

Application by Norfolk Vanguard Limited for an Order Granting Development Consent for the Norfolk Vanguard offshore Wind Farm Project



Additional submission by the Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority regarding in-principle compensatory measures involving Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority byelaws

28th February 2020

In the letter from the Secretary of State dated 6th December 2019 (Ref: EN010079-004198-NORV), it was requested that the Applicant, in consultation with Natural England, provide evidence of any in-principle compensatory measures proposed to ensure the overall coherence of the network of Natura 2000 sites. Following discussions with the Applicant, Eastern IFCA are aware that the Applicant has considered options for extending fisheries closed areas in the inshore section of Haisborough, Hammond and Winterton SAC, as potential compensatory measures for damage from the wind farm in this site. While our understanding is that the Applicant is moving away from this option, Eastern IFCA would still like to highlight that we do not consider it equitable to penalise inshore fishery stakeholders (by introducing additional spatial closures) for environmental damage caused by the offshore renewables industry.

Eastern IFCA will support exploring compensatory measures with environmental benefits and no adverse impact upon fishing activities but will not support compensatory measures that increase restrictions on fishing activities, particularly where those activities have been assessed and found to be compatible with conservation objectives for the designated site.

Fisheries are already subject to assessment under the Habitats Regulations, and measures have been put in place (or are in development) to ensure fisheries do not have an adverse effect on designated sites. Once in force, the Marine Protected Areas Byelaw 2019 will close areas agreed with Natural England as requiring closure to towed-demersal fishing, and Eastern IFCA would not consider additional closures as being necessary or proportionate to risk of damage from fishing. Should evidence for additional areas of *Sabellaria* reef come to light through additional surveys, it would be standard practice under Article 9(1) of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as a function of Part 6 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009) for Eastern IFCA to introduce additional spatial restrictions to protect these from towed-demersal fishing.