



**NORTH FALLS**

*Offshore Wind Farm*

## **Statement of Common Ground**

United Kingdom Chamber of Shipping

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## Contents

1.	Introduction .....	5
1.1	Background .....	5
1.2	Consultation with Chamber of Shipping .....	6
1.3	Summary of Agreed, Not Agreed and In Discussion .....	6
2.	Statement of Common Ground .....	7
2.1	Shipping and Navigation .....	8
3.	Signatures .....	14
4.	References .....	15

## Tables

Table 1.1	Topics and Relevant Documents included in the SoCG .....	5
Table 1.2	Summary of Consultation with Chamber of Shipping regarding Shipping and Navigation .....	6
Table 1.3	Position status key .....	7
Table 2.1	Topics agreed, in discussion or not agreed in relation to Shipping and Navigation .....	8

## Glossary of Acronyms

ALARP	As Low As Reasonably Practicable
DCO	Development Consent Order
dML	deemed Marine Licence
DWR	Deep Water Route
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
MCA	Maritime and Coastguard Agency
MGN	Marine Guidance Note
NFOW	North Falls Offshore Wind Farm Limited
NIP	Navigation and Installation Plan
NRA	Navigational Risk Assessment
PEIR	Preliminary Environmental Information Report
SEZ	Structure Exclusion Zone
SoCG	Statement of Common Ground

## Glossary of Terminology

Navigational Risk Assessment (NRA)	A document which assesses the hazards to shipping and navigation of a proposed Offshore Renewable Energy Installation (OREI) based upon the FSA.
Offshore cable corridor	The corridor of seabed from array area to the landfall within which the offshore export cables will be located.
Offshore export cables	The cables which bring electricity from the offshore substation platform(s) to the landfall, as well as auxiliary cables.
The Applicant	North Falls Offshore Wind Farm Limited (NFOW).
The Project or 'North Falls'	North Falls Offshore Wind Farm, including all onshore and offshore infrastructure.

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background

1. This Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) has been prepared by North Falls Offshore Wind Farm Limited (NFOW) (the Applicant) and United Kingdom Chamber of Shipping (hereafter 'Chamber of Shipping'). It identifies areas of North Falls Offshore Wind Farm (hereafter 'the Project' or 'North Falls') where matters are agreed, not agreed or that remain under discussion between the parties.
2. The Chamber of Shipping is the trade association for the UK shipping industry, representing 200 members, operating 900 vessels equalling 18 million gross tonnes in capacity, across all vessel sectors. The CoS' interest lies in ensuring the impacts to navigational safety, commercial operation, and environmental performance degradation are avoided or minimised as far as possible.
3. The Applicant has had regard to the Planning Act 2008: Guidance for the examination of applications for development consent (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2015) when compiling the SoCG.
4. This SoCG has been structured to reflect topics of the application which are of interest to Chamber of Shipping. The applicable matters considered within the SoCG apply to Chamber of Shipping statutory and non-statutory remit.
5. Table 1.1 presents the topics included in the SoCG with the Applicant and Chamber of Shipping.

**Table 1.1 Topics and Relevant Documents included in the SoCG**

Topic/Chapter	DCO Document Reference
Environmental Statement (ES) Chapter 15 Shipping and Navigation	APP-029
ES Chapter 15 Shipping and Navigation Figures	APP-060
ES Appendix 15.1 Navigation Risk Assessment Parts 1 - 3	APP-106; APP-107; APP-108
Draft Development Consent Order (DCO)	AS-022

6. Topic specific matters agreed, not agreed, and matters that remain under discussion between the Applicant and Chamber of Shipping are included within this SoCG. Matters that are not yet agreed will be the subject of ongoing discussion between the Applicant and Chamber of Shipping to reach agreement on each matter whatever possible or refine the extent of disagreement between parties.

## 1.2 Consultation with Chamber of Shipping

7. The Applicant has engaged with Chamber of Shipping on the project during the pre-Application process, both in terms of informal non-statutory engagement and formal consultation carried out pursuant Section 42 of the Planning Act 2008.
8. During formal consultation, Chamber of Shipping provided comments on the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) by way of letter dated 14<sup>th</sup> July 2023.
9. Further to the statutory Section 42 consultation, several meetings were held with Chamber of Shipping through the pre-application process (Table 1.2). These are detailed throughout the SoCG, Consultation Report (Document reference: APP-215) and minutes of the meetings.

**Table 1.2 Summary of Consultation with Chamber of Shipping regarding Shipping and Navigation**

Date	Contact Type	Topic
Pre-Application		
8 <sup>th</sup> July 2021	Meeting	Update provided to the Sunk Users Group.
14 <sup>th</sup> December 2021	Email correspondence	CoS written response to informal consultation outreach.
7 <sup>th</sup> July 2022	Meeting	Update provided to the Sunk Users Group.
14 <sup>th</sup> July 2023	PEIR response	Section 42 responses provided by Chamber of Shipping.
23 <sup>rd</sup> August 2023	Meeting	Meeting to discuss updates to the Project following PEIR responses.
12 <sup>th</sup> October 2023	Hazard Workshop	Meeting to review the Navigation Risk Assessment (NRA).
17 <sup>th</sup> January 2024	Meeting	Update provided to the Sunk Users Group.
27 <sup>th</sup> June 2024	Meeting	Meeting to discuss key considerations identified through the NRA process and the implementation of a Structure Exclusion Zone (SEZ).
15 <sup>th</sup> January 2025	Meeting	Update provided to the Sunk Users Group.

## 1.3 Summary of Agreed, Not Agreed and In Discussion

10. In order to easily identify whether a matter is 'agreed', 'not agreed', or 'in discussion' the position status colour coding system set out in Table 1.3 is used in the SoCG.
11. Details of specific topics that are 'agreed', 'not agreed', or 'in discussion' between the Applicant and Chamber of Shipping are presented in Table 2.1.

**Table 1.3 Position status key**

Position Status	Position Colour Coding
<b>Agreed.</b> The matter is considered to be agreed between the parties.	<b>Agreed</b>
<b>Not Agreed- no material impact</b> The matter is not yet agreed between the parties however the outcome of the approach taken by either the Applicant and Chamber of Shipping is not considered to result in a material impact to the assessment conclusions and the matter is considered to be closed for the purposes of this SoCG. Discussion on these matters have concluded.	<b>Not Agreed- no material impact</b>
<b>Not Agreed- material impact</b> The matter is not agreed between the parties and the outcome of the approach taken by either the Applicant and Chamber of Shipping is considered to result in a materially different impact to the assessment conclusions. Discussions on these matters have concluded.	<b>Not Agreed- material impact</b>
<b>In discussion</b> The matter is neither 'agreed' nor 'not agreed' and is a matter where further discussion is required between the parties (e.g. where the documents are yet to be shared with Chamber of Shipping.	<b>In discussion</b>

## 2. Statement of Common Ground

12. A summary of the consultation undertaken to date with Chamber of Shipping and the matters agreed or not agreed between the Applicant and Chamber of Shipping (based on discussions and information exchanged between the Applicant and Chamber of Shipping during the pre-application phase of the Application) are set out below for each of the SoCG topic areas.

## 2.1 Shipping and Navigation

**Table 2.1 Topics agreed, in discussion or not agreed in relation to Shipping and Navigation**

ID	The Applicant Position	Chamber of Shipping Position	Position Summary
<b>NRA and EIA – Baseline Environment and Data</b>			
1	<b>Marine Traffic Surveys</b> The vessel traffic surveys were conducted in accordance with Marine Guidance Note (MGN) 654 (Maritime and Coastguard Agency, 2021).	Agreed	Agreed
2	<b>Secondary Data Sources</b> Other supporting data sources as detailed within the NRA (APP-106; APP-107; and APP-108) adequately inform the shipping and navigation baseline.	Agreed	Agreed
3	<b>Baseline Environment</b> The data presented within the NRA (APP-106; APP-107; and APP-108) and Environmental Statement (ES) Shipping and Navigation Chapter (APP-029) adequately identifies shipping and navigation baseline including main routes operating within the area.	Agreed	Agreed
<b>NRA and EIA - Assessment Methodology</b>			
4	<b>NRA and EIA Methodology</b>	Agreed	Agreed



ID	The Applicant Position	Chamber of Shipping Position	Position Summary
	The assessment has been undertaken in line with relevant shipping and navigation legislation and guidance including being compliant with MGN 654 requirements.		
5	<b>Future Case Methodology</b> The approach to the assessment of impacts is deemed appropriate for the purposes of predicting changes to the baseline environment.	Agreed	Agreed
6	<b>Worst Case</b> The worst case for shipping as identified in the NRA (APP-106; APP-107; and APP-108) and ES Shipping and Navigation Chapter (APP-029) has been assessed.	Agreed	Agreed
<b>EIA – Impact Assessment Conclusions</b>			
7	<b>Hazard Identification</b> The hazards identified adequately capture the potential effects on shipping and navigation that may result from the Project.	Agreed	Agreed
8	<b>Interference with sea lanes (TSS) and passing distances</b> The Red Line Boundary Reductions and implementation of the Structure Exclusion Zone (SEZ) mean that tolerable distances will be maintained between the Sunk TSS lanes &	Agreed – the Chamber believes the additional mitigation of the SEZ to maintain a distance of at least 1nm from all surface piercing infrastructure including blades to the Outer Precautionary Area, Sunk TSS South and Sunk TSS East unless otherwise agreed with the MCA, is necessary	Agreed

ID	The Applicant Position	Chamber of Shipping Position	Position Summary
	Outer Precautionary Area and the structures in the array area.	for the hazard to be assessed as tolerable and ALARP	
9	<p><b>UKC/draft and routeing</b></p> <p>The Applicant recognises the importance of maintaining vessel access to key local ports via the DW routes in the area, together with appropriate cable burial and consideration of the potential for increases in vessel draught in the future. Technical discussions are currently ongoing internally to understand what is technically achievable in terms of burial depth over and in proximity to the DW routes, noting the ports position that burial should be such that a dredged channel depth of 22m is achievable in the future. An offshore seabed site investigation is currently out to tender, with the results feeding additional technical assessments. Meetings to continue engagement with the ports on this topic have been arranged and the CoS will be kept updated.</p>	In discussion. The Chamber looks forward to the outcome of ongoing dialogue between the applicant and the ports' regarding under keel clearance. The Chamber firmly supports the ports' position that a dredged channel depth of 22m is necessary to ensure the long-term future viability of the ports from the increasing size and draft of visiting vessels.	In discussion
10	<p><b>Radar interference</b></p> <p>Impacts on vessel radar have been assessed in the NRA (APP-106; APP-107; and APP-108) with the conclusions being that associated hazards are ALARP and the impact is</p>	Agreed. The Chamber welcomes the embedded mitigation for Marine Coordination for Project Vessels so that the applicant commits to use of entry/exit points and	Agreed

ID	The Applicant Position	Chamber of Shipping Position	Position Summary
	manageable. This considers input from vessel operators navigating in proximity to the existing Galloper and Greater Gabbard WTGs.	defined routes to and from construction/decommissioning and O&M ports to mitigate interaction between third-party and project vessels.	
11	<b>Galloper Recommended Ferry Route</b>  The Applicant has demonstrated that safe viable alternate routeing is available in the event that the Galloper Recommended Ferry Route is removed.	Agreed.	Agreed
12	<b>Risk Level – Array Area</b>  Based on the information provided within NRA (APP-106; APP-107; and APP-108) and the ES Shipping and Navigation Chapter (APP-029) it is agreed that in isolation hazards, including main route deviations caused by the project are unlikely to be significant with the mitigation measure and monitoring detailed in place. This includes implementation of the SEZ which will allow for a suitable minimum distance between the Sunk routeing measures and the turbines.	Agreed.	Agreed
13	<b>Risk Level – Export Cable Corridor</b>  Based on the information provided within NRA (APP-106; APP-107; and APP-108) and the ES Shipping and Navigation Chapter (APP-029) in isolation hazards in terms of navigational safety are unlikely to be significant with the mitigation	Agreed with caveats that the Chamber firmly supports the ports' position that a dredged channel depth of 22m is necessary to ensure the long-term future viability of the ports from the increasing size and draft of visiting vessels.	Agreed

ID	The Applicant Position	Chamber of Shipping Position	Position Summary
	measure and monitoring detailed in place noting this includes the Navigation Installation Plan. Engagement with the ports is ongoing in terms of future case vessel access.		
14	<b>Risk Level Cumulative – Array Area</b>  Based on the information provided within NRA (APP-106; APP-107; and APP-108) and the ES Shipping and Navigation Chapter (APP-029) it is agreed that cumulative hazards, including main route deviations, are unlikely to be significant with the mitigation measures and monitoring detailed in place.	Agreed.	Agreed
15	<b>Risk Level Cumulative - Export Cable Corridor</b>  Based on the information provided within NRA (APP-106; APP-107; and APP-108) and the ES Shipping and Navigation Chapter (APP-029) cumulative hazards in terms of navigational safety are unlikely to be significant with the mitigation measures and monitoring detailed in place, noting this includes the Navigation Installation Plan. Engagement with the ports is ongoing in terms of future case vessel access and cumulative impacts.	Agreed with caveats that the Chamber firmly supports the ports' position that a dredged channel depth of 22m is necessary to ensure the long-term future viability of the ports from the increasing size and draft of visiting vessels.	Agreed
<b>Other Matters as Required</b>			

ID	The Applicant Position	Chamber of Shipping Position	Position Summary
16	<p><b>Decommissioning</b></p> <p>The Project will be decommissioned in line with a decommissioning plan under the Energy Act 2004 and any requirements of The Crown Estate. The draft DCO (AS-022) includes the requirement for a decommissioning programme to be approved prior to the commencement of construction.</p>	<p>The Chamber accepts the decommissioning plan will be undertaken in line with appropriate legislation and guidance at the time.</p> <p>It is the Chamber position however that we strongly recommend the full decommissioning and removal of all infrastructure from the site, including all turbines, topsides, inter-array and interconnector cables, and foundations to a safe depth below the seabed.</p> <p>Failure to enact full removal may hinder or encumber future activity or development, as well as provide safety hazard to vessels, for example through cabling which becomes exposed and presents snagging risk.</p>	Agreed

### 3. Signatures

13. The above SoCG is agreed between the Applicant and Chamber of Shipping on the day specified below.

14.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Job Title: \_\_Policy Manager (Safety & Nautical) & Analyst\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_22 April 2025\_\_\_\_\_

Duly authorised for and on behalf of the Chamber of Shipping

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Daniel** Digitally signed  
by Daniel Harper  
**Harper** Date: 2025.04.23  
08:23:36 +01'00'

Duly authorised for and on behalf of North Falls Offshore Wind Ltd

## 4. References

MCA (2021). Marine Guidance Note 654 (Merchant and Fishing) safety of Navigation: offshore Renewable Energy Installations (OREIs) – Guidance on UK Navigational Practice, Safety and Emergency Response. Southampton: MCA.

Planning Inspectorate (2024) Statements of Common/Uncommon Ground for Hearings and Inquiries. Available at: [Statements of Common/Uncommon Ground for Hearings and Inquiries - GOV.UK](#)



## HARNESSING THE POWER OF NORTH SEA WIND

*North Falls Offshore Wind Farm Limited*

*A joint venture company owned equally by SSE Renewables and RWE.*

*To contact please email [contact@northfallsoffshore.com](mailto:contact@northfallsoffshore.com)*

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