

MONA OFFSHORE WIND PROJECT

Appendix to Response to Hearing Action Point: Hedgerow Clarification Note

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Image of an offshore wind farm

MONA OFFSHORE WIND PROJECT

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MONA OFFSHORE WIND PROJECT

Contents

1 APPENDIX TO RESPONSE TO HEARING ACTION POINT: HEDGEROW CLARIFICATION NOTE 1

1.1 Introduction..... 1

1.2 Response 1

 1.2.1 Purpose of the document 1

 1.2.2 Hedgerows Surveys 1

Glossary

Term	Meaning
Applicant	Mona Offshore Wind Limited.
Development Consent Order (DCO)	An order made under the Planning Act 2008 granting development consent for one or more Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP).
Mona Offshore Wind Project	The Mona Offshore Wind Project is comprised of both the generation assets, offshore and onshore transmission assets, and associated activities.
The Planning Inspectorate	The agency responsible for operating the planning process for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects.

Units

Unit	Description
m	Metres

1 Appendix to Response to Hearing Action Point: Hedgerow Clarification Note

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1.1 This document has been prepared in response to Action Point 48 arising from the issue Specific Hearing 2 “Onshore and Offshore Environmental Matters and dDCO” which was held on 18 July 2024 in respect of the Mona Offshore Wind Project.

1.1.1.2 Action Point 48 is set out in the Issue Specific Hearing Note 2 (document reference EV1-006) and requires the Applicant to

Submit a clarification note to differentiate between historic hedgerows and important hedgerows.

1.2 Response

1.2.1 Purpose of the document

1.2.1.1 Hedgerows provide valuable habitats for wildlife, and they form boundary features that have landscape and cultural heritage importance. The purpose of this document is to clarify how hedgerows have been described and assessed in the Environmental Statement for the Mona Offshore Wind Project.

1.2.1.2 Hedgerows have been considered in the following documents of the Environmental Statement:

- Volume 3, Chapter 3: Onshore Ecology (APP-066)
- Volume 3, Chapter 5: Historic Environment (APP-068)
- Volume 3, Chapter 6: Landscape and visual resources (APP-069)
- Volume 7, Annex 3.2: Extended Phase 1 habitat survey technical report (APP-122)
- Volume 7, Annex 3.4: Hedgerows survey technical report (APP-124)
- Volume 7, Annex 5.1: Desk-based assessment (APP-143)
- Volume 7, Annex 6.2: Landscape and seascape character baseline technical report (APP-153 and APP-154)
- Volume 7, Annex 6.6: Tree survey and arboricultural impact assessment (APP-160)

1.2.2 Hedgerows Surveys

Overview

1.2.2.1 Baseline ecology surveys were undertaken as part of the environmental impact assessment process to confirm the location of hedgerows within and adjacent to the Mona Onshore Development Area that may be affected during construction of the Project. Further surveys and desktop historic environment studies were undertaken to confirm if the hedgerows were “important” as defined under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997.

Hedgerows Regulations 1997

- 1.2.2.2 Under the Regulations, a hedgerow is considered “important” if the hedgerow:
- has existed for 30 years or more; and
 - satisfies at least one of the Wildlife and Landscape criteria or Archaeology and History criteria from Part II of Schedule 1 of the Regulations.
- 1.2.2.3 The criteria set out in the Regulations can be summarised as follows:
- 1.2.2.4 Under the Wildlife and Landscape criteria, a hedgerow is considered ecologically ‘important’ if it meets at least one of the following criteria:
- Contains protected species listed in part 1 of Schedule 1, Schedule 5 or Schedule 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981;
 - Contains species that are endangered, extinct, vulnerable, or rare and identified in the British Red Data books (Perring and Farrell, 1983; Shirt, 1987; Bratton, 1991; Stewart and Church, 1992); or
 - Includes woody species, and associated features as specified in Schedule 1, Part II Criteria, paragraph 7(1) of The Hedgerows Regulations 1997 which are as follows
 - At least seven woody species
 - At least six woody species plus at least three associated features (i.e. a bank, wall, ditch, standard tree, ground flora containing woodland species or connections with broadleaved woodland or pond, parallel hedge)
 - At least six woody species including black poplar, large-leaved lime, small-leaved lime or wild service tree
 - At least five woody species and has associated with it at least four of the features specified in sub-paragraph (4).
 - Is adjacent to a bridleway or footpath, within the meaning of the Highways Act 1980, a restricted byway within the meaning of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, or a byway open to all traffic, within the meaning of Part II of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981; and
 - Includes at least 4 woody species, ascertained in accordance with paragraph 7(3) and at least 2 of the features specified in paragraph 7(4)(a) to (g).
- 1.2.2.5 Under the Archaeology and History criteria, a hedgerow is considered historically ‘important’ if it meets at least one of the following criteria:
- Marks the boundary, or part of the boundary, of at least one parish or township that existed prior to 1850
 - Incorporates an archaeological feature which is included in the schedule of monuments or recorded at the relevant date in a Sites and Monuments Record
 - Situated wholly or partly within an archaeological site (or on land adjacent to and associated with such a site – such sites being recorded on the Sites and Monuments Record) and is associated with any monument or feature in that site
 - The hedgerow marks the boundary of, or is visibly related to a pre-1600 AD estate or manor recorded in a Sites and Monuments Record

MONA OFFSHORE WIND PROJECT

- An integral part of a field system pre-dating the Inclosure Acts (that is before 1845) or is part of (or is visibly related to, any building or other feature associated with) such a system.

1.2.2.6 For the purposes of this Application, hedgerows which are identified as of ‘ecological’ importance are those which meet the Wildlife and Landscape criteria and those which are identified as of ‘historical’ importance as those which meet the Archaeology and History criteria.

Results of the Surveys

1.2.2.7 As set out in Volume 7, Annex 3.4: Hedgerows survey technical report (APP-124), once initial hedgerow surveys were completed hedgerows were then selected (based on those survey results) for further surveys to be undertaken in order to identify ‘important’ hedgerows from an ecological perspective. In addition, desk based assessments were carried out on those hedgerows identified from initial surveys to determine whether they would be ‘important’ hedgerows from a ‘historic’ perspective (see Volume 7, Annex 5.1: Desk-based assessment (APP-143)).

1.2.2.8 Further information concerning the assessment of ecologically ‘important’ and ‘not important’ hedgerows are set out in the following documents:

- Volume 7, Annex 6.2: Landscape and seascape character baseline technical report (APP-153 and APP-154)
- Volume 7, Annex 6.6: Tree survey and arboricultural impact assessment (APP-160)
- Volume 5, Annex 5.3: Onshore Crossing Schedule (F.5.4.3 F02)
- B14 Tree and Hedgerow Plan (APP-019)

1.2.2.9 Hedgerows classified as historically ‘important’ and ‘non important’ in accordance with the criteria of the Regulations are identified in the following documents:

- Volume 3, Chapter 5: Historic Environment (F3.5)

1.2.2.10 Many of the ‘hedgerows’ identified in in Figure 1.20 to Figure 1.26 of Volume 7, Annex 5.1: Desk-based assessment (APP-143) comprise field and roadside boundaries which are no longer present or visible but under the criteria of the Regulations are classified as ‘hedgerows’ and have been treated to the same assessment process.

Assessment of impacts

1.2.2.11 The impacts from the Mona Offshore Wind Project on ecologically ‘important’ hedgerows are assessed in the following documents:

- Volume 3, Chapter 3: Onshore Ecology (APP-066)
- Volume 3, Chapter 6: Landscape and visual resources (APP-069)

1.2.2.12 The impacts from the Mona Offshore Wind Project on historically ‘important’ hedgerows are assessed in the following document:

- Volume 3, Chapter 5: Historic Environment (APP-068)

1.2.2.13 Measures to mitigate the impacts of the Mona Offshore Wind Project on hedgerows are set out in the Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (APP-208). The measures aim to improve the quality of existing hedgerows which are not currently

MONA OFFSHORE WIND PROJECT

classified as ecologically 'important' and re-establish some historically 'important' hedgerows. A final Landscape and Ecological Management Plan will be agreed with the local planning authority in accordance with Requirement 12 (and as appropriate Requirement 7) of Schedule 2 of the draft development consent order (PDA-003) (Draft DCO).

Draft DCO

1.2.2.14 Article 35 of the Draft DCO provides the general power to remove hedgerows. Schedule 11 of the Draft DCO includes in Part 1 details of hedgerows (i.e. 'not important') to be removed for the purposes of the authorised development and in Part 2 'important' hedgerows to be removed. In accordance with Article 35 of the Draft DCO, references to 'hedgerow' and 'important hedgerow' are to the definitions as set out in the Hedgerow Regulations 1997.

1.2.2.15 The Applicant has undertaken a review of the hedgerows described in Schedule 11 and an updated version is provided in the updated draft DCO (C1 F04). Schedule 11 has been updated to include all sections of hedgerow which could be removed to facilitate the Project including:

- Onshore cable crossings;
- The construction of the onshore substation platform
- Haul road crossings;
- Visibility splays at accesses from the public highway;
- Otherwise at the location of accesses;
- Temporary Construction Compounds;
- Hedgerow enhancements (where the improvement of hedgerows may result in the removal of individual plants to improve the overall hedgerow); and
- Habitat enhancements (where sections of hedge may need to be removed to facilitate works to improve existing habitat).