



NORTH FALLS

Offshore Wind Farm

Statement of Common Ground

Essex Country Fire and Rescue Service

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Glossary of Acronyms

| | |
|-------|--|
| DCO | Development Consent Order |
| EIA | Environmental Impact Assessment |
| ETG | Expert Topic Group |
| NFOW | North Falls Offshore Wind Farm Limited |
| OCoCP | Outline Code of Construction Practice |
| OCTMP | Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan |
| SoCG | Statement of Common Ground |
| TMCo | Traffic Management Coordinator |

Glossary of Terminology

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| 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 |
| Onshore cable route | Onshore route within which the onshore export cables and associated infrastructure would be located |

1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

1. This Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) has been prepared by North Falls Offshore Wind Farm Limited (NFW) (the Applicant) and Essex Country Fire and Rescue Service. 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 Applicant has had regard to the Planning Inspectorate (2024) guidance regarding Statements of Common/Uncommon Ground for Hearings and Inquiries when compiling the SoCG.
3. This SoCG has been structured to reflect topics of the application which are of interest to Essex Country Fire and Rescue Service. The applicable matters considered within the SoCG apply to Essex Country Fire and Rescue Service's statutory and non-statutory remit.
4. Table 1.1 presents the topics included in the SoCG with the Applicant and Essex Country Fire and Rescue Service.

Table 1.1 Topics included in the SoCG

| Topic/Chapter | DCO Document Reference |
|--|------------------------|
| Chapter 27 Traffic and Transport | APP-041 |
| Chapter 31 Socio Economics | AS-010 |
| Outline Code of Construction Practice | REP3-017 |
| Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan | REP4-008 |

5. Topic specific matters agreed, not agreed, and matters that remain under discussion between the Applicant and Essex Country Fire and Rescue Service are included within this SoCG. Matters that are not yet agreed will be the subject of ongoing discussion between the Applicant and Essex Country Fire and Rescue Service to reach agreement on each matter wherever possible or refine the extent of disagreement between parties.
6. Throughout the SoCG the phrase "Agreed" identifies any point of agreement between the Applicant and Essex Country Fire and Rescue Service. The phrase "Not Agreed" identifies any point that is not agreed between the Applicant and Essex Country Fire and Rescue Service.

1.2 Consultation with the Essex Country Fire and Rescue Service

7. The Applicant has engaged with Essex Country Fire and Rescue Service 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 statutory (Section 42) consultation, Essex Country Fire and Rescue Service provided comments on the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) by way of letter dated 14th July 2023.
9. Further to the statutory Section 42 consultation, a meeting was held with Essex Country Fire and Rescue Service on 15th November 2024. These points raised during this meeting are detailed within this SoCG, and in minutes of the meeting.

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 1.2 is used in the SoCG.
11. Details of specific topics that are 'agreed', 'not agreed', or 'in discussion' between the Applicant and Essex Country Fire and Rescue Service are presented in Table 2.2 and Table 2.4.

Table 1.2 Position status key

| Position Status | Position Colour Coding |
|---|--------------------------------|
| Agreed The matter is considered to be agreed between the parties. | Agreed |
| Not Agreed- no material impact The matter is not yet agreed between the parties however the outcome of the approach taken by either the Applicant and Essex Country Fire and Rescue Service 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. | Not Agreed- no material impact |
| Not Agreed- material impact The matter is not agreed between the parties and the outcome of the approach taken by either the Applicant and Essex Country Fire and Rescue Service is considered to result in a materially different impact to the assessment conclusions. Discussions on these matters have concluded. | Not Agreed- material impact |
| In discussion 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 the Essex Country Fire and Rescue Service). | In discussion |

2 Statement of Common Ground

12. A summary of the consultation undertaken to date with Essex Country Fire and Rescue Service and the matters agreed or not agreed between the Applicant and Essex Country Fire and Rescue Service (based on discussions and information exchanged between the Applicant and Essex Country Fire and Rescue Service during the pre-application, pre-Examination and Examination phases of the Application) are set out below for each of the SoCG topic areas.

2.1 Traffic and Transport

Table 2.1 Summary of Consultation with Essex Country Fire and Rescue Service regarding Traffic and Transport.

| Date | Contact Type | Topic |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|--|
| Post-Application | | |
| 15 th November 2024 | Consultation Meeting | <p>The following topics were discussed during the ETG meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Current Project status;• Approach to traffic and transport impact assessment; and,• Mitigation measures for managing fire safety. |

Table 2.2 Topics agreed, in discussion or not agreed in relation to Traffic and Transport

| ID | The Applicant Position | Essex County Fire and Rescue Position | Position Summary |
|--|--|--|------------------|
| Severance and Amenity, Highway safety, driver delay, abnormal loads | | | |
| 1 | The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) detailed ES Chapter 27 Traffic and Transport [APP-041] is appropriate for assessing impacts on traffic and transport receptors. | Essex County Fire and Rescue have no specific concerns at this moment and are reassured to see the inclusion of the pedestrian route along Bentley Road. | Agreed |
| 2 | The Applicant has appropriately considered impacts on severance and amenity, highway safety, driver delay (capacity, highway constraints and road closures) and abnormal loads, all of which have the potential to impact Essex County Fire and Rescue operations. | No further comment. | Agreed |
| 3 | The Applicant is aware of the Safer Essex Road Partnership (SERP) as a way of providing training to the workforce, and has updated the Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (OCTMP) [REP4-008] to add a statement on engaging with SERP when preparing training. | Essex County Fire and Rescue recommend linking with Safer Essex Road Partnership who provide road safety advice. | Agreed |
| Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan | | | |
| 4 | The mitigation measures presented within the Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (OCTMP) [REP4-008] are adequate and appropriate to mitigate likely significant impacts which have the potential to impact Essex County Fire and Rescue operations. | No further comment. | Agreed |
| 5 | Section 1.4 of the OCTMP [REP4-008] states that a Traffic Management Co-ordinator (TMCo) would be appointed by the Principal Contractor. A key responsibility of the TMCo would be sharing information with emergency and healthcare services, e.g. dates of road closures, abnormal load movements, etc. | No further comment. | Agreed |

2.2 Socio Economics

Table 2.3 Summary of Consultation with Essex Country Fire and Rescue Service regarding Socio Economics

| Date | Contact Type | Topic |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|--|
| Post-Application | | |
| 15 th November 2024 | Consultation Meeting | <p>The following topics were discussed during the ETG meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Current Project status;• Approach to socio-economic impact assessment;• Mitigation measures for managing fire safety. |

Table 2.4 Topics agreed, in discussion or not agreed in relation to Socio Economics

| ID | The Applicant Position | Essex Country Fire and Rescue Position | Position Summary |
|------------------------|--|--|------------------|
| Socio Economics | | | |
| 1 | The EIA detailed in ES Chapter 31 Socio Economics [AS-010] is appropriate for assessing impacts on socio-economic receptors. | Essex Country Fire and Rescue consider this to be a fair assessment. | Agreed |

2.3 Outline Code of Construction Practice

Table 2.5 Summary of Consultation with Essex Country Fire and Rescue Service regarding the Outline Code of Construction Practice

| Date | Contact Type | Topic |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|--|
| Post-Application | | |
| 15 th November 2024 | Consultation Meeting | The following topics were discussed during the ETG meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Current Project status;• Outline Code of Construction Practice Mitigation Measures. |
| 2 nd May 2025 | Consultation Meeting | The following topics were discussed during the meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Water supply;• Outline Code of Construction Practice Mitigation Measures |

Table 2.6 Topics agreed, in discussion or not agreed in relation to the Outline Code of Construction Practice

| ID | The Applicant Position | Essex County Fire and Rescue Position | Position Summary |
|--|---|---|------------------|
| Outline Code of Construction Practice – fire safety | | | |
| 1 | The fire and rescue mitigation measures within the Outline Code of Construction Practice (OCoCP) [REP3-017] are adequate and appropriate with regards to fire awareness training, electrical substation measures and onshore cable route measures. | No further comment. | Agreed |
| 2 | Fire prevention would be considered at the detailed design stage and fire breaks would be introduced within the Project's detailed design. The 'Design Vision' [APP-234] submitted as part of the DCO application sets out the overall approach to design for the onshore substation; it contains decisions which have taken fire safety into account, such as ruling out timber cladding as a material for onsite buildings due to the heightened fire risk. Wildfires have also been considered within the design of the onshore substation, using soft landscaping to mitigate risk of fires, by reducing the areas of grassland which are more prone to wildfires in the height of summer. | Essex County Fire and Rescue note that 'fire prevention' is a broad term and it is important to protect North Falls' infrastructure from fire as well as protecting the surrounding areas from a potential fire caused by the North Falls project. Whilst there is no legalisation which calls for fire prevention to be in place, it would be good practice to do so in order to reduce the risk of fire for the surrounding area. | Agreed |
| 3 | The Applicant will take responsibility for ensuring that fire safety and the management of fire incidents is considered in detail throughout the detailed design process post-consent. A tactical fire plan will also be developed post-consent and in consultation with Essex County Fire and Rescue. This will consider what the best approach for incident management at the onshore substation is, in discussion with Essex County Fire and Rescue. | The applicant should make full provision (including all associated costs) for an appropriate water supply to be made available for the purposes of firefighting at all sites during the construction and for the life of the project where any permanent/semi-permanent constructions are built. E.g. – access to a suitable and sufficient hydrant within an appropriate proximity to the substation site. | Agreed |
| Outline Code of Construction Practice – Stakeholder Communications Plan | | | |
| 4 | The construction mitigation measures presented within the Stakeholder Communications Plan, which will form part of the Code of Construction Practice (which will be based on the OCoCP [REP3-017]), are adequate and appropriate to ensure effective communication. | No further comment. | Agreed |

| ID | The Applicant Position | Essex Country Fire and Rescue Position | Position Summary |
|---|--|---|------------------|
| 5 | <p>As outlined in Section 1.2.6 of the OCoCP [REP3-017], a designated point of contact for the Project will be established to manage communications with blue light services and provide updates and detail as required. This includes but is not limited to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The location of compounds and accesses. • Planned road works and road closures, including details of any diversion routes. | No further comment. | Agreed |
| Outline Code of Construction Practice – Health and Safety Plan | | | |
| 6 | <p>The construction mitigation measures presented within the Health and Safety Plan, which will form part of the OCoCP [REP3-017], are adequate and appropriate to ensure health and safety issues are considered in full. The plan shall <i>‘set specific health and safety goals and monitor performance...ensuring that Health and Safety issues are fully considered as an integral part of project management throughout the proposed North Falls project life; from design, through construction, operation and maintenance, and future decommissioning’</i>.</p> <p>The accesses have been designed to accommodate a range of vehicles and have been checked to ensure they can safely accommodate the swept path of a maximum legal length articulated HGV. Emergency service vehicles would sit within the envelope of this maximum length articulated HGV. As such, no update to the OCoCP [REP3-017] is required.</p> | <p>The applicant should consider appropriate site access for all emergency service vehicles in the event of an emergency incident occurring where a response from Essex County Fire and Rescue, Essex Police or the East of England Ambulance Service Trust (EEAST) may be required.</p> <p>The applicant should include a written record of this information within their emergency action plans and share this with the appropriate emergency services.</p> | Agreed |

3 Signatures

13. The above SoCG is agreed between the Applicant and Essex Country Fire and Rescue Service on the day specified below

Signed: _____

Print Name: _____

Job Title: _____ Group Manager - Risk _____

Date: _____ 18/03/2025 _____

Duly authorised for and on behalf of the Essex County Fire and Rescue Service

Signed: Cormac Rooney

Print Name: _____

Job Title: Consents Manager

Date: 29/05/2025

Duly authorised for and on behalf of North Falls



NORTH FALLS

Offshore Wind Farm



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

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