

# MONA OFFSHORE WIND PROJECT

## Response to RSPB Cymru ExQ1 Responses

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Image of an offshore wind farm

**MONA OFFSHORE WIND PROJECT**

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## MONA OFFSHORE WIND PROJECT

### 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).
Landfall	The area in which the offshore export cables make contact with land and the transitional area where the offshore cabling connects to the onshore cabling.
Mona Offshore Transmission Infrastructure Scoping Search Area	The area that was presented in the Mona Scoping Report as the area encompassing and located between the Mona Potential Array Area and the landfall up to MHWS, in which the offshore export cables will be located.
Mona Offshore Wind Project	The Mona Offshore Wind Project is comprised of both the generation assets, offshore and onshore transmission assets, and associated activities.

### Acronyms

Acronym	Description
DCO	Development Consent Order
NRW	Natural Resources Wales
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
SPA	Special Protection Area

# **1 Response to RSPB Cymru ExQ1 Responses**

## **1.1 Introduction**

1.1.1.1 The Applicant has responded to RSPB's ExQ1 responses below.

## 2 Response to RSPB Cymru ExQ1 Responses

Table 2.1: REP3-105 – Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)

Planning Inspectorate Ref. No.	Question is addressed to	ExA Question	RSPB response	Applicant's response
REP3-105.1	The Applicant RSPB Cymru	<p>Q1.17.15</p> <p>Can you explain how the application considers the resilience of ecosystems and potential ornithology effects regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>displacement from foraging areas;</li> <li>species energy expenditure;</li> <li>impact on forage fish; and</li> <li>ocean stratification (Irish sea).</li> </ul> <p>Can RSPB Cymru provide evidence addressing the four bullet points to demonstrate that the assessment has not fully considered indirect ecosystem impacts and also whether it would change any conclusions related to significance of effects.</p>	<p>The Applicant approach as detailed in APP-063 is that for offshore ornithology, the following potential impacts were considered within the inter-related assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disturbance and displacement from airborne noise, underwater sound, and presence of vessels and infrastructure.</li> <li>Indirect impacts from underwater sound affecting prey species.</li> <li>Temporary habitat loss/disturbance and increased Suspended Sediment Concentrations.</li> <li>Collision risk.</li> <li>Barrier effects.</li> </ul> <p>While these assessments are welcome, this does not include those listed in the question, in particular species energy expenditure and ocean stratification.</p> <p>There is potential for seabirds to have greater energy expenditure as a result of, for example, loss of foraging opportunities, greater commuting flight times, and increased metabolic costs of flight in areas with turbulence flumes. While these to a limited extent are considered with the analysis of displacement and barrier effects under mortality rate, they are not explicitly considered in the assessment.</p> <p>Changes in ocean stratification have also not been explicitly considered. Such changes in hydrodynamic regimes can have subsequent effects on the stability and strength of oceanographic features such as tidal mixing fronts<sup>1</sup>. These fronts are important drivers of the spatio-temporal availability of prey species for seabirds<sup>2</sup> and so modification to these through the presence of turbines can have profound effects on the distribution and fitness of these species. RSPB Cymru is concerned that these consequences of modifications to oceanographic dynamic have not been properly addressed.</p>	<p>The Applicant has provided a response to this question in the Applicant's Response to Examining Authority's Written Questions (ExQ1) (REP3-062) submitted at Deadline 3. The Applicant's response covers all four topics identified in the Examining Authority's question (Q1.17.15).</p> <p>The Applicant welcomes RSPB's acknowledgment that the inter-related effects of displacement from foraging areas and impact on forage fish have been considered by the Applicant within the DCO application.</p> <p>The Applicant wishes to highlight to RSPB that species energy expenditure and ocean stratification have been considered within the DCO application and directs RSPB to the Applicant's Response to Examining Authority's Written Questions (ExQ1) (REP3-062), question Q.17.15 for further information.</p>
REP3-105.2	DCC, CCBC, NRW (A), RSPB Cymru, NWWT	<p>Q1.18.8</p> <p>OLEMP [REP2-034]</p> <p>Are you satisfied with the Applicant's onshore/landfall approach to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>habitats - mitigation, management, and monitoring; and</li> <li>protected species – mitigation, management, and monitoring.</li> </ol> <p>If not, can you provide reasons with supporting evidence to justify your position.</p>	<p>This is not an area covered in our Relevant Representation. However, RSPB Cymru is satisfied with the Applicant's approach to onshore matters, although there is a disparity in the application of timing restrictions between offshore and landfall that has been raised by NRW.</p> <p>There are timing restrictions for offshore export cable installation activities within the Liverpool Bay SPA whereas no timing restrictions have been applied to the cable landfall. This inshore area does support overwintering common scoter which could be potentially displaced during the cable landfall activity.</p> <p>We defer to Natural Resources Wales as to whether they are satisfied with the level of information covering mitigation, management, and monitoring.</p>	<p>The Applicant notes this response.</p>