



NORTH FALLS

Offshore Wind Farm

Statement of Common Ground

Historic England (Clean)

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Glossary of Acronyms

AEZ	Archaeological Exclusion Zones
AMS	Archaeological Mitigation Strategy
CoCP	Code of Construction Practice
DCO	Development Consent Order
DBA	Desk Based Assessment
ECC	Essex County Council
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EPP	Evidence Plan Process
ES	Environmental Statement
ETG	Expert Topic Group
HE	Historic England
NFOW	North Falls Offshore Wind Farm Limited
OWEKH	Offshore Wind Evidence and Knowledge Hub
PEIR	Preliminary Environmental Impact Report
SoCG	Statement of Common Ground
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation

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 substation	A compound containing electrical equipment required to transform and stabilise electricity generated by the Project so that it can be connected to the National Grid.
Onshore substation zone	The area considered at PEIR, within which the onshore substation will be located.
Onshore cable route	Onshore route within which the onshore export cables and associated infrastructure would be located.

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 Historic England (HE). 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 HE. The applicable matters considered within the SoCG apply to HE's statutory and non-statutory remit.
4. Table 1.1 presents the topics included in the SoCG with the Applicant and HE.
5. HE is an executive non-departmental public body and is sponsored by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport. HE was established under the National Heritage Act 1983 and operated from 1983 to 2015 under the name English Heritage. The organisation was renamed Historic England in 2015.
6. HE is the government's statutory advisor and a statutory consultee on all aspects of the historic environment and historic assets.
7. HE's role in relation to the Development Consent Order (DCO) process derives from the Planning Act 2008, and HE are a statutory body as prescribed under Section 42(1)(a) (duty to consult) of the Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 (as amended).

Table 1.1 Topics included in the SoCG

Topic/Chapter	DCO Document Reference
Offshore and Intertidal Archaeology and Cultural Heritage	APP-030
Onshore Archaeology and Cultural Heritage	APP-039

1.2 Consultation with Historic England

8. Please refer to Section 4 which provides a summary of the consultation with HE to date.

1.3 Summary of Agreed, Not Agreed and In Discussion

9. 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.
10. Details of specific topics that are 'agreed', 'not agreed', or 'in discussion' between the Applicant and HE are presented Table 2.1.

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 The matter is not yet agreed between the parties.	Not Agreed
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 HE).	In discussion

2. Statement of Common Ground

2.1 Offshore and Intertidal Archaeology and Cultural Heritage and Onshore Archaeology and Cultural Heritage

Table 2.1 Issues agreed, in discussion or not agreed in relation to Offshore and Intertidal Archaeology and Cultural Heritage and Onshore Archaeology and Cultural Heritage

ID	Issue	Historic England Position	The Applicant Position	Position Summary
Offshore and Intertidal Archaeology and Cultural Heritage				
1	Approach / methodology for EIA	In their 'Written Representation' [REP2-039] (05/03/25) Historic England wrote that the ES is broadly adequate for the purposes of the examination.	The approach / methodology for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) as set out in Section 16.4 of ES Chapter 16 Offshore and Intertidal Archaeology and Cultural Heritage [APP-030] is appropriate.	Agreed
2	Suitability of baseline characterisation to inform the offshore and intertidal EIA	In their Relevant Representation received 18/10/24 [RR-130] Historic England wrote: We are aware that marine geophysical survey was undertaken in 2021, which was able to identify a range of potential archaeological anomalies within the proposed Order Limits. This coupled with the assessment of desk-based data sources have highlighted the clear potential for both known and unknown heritage assets to be present. In their responses to ExQ2 received 30/05/2025 [REP5-095] Historic England wrote: Broadly speaking we confirm the applicant has undertaken an assessment of the known heritage receptors and that the heritage chapters of the ES are adequate for the purposes of this examination.	The ES adequately characterises the baseline environment as detailed in Section 16.5 of ES Chapter 16 Offshore and Intertidal Archaeology and Cultural Heritage [APP-030] .	Agreed
3	Assessment of significant effects	In their Relevant Representation received 18/10/24 [RR-130] Historic England wrote:	The assessment of significant effects, including cumulative and transboundary effects, set out in Section 16.6, Section 16.8 and Section 16.9 of ES	Agreed

ID	Issue	Historic England Position	The Applicant Position	Position Summary
		As such, heritage assets could be impacted directly or indirectly by the proposed development. In their responses to ExQ2 received 30/05/2025 [REP5-095] Historic England wrote: Broadly speaking we confirm the applicant has undertaken an assessment of the known heritage receptors and that the heritage chapters of the ES are adequate for the purposes of this examination.	Chapter 16 Offshore and Intertidal Archaeology and Cultural Heritage [APP-030] is appropriate.	
4	Approach to mitigation as set out in the Outline WSI (Offshore)	In their 'Comment's on any submissions received at the previous deadline' [REP4-076] (25/04/25) Historic England wrote: We accept that archaeological investigations and mitigation measures are provided for through the draft DCO conditions and described within the Outline Offshore Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI).	The Outline WSI (Offshore) [APP-246] sets out an appropriate approach to further investigation, post-consent, which will inform the appropriate application of mitigation measures inclusive of in-situ avoidance of known heritage assets. The methodological approaches to be followed, with respect to the refinement of the design of the Project, will be agreed through an archaeological WSI which will be agreed post-consent, in line with the Outline WSI (Offshore) [APP-246] .	Agreed
5	Acknowledgement of HMS E6 as a protected place under the Protection of Military Remains Act 1986	In their 'Comment's on any submissions received at the previous deadline' [REP4-076] (25/04/25) Historic England wrote: We acknowledge that changes have been made to the project documentation regarding the protected status of the HMS E6 as we stated in paragraph 4.3 of our Written Representation (Examination Ref: REP02-039). We therefore have no further comments to make on this matter.	It is acknowledged that HMS E6 is a protected place under the Protection of Military Remains Act 1986 and that this was not reported in ES Chapter 16 Offshore and Intertidal Archaeology and Cultural Heritage [APP-030] nor in ES Appendix 16.1 Archaeological Assessment of Geophysical Data [APP-109] in error. It is therefore also acknowledged that the statement that there are no known sites with statutory protection is incorrect. The location of HMS E6 is known and will be avoided through the application of an Archaeological Exclusion Zones (AEZ). In accordance with the Protection of Military Remains Act 1986 no activities will take place at the location (or within the AEZ), the site will remain undisturbed, and nothing will be removed from the site.	Agreed

ID	Issue	Historic England Position	The Applicant Position	Position Summary
6	Extension of recommended AEZ for HMS E6	In their Relevant Representation received 18/10/24 [RR-130] Historic England wrote: We note a 50m Archaeological Exclusion Zone (AEZ) is proposed for the HMS E6. We hereby confirm that the Ministry of Defence is the competent authority for all responsibilities under the 1986 Act. In their 'Comment's on any submissions received at the previous deadline' [REP4-076] (25/04/25) Historic England wrote: We acknowledge that changes have been made to the project documentation regarding the protected status of the HMS E6 as we stated in paragraph 4.3 of our Written Representation (Examination Ref: REP02-039). We therefore have no further comments to make on this matter.	The 50m AEZs around the wreck of HMS E6 (70768), and associated debris (70769 and 70770), as proposed in Table 16.21 of ES Chapter 16 Offshore and Intertidal Archaeology and Cultural Heritage [APP-030] and Table 1.10 of the Outline WSI (Offshore) [APP-246] has been extended to include a 50m buffer around the extents of debris field 70771 to ensure full avoidance of the wreck, and any potentially associated debris in accordance with the Protection of Military Remains Act 1986. Written confirmation on their agreement with the extended AEZ was received from the Ministry of Defence, as the competent authority for all responsibilities under the 1986 Act, via email 20th January 2025. The Outline WSI (Offshore) [APP-246] has been updated to include the revised AEZ and has been submitted at Deadline 1.	Agreed
7	Approach to approval of recommended AEZs prior to construction	In their 'Comment's on any submissions received at the previous deadline' [REP4-076] (25/04/25) Historic England wrote: We accept that archaeological investigations and mitigation measures are provided for through the draft DCO conditions and described within the Outline Offshore Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI).	In accordance with the Outline WSI (Offshore) [APP-246], the nature and extent of all AEZs will be finalised and agreed in consultation with Historic England (and the Ministry of Defence as appropriate) prior to construction based upon the archaeological assessment of pre-construction data with regard to the refined design footprint and to any other information which may come to light.	Agreed
8	Consultation	Agreed	Historic England has been adequately consulted on offshore and intertidal archaeology and cultural heritage matters to date.	Agreed

ID	Issue	Historic England Position	The Applicant Position	Position Summary
Onshore Archaeology and Cultural Heritage				
1	Effects on setting and associated heritage significance during the operation of the onshore substation	HE flagged concerns in their Scoping Opinion (12/08/2021) about the setting of heritage assets in the area of the onshore substation.	Four cultural heritage viewpoints in which visibility, and potential effects to heritage setting and associated significance, of the project's onshore substation (CH01, CH02, CH03 and VH04) were agreed at a site meeting on 12/07/2022. These cultural heritage viewpoints are provided in ES Appendix 25.3 Onshore Infrastructure Settings Assessment [APP-148] and [APP-149]. It was also agreed at the site visit on 12/07/2022 that there was no requirement for a cultural heritage viewpoint from the Scheduled settlement site of a Neolithic enclosure (NLHE 1002157), located NNE of Lawford House, as the onshore substation is unlikely to be visible given the intervening vegetation, buildings and topography.	Agreed
2	Level of intrusive evaluation undertaken to inform the assessment and an appropriate mitigation strategy	Relevant Representation received 18/10/2024 [RR-130] In order to provide an effective mitigation strategy for heritage, assets particularly non-designated archaeological sites within the construction corridor, need to be fully assessed so that the significance and value to be determined and assigned. This is best done via a range of techniques tailored to the specifics of each site, however in our view it should include intrusive field evaluation at agreed locations along the length of the proposed cable route corridor. At present the values set out in Chapter 25, Table 25.11 and assigned to individual heritage assets is, in our view, based on only a partial assessment because of the limited locations of the field evaluation undertaken. These heritage values are	Targeted intrusive field evaluation was undertaken at the onshore substation, an area of fixed permanent infrastructure, as well as an area of the onshore ECC to the north of Little Clacton Road. Areas where substantial archaeological remains were identified through other non-intrusive evaluation techniques have been avoided by the Project as far as reasonably possible. The desk-based assessments, non-intrusive surveys and targeted intrusive evaluation is considered sufficient to inform the heritage values assigned to individual heritage assets and to make an informed judgement on the impacts of the development upon heritage significance and inform an effective mitigation strategy. The Applicant in discussion with Essex County Council (Places Services) and Historic England (in	Agreed

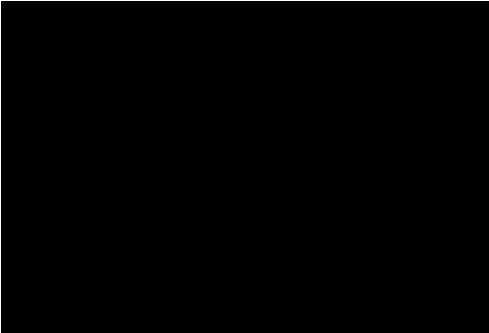
ID	Issue	Historic England Position	The Applicant Position	Position Summary
		often therefore only interim or draft and present a risk to any implementation stage of the project. We acknowledge the applicant has set out mitigation and we appreciate there are factors that can limit opportunities for evaluation. However, further intrusive assessment provides clarity on significance and reduces project risk particularly when targeted at key construction areas such as cable landing and direct drilling sites. It is important to identify any sites which are of equivalent value to a designated heritage asset as soon as possible, and prior to construction work commencing to ensure mitigation measures are effective and can be implemented. One such site – the Little Bromley henge, (see Table 25.11) has already been identified by the project team. Evaluation fieldwork is often the only reliable way to identify such sites before any direct impacts to them are consented. Although we welcome aspirations around avoidance and micro-siting to manage unexpected archaeological impacts, we consider that the evaluation work needs to be revisited and expanded by the applicant and more information provided in order to inform a decision. Comments received 23/05/2025 Historic England welcomes the adoption of the Five estuaries methodology, including bringing forward the AMS, Trial trench plan and updated OWSI. Historic England welcomes that this approach will be secured through the DCO.	combination with Five Estuaries) on 16/01/2025 have agreed a way forward in which the impacts of construction on known and currently unknown archaeological and geoarchaeological remains can be managed effectively through the application of the phased approach set out in the Onshore Archaeological Mitigation Strategy (AMS) and revised version of the Outline Onshore Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) [APP-247]. The approach detailed within the AMS and Outline Onshore WSI [AAP-247] includes for a programme of project-wide trial trenching and geoarchaeological evaluation post-consent to inform the detailed design phase and archaeological mitigation approaches and how to manage risk in delivery. Where archaeological remains are identified and considered to be of high significance, these can be avoided by design and preserved in situ (within the confines of other engineering and environmental constraints). Appropriate mitigation will be implemented for archaeological remains considered to be of lower significance. The construction methodology and the width of the onshore cable route retain enough flexibility for the Project to be able to avoid archaeological remains of high significance. The Applicant is following the approach discussed with Five Estuaries and has drafted an Onshore AMS and Trial Trench Plan and updated the Outline Onshore WSI [APP-247] to be submitted into the Examination at Deadline 5. The AMS and Outline Onshore WSI [APP-247] will be secured through the DCO Requirement for Onshore Archaeology. The wording of the draft DCO requirement and Outline Code of Construction Practice (CoCP) [APP-248] have been revised to	

ID	Issue	Historic England Position	The Applicant Position	Position Summary
			reflect the commitment to the phased approach detailed in the AMS and revised Outline Onshore WSI [7.12 [Rev1]] . These documents will be submitted into Examination at Deadline 5.	
3	Level of detail within the Outline Code of Construction Practice (CoCP)	Relevant Representation received 18/10/2024 [RR-130] The Outline Code of Construction Practice (Examination Ref: APP-248) does not address archaeology except to cite the Onshore WSI as a document to read alongside. We therefore recommend that the CoCP is updated to include a section on archaeology, so that headline principles around its role in site inductions, the timings, scope and implementation of fieldwork, as well as protocols for unexpected discoveries, public engagement, County Archaeologist sign-off of investigations, and the monitoring and maintenance of no dig areas are highlighted in this key control document.	The Applicant has updated the Outline CoCP (document reference 7.13) to reflect the approaches to archaeological mitigation detailed in the AMS and Outline Onshore WSI [APP-247] and the procedures to be followed by all contractors during the construction phase. The revised Outline CoCP will be submitted into Examination at Deadline 5.	Agreed
4	Inclusion of HE as consultee in the draft DCO wording	Relevant Representation received 18/10/2024 [RR-130] We request that the Draft DCO requirement [for Onshore Archaeology] is amended to include HE and the County Council archaeological service (Essex Place Services), as advisers to the LPA, with whom consultation is to be conducted prior to approval.	The Applicant has amended the wording of the draft DCO (document reference 6.1) to include Historic England as a consultee. This will be submitted into Examination at Deadline 5.	Agreed
5	Draft wording of the DCO Requirement for Onshore Archaeology	Relevant Representation received 18/10/2024 [RR-130] We recommend that if granted on current understanding, any DCO condition explicitly allows for a first, evaluation stage of archaeological work in	The Applicant has amended the wording of the DCO to allow for an evaluation stage of archaeological and geoarchaeological work before securing the archaeological mitigation stage of work. The DCO requirement refers to the AMS and Outline onshore WSI [APP-247] as the key	Agreed

ID	Issue	Historic England Position	The Applicant Position	Position Summary
		each stage, before securing a detailed investigation stage to follow.	documents to adhere to. This will be submitted into Examination at Deadline 5.	

3. Signatures

11. The above SoCG is agreed between the Applicant and HE on the day specified below.

Signe	
Print	
Job Title: Team Leader (East Region)	
Date: 15.06.2025	
Duly authorised for and on behalf of Historic England	
Signed: Cormac Rooney	
Print Name: Cormac Rooney	
Job Title: Consents Manager	
Date: 16/06/2025	
Duly authorised for and on behalf of North Falls	

4. Summary of Consultation with Historic England

Date	Contact Type	Topic
Offshore and Intertidal Archaeology and Cultural Heritage		
Pre-Application		
6 th July 2021	1 st Expert Topic Group (ETG)	ETG to introduce the Project and to summarise the information in the EIA Scoping Report.
12 th August 2021	Scoping response	Scoping opinion responses provided by HE.
22 nd March 2022	2 nd ETG	Project updates, review of comments from HE in the Scoping Opinion and approach to data collection.
2 nd August 2022	3 rd ETG	Project status update including progress of data collection and to request feedback on Geophysical Survey Written Scheme Investigation.
14 th July 2023	PEIR response	Section 42 responses provided by HE.
22 nd March 2024	Meeting	Meeting to discuss updates to the Project following PEIR responses.
Post-Application		
18 th October 2024	Relevant Representation	HE response to the Relevant Representation consultation.
16 th January 2025	Consultation (joint Five Estuaries and North Falls)	The following topics were discussed during the meeting: • Wessex Archaeology update • Timeline of programme • Draft DCO wording • Other questions from Essex County Council (ECC) and HE
Onshore Archaeology and Cultural Heritage		
Pre-Application		
6 th July 2021	1 st ETG	The following topics were discussed during the meeting: • Overview of the EPP process • Project status and update • Onshore EIA scoping • Written Scheme of Investigation • Onshore Archaeology and Cultural Heritage • Data collection
12 th August 2021	Scoping response	Scoping opinion responses provided by HE.
22 nd March 2022	2 nd ETG	The following topics were discussed during the meeting: • Project updates

Date	Contact Type	Topic
		- Review of Scoping Opinion comments - Update on data collection methodology and programme
4 th August 2022	3 rd ETG	The following topics were discussed during the meeting: - Project update - Data collection - Cable Corridors and Substation Options Desk-based Assessment (DBA) - Survey Objectives of the Geophysical Survey WSI - Approach to WSI - North Falls Priority Areas - Questions based on information presented for Areas 1-24 - Feedback requested from ETG
7 th February 2023	4 th ETG (joint Five Estuaries and North Falls)	The following topics were discussed during the meeting: - Project update - Summary of data to be provided at PEIR - Geoarchaeological DBA results - Geophysical survey update - Joint Onshore Substation Zone: Proposed Trial Trenching and Geoarchaeological Test Pits
14 th July 2023	PEIR response	Section 42 responses provided by HE.
3 rd August 2023	5 th ETG (joint Five Estuaries and North Falls)	The following topics were discussed during the meeting: - Project updates - Survey updates - Findings from Trial Trenching Phase 1 Evaluation (May 2023) - Proposed Trench Layout for Trial Trenching Phase 2 (September 2023) - Review of PEIR Feedback - Outline WSI
9 th November 2023	Consultation Meeting (offshore and onshore setting assessment approach)	The following topics were discussed during the meeting: - Project update - Review of relevant PEI responses - Suggested scope of ES assessment relating to the offshore and onshore setting assessment and direct/indirect effects upon built heritage
Post-Application		
18 th October 2024	Relevant Representation	HE response to the relevant representation consultation.
16 th January 2025	Consultation (joint Five Estuaries and North Falls)	The following topics were discussed during the meeting: Wessex Archaeology update

Date	Contact Type	Topic
		• Timeline of programme • Draft DCO wording • Other questions from ECC and HE



NORTH FALLS

Offshore Wind Farm



RWE

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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