



Department for  
Energy Security  
& Net Zero

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[www.gov.uk/desnz](http://www.gov.uk/desnz)

To:  
Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm Limited  
Natural England

Ref: EN010115

26 September 2025

Dear Sir or Madam,

**Planning Act 2008 and The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010**

**Application by Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm Limited (“the Applicant”) for an Order granting Development Consent for the proposed Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm (“the Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm project”)**

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION**

1. Following the completion of the Examination on 17 March 2025, the Examining Authority submitted a Report and Recommendation in respect of its findings and conclusions on the above application to the Secretary of State on 17 June 2025.
2. On 11 July 2025, the Secretary of State requested information from specific parties. On 14 August 2025, the Secretary of State invited all Interested Parties (“IPs”) to comment on the responses received. On 21 August 2025, the Secretary of State requested further information from specific parties.
3. On 11 September 2025, the Secretary of State decided to extend the statutory deadline to 17 December 2025, and the extension has been confirmed in a statement to Parliament in accordance with section 107(7) of Planning Act 2008.
4. The Secretary of State would be grateful if the following parties could provide updates or information as appropriate in response to the queries set out in this letter: **the Applicant** and **Natural England (“NE”)**.

**HRA – Guillemot and Razorbill Implementation and Monitoring Plan**

5. Noting the response (Point 1 of Table 2.3) (5 September 2025) to the Secretary of State’s request for information (21 August 2025) in relation to the updated Guillemot and Razorbill Implementation and Monitoring Plan, **NE** is invited to provide draft wording to secure within the Order the site-by-site level of detail in the Plan, as recommended by NE.

### **HRA – Guillemot and Razorbill Evidence, Site Selection and Roadmap**

6. **NE** is invited to confirm whether the requested amendments made by the Applicant (in response to the Secretary of State's information request dated 21 August 2025) to the Guillemot and Razorbill Evidence, Site Selection and Roadmap resolve its outstanding concern raised in relation to re-calculating the compensation quantum using the latest demographic rate advice.
7. **NE** is invited to confirm whether the requested amendments made by the Applicant (in response to the Secretary of State's information requested dated 21 August 2025) to the Guillemot and Razorbill Evidence, Site Selection and Roadmap resolve its outstanding concern raised in relation to presenting the expected number of recruits that would disperse or stay at the natal colonies.

### **HRA – Buffer Zone for Schedule 1 Species**

8. In line with NE's response (dated 5 September 2025) to the Secretary of State's request for information (dated 21 August 2025), the **Applicant** is requested to revise Section 10.4 of the Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan to clearly detail a commitment to secure further mitigation in the event that buffer zones for Schedule 1 bird species fail.

### **Onshore Ecology – ES 6.3.4 Onshore Biodiversity and Nature Conservation**

9. **NE** is invited to confirm whether the amendments made by the Applicant as requested by the Secretary of State on 21 August 2024 to ES 6.3.4 Onshore Biodiversity and Nature Conservation resolves the outstanding concern raised in its Risk and Issues Log [REP8A-053] (Point 2 in J – Onshore Ecology). If this has not resolved its concerns, NE is requested to set out whether the mitigation measures within the Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan are sufficient in light of the updates made to the impact assessment, and provide further direction to the Applicant to resolve its concerns in relation to impact duration and species lifecycles.

### **Onshore Ecology – Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan**

10. In line with NE's response (dated 5 September 2025) to the Secretary of State's request for information (dated 21 August 2025), the **Applicant** is requested to revise Section 7.8.11 of the Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan to remove reference to the felling of potential roost feature trees in winter months.

### **Flood Risk – Code of Construction Practice**

11. In line with Essex County Council's ("ECC") response (dated 12 September 2025) to the Secretary of State's request for information (dated 21 August 2025), the **Applicant** is requested to revise the Code of Construction Practice to include the flood management and emergency response measures recommended by ECC.

### **Offshore Ornithology – Offshore In-Principle Monitoring Plan**

12. In line with NE's response (dated 5 September 2025, Table 2.2) to the Secretary of State's request for information (dated 21 August 2025), the **Applicant** is

requested to revise the Offshore In-Principle Monitoring Plan to remove the caveat at Section 4.5.14 that monitoring will only occur should cable-laying works within 2km of the Outer Thames Estuary Special Protection Area between November - March inclusive take place. In addition, the inclusion of chick colour-ringing of lesser black-backed gulls within Section 4.5.9 should also be added.

### **Benthic Ecology – Offshore In-Principle Monitoring plan**

13. In line with the advice within NE's response (dated 5 September 2025) to the Secretary of State's request for information (dated 21 August 2025) in relation to benthic ecology monitoring, the **Applicant** is requested to revise the Offshore In-Principle monitoring Plan to include further measures that may be necessary should the monitoring of 'reef' and other features identify issues, such as more targeted monitoring or remedial action.

### **Deadline for Response**

14. Responses should be submitted **by no later than 23:59 on 10 October 2025**, by email only to [fiveestuaries@planninginspectorate.gov.uk](mailto:fiveestuaries@planninginspectorate.gov.uk).
15. Responses will be published on the Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm project page of the National Infrastructure Planning website as soon as possible **after 10 October 2025**.

<https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/EN010115>

16. This letter is without prejudice to the Secretary of State's consideration of whether to grant or withhold development consent for the Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm project or any part of the project. Nothing in this letter is to be taken to imply what the eventual decision might be or what final conclusions the Secretary of State may reach on any particular issue which is relevant to the determination of the application.

Yours faithfully,



John Wheadon

Head of Energy Infrastructure Planning Delivery & Innovation

Department of Energy Security & Net Zero