

Outer Dowsing Offshore Wind

Habitats Regulations Assessment

Without Prejudice Benthic
Compensation Strategy

Document 7.6

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Acronyms & Definitions

Abbreviations / Acronyms

Abbreviation / Acronym	Description
AEoI	Adverse Effect on Integrity
DCO	Development Consent Order
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment
IDRBNR	Inner Dowsing, Race Bank and North Ridge
IMP	Implementation and Monitoring Plan
RIAA	Report to Information Appropriate Assessment
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SoS	Secretary of State

Terminology

Term	Definition
Array area	The area offshore within which the generating station (including wind turbine generators (WTG) and inter array cables), offshore accommodation platforms, offshore transformer substations and associated cabling will be positioned.
Development Consent Order (DCO)	An order made under the Planning Act 2008 granting development consent for a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP).
Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)	A process which helps determine likely significant effects and (where appropriate) assesses adverse impacts on the integrity of European conservation sites and Ramsar sites. The process consists of up to four stages of assessment: screening, appropriate assessment, assessment of alternative solutions and assessment of imperative reasons of over-riding public interest (IROPI) and compensatory measures.
The Applicant	GT R4 Ltd. The Applicant making the application for a DCO. The Applicant is GT R4 Limited (a joint venture between Corio Generation, Tota Energies and Gulf Energy Development (GULF)), trading as Outer Dowsing Offshore Wind. The Project is being developed by Corio Generation (a wholly owned Green Investment Group portfolio company), TotalEnergies and GULF.
The Project	Outer Dowsing Offshore Wind, an offshore wind generating station together with associated onshore and offshore infrastructure.

1 Overview

1. GT R4 Limited (trading as Outer Dowsing Offshore Wind) hereafter referred to as the 'Applicant', is proposing to develop the Project. The Project will include both offshore and onshore infrastructure including an offshore generating station (windfarm) approximately 54km offshore of the Lincolnshire coast, export cables to landfall, Offshore Reactive Compensation Platforms, onshore cables, connection to the electricity transmission network, ancillary and associated development and areas for the delivery of up to two Artificial Nesting Structures and the creation and recreation of a biogenic reef (if these compensation measures are deemed to be required by the Secretary of State) (see Volume 1, Chapter 3: Project Description (document reference 6.1.3) for full details).
2. The Report to Inform and Appropriate Assessment (RIAA), submitted as part of the Development Consent Order (DCO) Application, has considered the potential for the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Project to result in any adverse effects on the integrity (AEoI) of the National Site Network sites. Following completion of the RIAA, the Applicant has excluded the potential for an AEoI to any benthic features from impacts of the Project in-combination with other plans, projects and activities. However, Natural England have advised that they are currently unable to conclude no AEoI for the sandbanks covered by seawater at all times and biogenic reef features of the Inner Dowsing, Race Bank and North Ridge (IDRBNR) Special Area of Conservation (SAC).
3. Therefore, to prepare for the potential that the Secretary of State (SoS) in their Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) concludes that an AEoI at IDRBNR SAC cannot be excluded for one or both of these features, the Applicant has provided a without prejudice derogation case for these features (document reference 7.5) and has developed compensation measures, including the evidence base and roadmap for their implementation, as outlined below.

2 Benthic Compensation Strategy

4. The Benthic Compensation Strategy comprises the following two plans:
 - Sandbank Compensation Plan (document 7.6.1); and
 - Biogenic Reef Compensation Plan (document 7.6.2).
5. Each of these plans provides relevant information on the scale of the impact predicted from the Project to the feature of the IDRBNR SAC, the development of the potential compensatory measures, a summary of the options considered and whether they have been taken forward, consideration of the effects of external factors, and a discussion of potential strategic mechanisms through which the compensation could be delivered (if considered appropriate).
6. These compensation plans are supported by a detailed evidence base and roadmap report which includes each of the measures developed:
 - Benthic Compensation Evidence Base and Roadmap (document 7.6.3).
7. The evidence base and roadmap report sets out the ecological evidence base for each measure and how it could deliver the necessary quantum of compensation, and the roadmap for the delivery of the compensation, including any lead-in time required for the establishment of the measure, and monitoring and adaptive management which may be needed.
8. Finally, for each of the identified features, an Outline Implementation and Monitoring Plan (IMP) has been provided which sets out the information which would be contained within the feature-specific IMP post-consent, in the event that compensation is required for one or both of these features as part of the DCO:
 - Outline Sandbank Implementation and Monitoring Plan (Annex 1 of document 7.6.1); and
 - Outline Biogenic Reef Implementation and Monitoring Plan (Annex 1 of document 7.6.2).
9. The Applicant is confident that, based on the information provided within the identified documents listed above, in the event that the Secretary of State determines potential for AEoI and considers that compensation is required, the Project has provided sufficient information to demonstrate that compensation measures are available, securable and deliverable.