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Our reference: MLA/2024/00669

**[By email only]**

19 March 2025

Dear Sir/Madam,

## **INTENT TO DEFER - THE MARINE WORKS (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) REGULATIONS 2007**

### **Proposal: Sofia Offshore Wind Farm (SOWF) Seabed Stabilisation**

The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) received a Marine Licence application from SOWF in respect to the deposit of seabed stabilisation materials to enable Jack-up Vessel (JuV) operations within SOWF's array area, approximately 165km offshore on the shallow central area of the North Sea known as the Dogger Bank. The MMO is required to consider such requests in accordance with the Marine Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (EIA) Regulations 2007 ("the Regulations").

### **MMO Screening Opinion**

On reviewing the information you supplied, the MMO is of the opinion that the proposed works would fall under Schedule A2, Section 89 of the Regulations on the assessment of the effects of the project on the environment:

*"89. Any change to or extension of development of a description listed in paragraphs 1 to 87 of this Schedule where that development is already authorised, executed or in the process of being executed."*

### **Intent to Defer EIA Consent Decision**

The MMO are of the opinion that the proposed works fall under Schedule A2, Section 89 of the Regulations. Article 10(1)(b)(i and ii) of the Regulations provides an appropriate authority (the MMO) the ability to determine that an EIA is not required in relation to a regulated (marine licensable) activity if it is satisfied that assessment of the effects on the environment of the project in question has already been, is being, or is to be carried out by another appropriate authority and such assessment are (or will be) sufficient to meet the



requirements of EIA in relation to that project.

The MMO confirms its intent to defer an EIA consent decision under the Regulations, by virtue of article 10(1)(b)(i and ii) of the Regulations, on the basis that assessment of the effects of the project has been carried out by the appropriate authority for this case, the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change under the Planning Act 2008 (as amended) and the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2009 (as amended).

Any decision to defer is subject to the MMO being satisfied that the decision is sufficient to meet requirements of EIA in relation to the project.

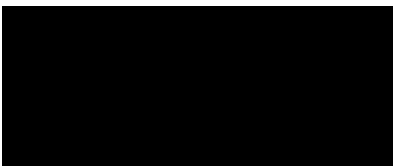
#### **Information required from the appropriate authority:**

- Conclusion of the EIA assessment of the appropriate authority
- Conditions attached to any consent of the appropriate authority, considered necessary in relation to likely significant environmental effects
- Description of features/measures to avoid, prevent, reduce and offset likely significant adverse effects on the environment
- Monitoring measures considered necessary
- Any further comments of relevance

#### **Withdrawal of EIA Deferral**

MMO withhold the right to withdraw the intent to defer to another appropriate authority in the event that they are not satisfied that the EIA assessment meets the criteria stipulated above. In the event that this occurs the application will be subject to EIA assessment under the Regulations ultimately resulting in an additional 42-day consultation period.

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me using the details provided below.



Marine Licensing Case Officer



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Copies to: Sofia Offshore Wind Farm