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All Interested Parties

Your Ref:

Our Ref: EN010130

Date: 3 December 2024

Dear Sir/Madam

Application by GT R4 Limited for an Order Granting Development Consent for the Outer Dowsing Offshore Wind Project

Planning Act 2008 (as amended) (PA2008) – Section 89 and The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 – Rule 9

Notification of Procedural Decision relating to a request for changes to the application as part of the Applicant's submission for Deadline 2.

I am writing to advise you of a Procedural Decision taken by the Examining Authority (ExA) following the Applicant's submission of a formal change request on 27 November 2024 (Deadline 2) [[REP2-065](#)]. The ExA's decision on the change request, brief background to, and the ExA's reasoning for, the Procedural Decision is set out below.

Requested Change – the introduction of the ORBA

The Applicant proposes that an Offshore Restricted Build Area (ORBA) be introduced over the northern section of the array area, comprising an area that is approximately 2km wide at the north-east corner and approximately 3.5km at the north-west corner. In total, the ORBA would cover an area of 71.3km², which represents 16.4% of the proposed array area. Requirement 4, Part 3 of Schedule 1 of the draft Development Consent Order (dDCO) and condition 1, Part 2 of the deemed marine licences forming Schedules 10 and 11 of the dDCO have been updated to provide that no Wind Turbine Generators (WTGs) or Offshore Platforms would be installed in the ORBA, the co-ordinates for which are set out in the said requirement and conditions. However, the area could be used for cable installation and ancillary operations during construction (and decommissioning) and operations and maintenance works.

Project parameters including number of structures, foundation types, and cable parameters would remain unchanged and no change is being proposed to the extent of the array area, as defined within the dDCO.

The Applicant notes that the proposed ORBA has been introduced to reduce the impact from the presence of the WTGs (and offshore platforms) on auk species (specifically common guillemot and razorbill). The Applicant further notes that the limits of the ORBA have been defined based on environmental considerations to ensure that the project would minimise environmental impacts as far as practicable whilst also retaining the required flexibility to ensure deliverability and meeting the Applicant's project objectives, including making a large contribution to UK decarbonisation targets [[APP-242](#)].

The Applicant states that there would be no change to the previously defined minimum or maximum criteria for the Wind Turbine Generators (WTGs) or offshore platforms within the Project Description [[APP-058](#)], with the maximum number of structures remaining at 100 WTGs, four offshore substations (OSSs) and one accommodation platform. There would be no change to the previously defined areas for the biogenic reef and artificial nesting structure (ANS) compensation areas.

The Applicant has confirmed that this proposed change would not impact on securing any consent or licences for the Proposed Development, nor would it cause any delay in securing such licences. Furthermore, the Applicant has confirmed that the proposed change does not involve a request to include additional compulsory acquisition powers and that, therefore, the procedures in regulations 5 to 19 of the Infrastructure Planning (Compulsory Acquisition) Regulations 2010 (the CA regulations) do not apply.

The Applicant also confirmed that this change would not give rise to any new or different likely significant environmental effects.

The Applicant notes that it has consulted with the Marine Management Organisation (MMO), Natural England (NE), the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA), Trinity House, the Chamber of Shipping, the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) and NATS En Route Ltd (NATS) on the proposed change.

The Applicant has received consultation responses from all consultees, with the MCA, Trinity House and the Chamber of Shipping commenting that the proposed change would be positive from a shipping and navigation perspective. NATS and the DIO have noted that the proposed change would have no impact on their previous positions. The MMO and NE continue to review the information submitted alongside the Applicant's Change Request for the ORBA.

The ExA has reviewed the information submitted by the Applicant in its Change Request dated 27 November 2024 [[REP2-065](#)] and agrees with the Applicant's conclusion that the proposed change would not result in the Proposed Development being materially different to that originally submitted and that the procedures in regulations 5 to 19 of the CA Regulations do not apply. The ExA notes that the Applicant has instigated this change as a further mitigation measure and is satisfied that the proposed change can be examined within the timeframe of the current Examination. The ExA therefore accepts the Applicant's proposed change as set out in this Change Request.

Yours sincerely,

ExA

Rod Macarthur
Lead Panel Member for the Examining Authority