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██████████  
Development Manager  
Vanguard West & East  
RWE Renewables UK

01 May 2026

Dear ██████,

**Norfolk Vanguard Offshore Wind Farm Order 2022 (“the Norfolk Vanguard Order”)**

**Discharge of Norfolk Vanguard West Limited (“NVWL”) and Norfolk Vanguard East Limited (“NVEL”) from any further benthic compensation obligations under Schedule 17 of the Norfolk Vanguard Order**

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1. The Norfolk Vanguard Order contains requirements that the undertaker must comply with in relation to the approved compensation measures for impacts to benthic habitats.
- 1.2. On 21 April, RWE (“the undertaker”) submitted an application for the Secretary of State to discharge NVWL and NVEL from any further benthic compensation obligations under Schedule 17 of the Norfolk Vanguard Order. The following documents were included within the application:
  - Enclosure 1 - Completed NVWL Marine Recovery Fund (“MRF”) contract for provision of 3.495 ha of benthic compensation;
  - Enclosure 2 - Completed NVEL MRF contract for provision of 3.495 ha of benthic compensation;
  - Enclosure 3 - MRF Confirmation and Transfer of Responsibility Letter from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (“Defra”) (dated 20 April 2026) confirming receipt of payment in full of the MRF contribution under the NVWL and NVEL MRF contracts and that the Marine Recovery Fund Operator (“MRFO”) has now assumed responsibility for the delivery, monitoring, maintenance, adaptation, management and decommissioning of 6.99ha of strategic environmental compensation; and
  - Defra Benthic Strategic Compensation High Level Implementation and Monitoring Plan (“IMP”) (dated December 2025).

## **2. The Secretary of State's consideration of the application**

- 2.1. The Secretary of State has considered the application as submitted by the undertaker.
- 2.2. The Secretary of State considers that the undertaker has submitted the necessary documentation demonstrating compliance with the requirements of paragraphs 39 and 40 of schedule 17 of the Norfolk Vanguard Order, as set out below. The Secretary of State notes that the relevant paragraph numbers were changed by way of Correction Slip following the making of the Norfolk Vanguard Order.
- 2.3. Under paragraph 39(a), the Secretary of State notes that the undertaker has submitted an IMP prepared by the Defra. The Secretary of State notes that the IMP is not bespoke to the Norfolk Vanguard Order, as it provides a high-level overview of the proposed process for the designation and/or extension of Marine Protected Areas ("MPAs"), together with the measures necessary to ensure its successful delivery. The Secretary of State acknowledges that the MRF's approach to implementation and monitoring will continue to evolve as the strategy develops and considers that the IMP adequately sets out the approach to compensation. The Secretary of State is therefore satisfied that the IMP demonstrates that effective compensation will be delivered and approves it for the purposes of paragraph 39(a).
- 2.4. Under paragraph 40(b), the Secretary of State notes that, in Enclosure 3 of the application, the undertaker has provided confirmation from Defra of receipt of payment in full of the MRF contribution. The Secretary of State further notes the supporting evidence demonstrating that the total combined area of benthic impact to be compensated for by NVWL and NVEL is 6.99 hectares for a period of 35 years, to be divided equally between the two projects. This is further evidenced by the undertaker in Enclosures 1 and 2 of the application, which include the signed MRF contracts for Vanguard West Limited and Vanguard East Limited respectively.
- 2.5. In accordance with Schedule 17, Part 3, paragraphs 39 and 40 of the Norfolk Vanguard Order, the Secretary of State confirms that NVWL and NVEL are fully discharged from any further obligations under that Order.

Yours sincerely,



Head of Environment Delivery & Networks  
Department for Energy Security & Net Zero