

22 February 2024  
The Planning Inspectorate  
National Infrastructure Directorate  
Temple Quay House  
Temple Quay  
Bristol, BS1 6PN

Dear Sirs,  
Planning Act 2008  
The proposed Mona Offshore Wind Farm  
PINS Reference: **EN010137**

Mona Offshore Wind Limited (the Applicant) encloses an application for an Order granting development consent (the Application) pursuant to section 37 of the Planning Act 2008 (the 2008 Act).

## 1. Subject of the application

- 1.1. The Application is for development consent to construct, operate and decommission the proposed Mona Offshore Wind Farm (the Project) located off the coast of North Wales. The Project comprises up to 96 wind turbine and associated onshore and offshore infrastructure. The Project will be located within Welsh waters and within the Counties of Denbighshire and Conwy.
- 1.2. At its closest point the Project's array area will be located approximately 29km from the North Wales coast. The offshore export cable corridor will be approximately 46 km in length and the onshore export cable corridor (including 400 kV cable corridor) will be approximately 16 km in length.
- 1.3. Development consent is required to the extent that development is, or forms part of, a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) pursuant to sections 14(1)(a) and 15(3B) of the 2008 Act. As the Project will have an overall capacity greater than 350 megawatts (MW) and is located in Welsh waters, it is an NSIP for the purposes of the 2008 Act. It is for this reason that the Project falls within the remit of the Secretary of State.

## 2. Documentation enclosed and application fee

- 2.1. We have transferred the following documents to the Planning Inspectorate:
  - a) The completed and signed application form;
  - b) The Environmental Statement (ES); and
  - c) Each of the other documents listed in the DCO Application Guide (document ref: A5).
- 2.2. As agreed with the Planning Inspectorate, the Applicant is submitting documents electronically, accompanied by the updated Application Index. Confidential documents will be clearly marked 'confidential' in the name of the file, with a 'public' version also marked in the same way.
- 2.3. A fee in the sum of £8,244 has already been submitted to the account of the Planning Inspectorate, using PINS reference EN010137 Mona.

### **3. Application formalities**

- 3.1. The Application is made in the form required by section 37(3) of the 2008 Act. The Application documentation complies with the overall requirements of section 37 and the requirements set out in:
- a) The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 (the APFP Regulations);
  - b) The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017;
  - c) Guidance published by the former Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG); and
  - d) The Planning Inspectorate's Advice Note 6 (version 11) on the preparation and submission of application documentation.
- 3.2. The Applicant confirms that the Planning Inspectorate will be able to publish the Application (with any necessary redactions and minus any confidential documents) on the Planning Inspectorate's webpage following acceptance.

### **4. Description of the project**

- 4.1. The Application seeks consent for the development outlined in paragraph 1.1 above and described in full in Schedule 1 to the draft Development Consent Order (draft DCO) (document ref: C1) and in the ES including the Project Description chapter (document ref: F1.3).
- 4.2. The development, which is the subject of the Application, also contains associated development under section 115 of the 2008 Act, including the infrastructure necessary to connect the Project to the National Grid. Further explanation on the approach to associated development is contained within the Explanatory Memorandum (document ref: C3).
- 4.3. The proposed DCO will, among other things, authorise:
- a) The construction and operation of up to 96 offshore wind turbine generators and their foundations;
  - b) The construction of up to four offshore substation platforms (OSP) and their foundations;
  - c) The construction of a network of subsea inter-array cables connecting the wind turbine generators and a network of interconnector cables connecting the OSPs
  - d) The installation of up to four subsea export cable circuits to transmit the electricity generated by the wind turbine generators to shore. The Project's offshore export cable corridor extends south-eastwards from the array area to the proposed landfall at Llandulas in Conwy;
  - e) The construction of up to four transition joint bays at landfall connecting the offshore cables to the onshore cables;
  - f) The installation of up to four underground onshore export cable circuits connecting to transition joint bays at landfall to the project onshore substation;
  - g) The construction and operation of a new project onshore substation to the south of St Asaph Business Park and Glascoed Road in Denbighshire;
  - h) The installation of up to two underground onshore export cable circuits connecting the proposed onshore substation to the National Grid Bodelyyddan substation to allow the power to be transferred to the National Grid; and
  - i) Works to connect the Project to the National Grid Bodelyyddan substation.

## **5. Consent flexibility**

- 5.1. The draft DCO provides for flexibility in relation to the proposed development. The Applicant has given careful consideration to the guidance in the National Policy Statements and the Planning Inspectorate's Advice Note 9: "Rochdale Envelope". In the Applicant's view, the inclusion of the flexibility provided for in the draft DCO is fundamental to whether or not the draft DCO is fit for purpose, and therefore whether or not the Project will proceed.
- 5.2. The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) which has been carried out in support of the Application has considered the flexibility which is sought in the draft DCO. This matter is addressed in the ES and in all cases the parameters referred to in the draft DCO have been adopted in the ES.
- 5.3. Further explanation on the Applicant's approach to the Rochdale Envelope is contained within the EIA Methodology chapter of the ES (document ref: F1.5).

## **6. Draft development consent order**

- 6.1. The draft DCO has been the subject of consultation with various interested parties including the host and neighbouring local authorities, Natural Resources Wales, the Maritime and Coastguard Agency and Trinity House, as it was included within the Statutory Consultation. More information on the feedback received on the draft DCO can be found in the Consultation Report (document ref: E3). The Applicant expects to have further discussions to refine some aspects of the detail of the draft DCO after acceptance, as has taken place with other accepted NSIP applications.

## **7. Compulsory purchase**

- 7.1. The Applicant is seeking authority within the draft DCO to acquire compulsorily land and rights in land and other related powers to support the delivery of the Project, details of which can be found in the Statement of Reasons (document ref: D3) and the Book of Reference (document ref: D4). Adequacy of funding for compensation is dealt with in the Funding Statement (document ref: D1).
- 7.2. Sections 127 and 132 of the 2008 Act apply. Details of the extent of the proposed works affecting land held by a statutory undertaker or special category land can be found in the Statement of Reasons (document ref: D3).

## **8. Habitats regulations**

- 8.1. The Application documents includes Information to Support an Appropriate Assessment as required by regulation 5(2)(g) of the APFP Regulations. This identifies all relevant European sites and provides sufficient information for the competent authority to determine whether the Project is likely to have an adverse effect on the integrity of any European site.
- 8.2. It concludes that the Project, together with mitigation and monitoring as proposed, is not expected to have an adverse effect on the integrity of any site. The Information to Support an Appropriate Assessment (document ref: E1.1, E1.2 and E1.3) has been discussed in detail with Natural Resources Wales and other relevant stakeholders as part of the Evidence Plan process. In preparing the report, the Applicant has been mindful throughout of the Planning Inspectorate's Advice Note 10: "Habitat Regulations Assessment relevant to Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects".

## **9. Planning Policy Wales**

- 9.1. Planning Policy Wales 12 was published on 7 February 2024 after the majority of the Application had been finalised. As a result, the Application documents refer to and consider Planning Policy Wales 11, including the update to Chapter 6 of PPW11 published in October 2023. The Applicant anticipates providing an update to the Examining Authority in relation to PPW12 as part of the Examination.

## **10. Other consents and licences required**

- 10.1. The application form (document ref: A3) sets out brief details of the various consents not forming part of the draft DCO which the Applicant will be seeking in relation to the Project. This includes a marine licence for the Mona transmission assets required from Natural Resources Wales under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. Further information on these consents, and the disapplication of certain legislation, is contained within the Other Consents and Licences Required document (document ref: J1).

## **11. Pre-application consultation**

- 11.1. The Applicant has had careful regard to the pre-application consultation requirements of the 2008 Act, the guidance on pre-application consultation issued by DCLG and the Planning Inspectorate as required by section 50 of the 2008 Act.
- 11.2. As required by section 37(3)(c) of the 2008 Act, the Application is accompanied by a Consultation Report (document ref: E3), which provides details of the Applicant's compliance with sections 42, 47, 48 and 49 of the 2008 Act. The responses of statutory and non-statutory consultees are listed and summarised in the Consultation Report and these have informed the evolution of the Application and the Project overall.

## **12. Other matters**

- 12.1. The onshore order limits include the operational access to the National Grid Substation from the Mona substation access from Glascoed Road, see Works Plans - Onshore (document ref: B3). This access has been assessed in the EIA but part of it is not currently shown on all the EIA figures. The Applicant anticipates the Planning Inspectorate requesting an update to the EIA figures to include the full access post-acceptance.
- 12.2. Under Regulation 6(b)(i) of the AFPP Regulations, an applicant is required to provide details of the proposed cable route and the method of installation for any cable. This information can be found in the Grid Connection and Cable Detail Statement (document ref: J4) and in the Works Plans (document refs: B3 and B4).
- 12.3. Under Regulation 6(b)(ii) of the AFPP Regulations, an applicant is required to provide a statement in respect of Safety Zones. This information can be found in the Safety Zone Statement (document ref: J6).
- 12.4. Under regulation 5(2)(l) of the APFP Regulations an applicant is required to provide a plan of certain nature conservation sites and features and an assessment of any effects on those sites and features likely to be caused by the proposed development. There is an equivalent requirement under regulation 5(2)(m) in relation to certain historic sites and features. The plans are attached as separate documents (document refs: B10 and B11) but the assessments are provided in the Environmental Statement and not as stand-alone documents.
- 12.5. The Applicant is required to submit a draft DCO (document ref: C1) in both a word version and PDF, together with a SI validation report (document ref: C2) for the draft DCO at submission.

We look forward to hearing from you in relation to the formal acceptance of the Application. If we can be of any assistance in that regard, please do not hesitate to contact Paul Carter on

Yours faithfully,

Paul Carter

Mona Consents Lead