is expected to conclude in March 2025. Therefore radial transmission to an onshore connection location must be included in the North Falls DCO application.
Little Bromley Parish Council	July 2023	PEIR Response	Little Bromley Parish Council (LBPC) strongly oppose North Falls proposal for development of onshore infrastructure in the parish of Little Bromley. We do support your Option 3 for the projects National Grid connection point, an Offshore electrical connection supplied by a third party electricity distribution network provider.	As discussed above, the feasibility of Option 3 (an offshore connection) is subject to the outcomes of the OCSS which is expected to conclude in March 2025. Therefore radial transmission to an onshore connection location must be included in the North Falls DCO application.
Little Bromley Parish Council	July 2023	PEIR Response	LBPC understand that North Falls is working in Tendring District and Little Bromley as you have been offered a connection into the proposed National Grid East Anglia Connection substation. The National Grid project is very	NFOW have been engaged with DESNZ extensively during the pre-consent process and have retained Option 3 (offshore connection) within the Project's Rochdale envelope in order to retain the option to

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			contentious with over 23,000 people having signed a petition calling for an offshore grid. Across East Anglia residents, parish councils, district councils, county councils and members of parliament (OFFSET group of MP's) have united in voicing their opposition to the current National Grid plans. With an offshore connection there would be no need for your development onshore. LBPC ask that North Falls support and participate in the DESNZ OTNR supporting the offshore option.	connection via an offshore connection should this be a viable option. ES Chapter 5 Project Description (Document Reference: 3.1.7) provides further details on the connection options for the Project.
Low Carbon Ltd	July 2023	PEIR Response	<p>We acknowledge your consultation for the North Falls Project.</p> <p>Low Carbon has an ongoing project which could be impacted by the North Falls Project.</p> <p>Attached to this letter is a decision notice (reference: 22/02117/FUL) and plan (LCS034-PLE-01_rev14) for a solar farm under your proposed route within the Tendring District, Essex; more particularly, to be located on land currently registered at HM Land Registry with freehold title number EX706653. The solar farm is known as Thorpe Park Solar Farm and is owned by Low Carbon Solar Farm 12 Limited (company number 13097982) (the "Company").</p> <p>With respect to the North Falls Project, Low Carbon does have concerns on the proposal and would like to engage further with you during your own respective development process. We are open to further discussions following the conclusion of the current consultation period in order to preserve Low Carbon's current position.</p>	Noted. NFOW has refined its onshore cable route away from the boundary of the Low Carbon project (reference: 22/02117/FUL) in response to this feedback. Haul routes for the Project are still located within the Low Carbon project boundary. NFOW are keen to engage further with Low Carbon as the Project progresses.
Low Carbon Ltd	July 2023	PEIR Response	Low Carbon's concerns relate to:	See above response.

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) part of your potential cable route being situated within our site boundary; (ii) the impact on our construction and operational plans for the main site (iii) any potential impact on the solar farm point of connection and the ability to export into the electricity network. <p>We responded to the recent VEOWL statutory consultation in a similar manner to this letter and have recently met with members of the RWE team to discuss our respective proposed developments. The NFOW Project was mentioned during this meeting and it was acknowledged by us and the RWE team that a future tripartite meeting to discuss the co-existence of all three projects would be beneficial.</p>	
Natural England	July 2023	PEIR Response	Natural England considers that for the project to avoid contributing further to the adverse effect on integrity (Aeol) for RTD red throated diver (RTD)] at Outer Thames Estuary (OTE)SPA the North Falls project boundary must be moved to at least 10km from the SPA boundary.	The North Falls array area has been refined to be as far from the Outer Thames Estuary (OTE) SPA as feasible, in response to the PEIR feedback. This is discussed further in the HRA Derogation Provision of Evidence (Document Reference: 7.2), submitted with the DCO application.
Trinity House	July 2023	PEIR Response	Trinity House considers two [array] areas within the red line boundary to be undevelopable. These areas are highlighted as red hatched areas in the attached chartlet. These areas would significantly compromise the safety of vessels using these internationally recognised shipping routes and are therefore deemed unacceptable.	The array area has been refined in response to the PEIR feedback. The northern array has been removed and the southern array area reduced in size. Further details on the consultation with shipping stakeholders and responses to stakeholder comments are provided in ES Chapter 15 Shipping and Navigation (Document Reference: 3.1.17).

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UK Chamber of Shipping	July 2023	PEIR Response	The Chamber has very strong concerns for the proposed encroachment into SPZ Traffic Separation Scheme areas and firmly supports the comments raised by the MCA and Trinity House in their meeting with the developer on 9 June 2022. The southwest section of the north array area is unacceptable from a navigation standpoint and need removal because of the impact on northbound vessels exiting the Sunk TSS North traffic lane. The overlap of the south array area with the Sunk Precautionary Area is unacceptable for navigational safety. The south array area abuts directly to the Sunk TSS South which is unacceptable for navigational safety and a greater buffer will be required.	The array area has been refined in response to the PEIR feedback. The northern array has been removed and the southern array area reduced in size. Further details on the consultation with shipping stakeholders and responses to stakeholder comments are provided in ES Chapter 15 Shipping and Navigation (Document Reference: 3.1.17).
RWS Netherlands	July 2023	PEIR Response	<p>Transboundary effects on shipping are not expected. However, multiple conflicts with local ships' routing measures require attention. International coordination is recommended and the Netherlands likes to be involved. The following conflicts are identified:</p> <p>a. The distances between the traffic separation schemes and the planned wind farms may not comply with paragraph 3.14 of the general provisions on ship routing. To ensure safe distances, it is recommended to adopt the NCSR 7-INF.15 report from the World Association for Waterborne Transport Infrastructure (PIANC).</p> <p>b. The impact of the irregular shapes on ships' situational awareness.</p> <p>c. The overlap between the southern wind farm and the precautionary area.</p>	The array area has been refined in response to the PEIR feedback. The northern array has been removed and the southern array area reduced in size. Further details on the consultation with shipping stakeholders and responses to stakeholder comments are provided in ES Chapter 15 Shipping and Navigation (Document Reference: 3.1.17).

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			<p>d. The positioning of the western border of the northern wind farm that is located within the boundaries of the adjacent traffic separation scheme.</p> <p>e. The galloper recommended route (ferries) located within the southern wind farm area.</p> <p>We would appreciate if you could inform us to which degree the aspects we mention above concerning gaps in the assessment can still be filled.</p>	
Port of London Authority and Harwich Haven Authority	July 2023	PEIR Response	<p>The Applicant has engaged with Port of London Authority (PLA) and Harwich Haven Authority (HHA) regarding cable routeing and has implemented changes to the offshore cable corridor to minimise impacts on the key areas raised as being of concern. Changes made include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shifting the offshore cable corridor further south from the Sunk Pilot Station; • Shifting the offshore cable corridor south of the Harwich Deep Water Channel; • TSS crossing angle moved closer to 90 degrees; and • Offshore cable corridor moved as far as practicable from the Sunk roundabout feature. <p>...It is recognised that impacts on port access and pilotage operations have been raised as a key concern notably by the HHA and PLA. On this basis the Applicant is in the process of Project Design refinement of the offshore cable corridor and will continue to liaise with and consult the MCA, Trinity House, PLA and HHA to ensure the impact is ALARP [As Low As Reasonably Practicable].</p>	<p>Consultation has been undertaken with shipping stakeholders throughout the pre-application process and is discussed in ES Chapter 15 Shipping and Navigation (Document Reference: 3.1.17).</p>

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Maritime and Coastguard Agency	July 2023	PEIR Response	<p>The proposed southern array area encroaches into the SUNK TSS Precautionary Area and is adjacent to two Traffic Separation Schemes. The encroachment into the Precautionary Area, which is an IMO-adopted routeing measure, is unacceptable to MCA as it would interfere with the use of recognised sea lanes essential to international navigation. The distance between the SUNK TSS South and the wind farm boundary is approximately 120 metres which does not meet MCA expectations of a two nautical mile separation distance as per MGN654 Annex 2. The distance between the SUNK TSS East and the boundary is less than half a nautical mile which also does not meet MCA expectations and guidance.</p> <p>The southern array area is proposed over an international Recommended Route (Galopper route) for ferries between UK and Belgium. It would require agreement, at least in principle, with relevant operators, ports and IMO members, in particular the Belgian maritime administration, to remove the ferry route from the routeing measure. If agreement cannot be reached MCA would not be able to support a proposal to remove the Recommended Route and, in all likelihood, it will result in objections to the proposed development. It is important to note that the route is also used by smaller vessels, including recreational and wind farm support vessels, and should consent be granted the array would force these smaller vessels into the main channel of the SUNK TSS South used by larger commercial vessels.</p> <p>The proposed northern array is located at the end of the SUNK TSS North and encroaches into the route where vessels exit the TSS. This western section of the northern</p>	<p>The array area has been refined in response to the PEIR feedback. The northern array has been removed and the southern array area reduced in size. Further details on the consultation with shipping stakeholders and responses to stakeholder comments are provided in ES Chapter 15 Shipping and Navigation (Document Reference: 3.1.17).</p>

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			array, located at the end of the TSS Separation Zone, would force vessels further west and restrict the available sea room. It would remove the safety clearance between the traffic exiting the TSS and Greater Gabbard wind farm. This section of the northern array is unacceptable to MCA as it would interfere with the use of a recognised sea lane essential to international navigation.	



NORTH FALLS

Offshore Wind Farm



HARNESSING THE POWER OF NORTH SEA WIND

North Falls Offshore Wind Farm Limited

A joint venture company owned equally by SSE Renewables and RWE.

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