

## **Morecambe Offshore Windfarm: Generation Assets** **Examination Documents**

### **Volume 9**

### **Statement of Common Ground with the Lancashire County Council**

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Rev 01



## Document History

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## Glossary of Acronyms

AfL	Agreement for Lease
DCO	Development Consent Order
ES	Environmental Statement
LLC	Lancashire County Council
OSP	Offshore substation platform
PATP	Outline Port Access and Transport Plan
PEIR	Preliminary Environmental Information Report
PINS	Planning Inspectorate
RIAA	Report to Inform Appropriate Assessment
SILVIA	Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
SoCG	Statement of Common Ground
UK	United Kingdom
WTG	Wind turbine generator

## Glossary of Units

km <sup>2</sup>	square kilometre
MW	Megawatt

## Glossary of Terminology

Agreement for Lease (AfL)	Agreements under which seabed rights are awarded following the completion of The Crown Estate tender process.
Applicant	Morecambe Offshore Windfarm Ltd
Application	This refers to the Applicant's application for a Development Consent Order (DCO). An application consists of a series of documents and plans which are published on the Planning Inspectorate's (PINS) website.
Generation Assets (the Project)	Generation assets associated with the Morecambe Offshore Windfarm. This is infrastructure in connection with electricity production, namely the fixed foundation wind turbine generators (WTGs), inter-array cables, offshore substation platform(s) (OSP(s)) and possible platform link cables to connect OSP(s).
The Planning Inspectorate	The agency responsible for operating the planning process for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects
Windfarm site	The area within which the WTGs, inter-array cables, OSP(s) and platform link cables would be present.



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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Overview of the Project

1. The Morecambe Offshore Windfarm is a proposed offshore windfarm located in the Eastern Irish Sea, which when fully operational, would have an anticipated nominal capacity of 480 megawatts (MW) and would have the potential to generate renewable power for over 500,000 homes in the United Kingdom (UK).
2. The windfarm was one of six projects selected by The Crown Estate in its Offshore Wind Leasing Round 4 in 2021. The Agreement for Lease (AfL) for the Project was received in 2023.
3. The AfL comprises an area of up to 125km<sup>2</sup> and reflects the windfarm site assessed in the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR). Following design development, surveys, assessments and consultation on the PEIR, the proposed windfarm site development area has been reduced to approximately 87km<sup>2</sup>.
4. The 'Project' relates to the Generation Assets of the Morecambe Offshore Windfarm (including wind turbine generators (WTGs), inter-array cables, offshore substation platforms (OSP(s)), and possible platform link cables to connect OSP(s)).
5. A separate consent for the Transmission Assets associated with the Morecambe Offshore Windfarm and the Morgan Offshore Wind Project (another proposed windfarm to be located in the Irish Sea) is being sought.

## 1.2 Purpose of this document

6. This draft Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) has been prepared by Morecambe Offshore Windfarm Ltd (the Applicant) with input from the Lancashire County Council (LCC). This identifies topic areas where there is agreement, areas of disagreement, and areas which remain under discussion in relation to the Development Consent Order (DCO) application ('the Application') for the Morecambe Offshore Windfarm Generation Assets (hereafter 'the Project').
7. 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 this draft SoCG.
8. This draft SoCG has been structured to reflect topics of the Application which are of interest to LCC.
9. Matters that are not yet agreed will be the subject of ongoing discussion ('In Discussion') between the Applicant and LCC to reach agreement on each

matter wherever possible or refine the extent of disagreement between parties.

10. Throughout the draft SoCG the phrase 'Agreed' identifies any point of agreement between the Applicant and LCC. The phrase 'Not Agreed' identifies any points not agreed between the Applicant and LCC.
11. LCC's main area of interest lies with the Transmission Assets which are onshore, which is subject to a separately consent and does not form part of this SoCG. LCC interest in the Project (offshore works) primarily relates to any related onshore effects in particular traffic impacts relating to the movement of materials and plant during the construction stage of the project
12. The Scoping Opinion of the Project confirmed the following onshore topics could be scoped out of the assessment:
  - Onshore ground conditions and contamination
  - Onshore land use
  - Onshore ecology
  - Onshore ornithology
  - Onshore water resources and flood risk
  - Onshore archaeology and cultural heritage
13. The Applicant has undertaken an assessment of the following topics that relate to onshore effects as a result of the Project.
  - Seascape, landscape and visual (APP-055)
  - Historic environment (visual impact to the setting of onshore historical assets) (APP-077)
  - Traffic and Transport (APP-059)
  - Human Health (APP-056)
  - Socio Economics (APP-057)
14. In association with these topics **Table 1.1** lists topics and documents of the Application which are of key interest to LCC.

*Table 1.1 Topics included in the draft SoCG*

Topic/chapter	PINS reference
Draft DCO	APP-012
Chapter 18 - Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment	APP-055



Topic/chapter	PINS reference
Historic Environment Plan	APP-011
Appendix 15.3 - Settings Assessment	APP-077
Chapter 19 - Human Health	APP-056
Chapter 20 - Socio-economics, Tourism and Recreation	APP-057
Chapter 22 - Traffic and Transport	APP-059
Outline Port Access and Transport Plan (PATP)	APP-151

## 1.2.1 Consultation with the LCC

### 1.2.1.1 Pre-application

15. Early engagement undertaken by the Applicant with a written communication sent to LCC in October 2021. This communication was primarily designed to introduce stakeholders to the Morecambe Offshore Windfarm and seek a meeting to discuss pre-application duties relating to consultation and environmental assessment parts of the DCO application. An introductory meeting subsequently took place between the Applicant and LCC in December 2021.
16. The Applicant had also engaged with LCC on the Project during the pre-application process, both in terms of informal non-statutory consultation and statutory consultation carried out pursuant to Section 42 of the Planning Act 2008.
17. For further information on the consultation process please see the Consultation Report (APP-015).

### 1.2.1.2 Post-application

18. Following the submission of the Application, a meeting was established with LCC and is detailed further in The matters agreed, in discussion or not agreed (based on discussions and information exchanged between the Applicant and LCC during the pre-application phase) are set out in **Table 2.1**.

## 1.2.2 Summary of 'Agreed', 'Not Agreed' and 'In Discussion' matters

19. In order to easily identify whether a matter is 'agreed', 'not agreed' or 'in discussion', the colour coding system set out in **Table 1.2** has been used.

20. Details on specific matters that are ‘Agreed’, ‘Not Agreed’ or ‘In Discussion’ are presented in **Table 2.2**.

*Table 1.2 Summary of ‘Agreed’, ‘Not Agreed’ and ‘In Discussion’ matters*

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 agreed between the parties; however, the outcome of the approach taken by either the Applicant or the LCC 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.	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 or the LCC 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	In Discussion

## 2 Statement of Common Ground

21. A summary of the consultation undertaken to date with LCC is set out in **Table 2.1**. The matters agreed, in discussion or not agreed (based on discussions and information exchanged between the Applicant and LCC during the pre-application phase) are set out in **Table 2.1**.

*Table 2.1 Summary of consultation with the LCC*

Date	Contact type	Owner	Topic
<b>Pre-application</b>			
October 2021	Email	Applicant	Introductory email to the Project and to seek a meeting to discuss pre-application duties relating to consultation and environmental assessment parts of the DCO
9 December 2021	Online meeting	Applicant	To introduce stakeholders to the Project to discuss pre-application duties relating to consultation and environmental assessment parts of the DCO application.
2 November to	Non-statutory consultation	Applicant	LCC were invited to take part in the non-statutory consultation for the Project

Date	Contact type	Owner	Topic
13 December 2022			
19 April to 4 June 2023	Statutory consultation	Applicant	LCC were invited to take part in the statutory consultation for the Project
<b>Post-application</b>			
5 September 2024	Online meeting	Applicant	Discussion following the acceptance of the project for examination and the publication of Relevant Representations.

*Table 2.2 Topics agreed, in discussion or not agreed with LCC in relation to offshore ornithology*

Topic	Applicants position	LCC position	Position summary
<b>Consultation</b>			
LCC 1	LCC has been adequately consulted by the Applicant in regard to the Project (noting this relates only to the Generation Assets).	Agreed	Agreed
LCC 2	LCC have not provided a response to statutory consultation or a relevant representation and do not intend to participate in the examination of the Project.	Agreed	Agreed
LCC 3	LCC are supportive of the Project (noting this relates only to the Generation Assets).	Agreed	Agreed
<b>Seascape, landscape and visual</b>			
LCC 4	The assessment identified that, for much of the study area, views of the Project would be either distant or heavily influenced by the existing offshore windfarms (Burbo Bank, Burbo Bank Extension, North Hoyle, Rhyl Flats and Gwynt y Môr, West of Duddon Sands, Ormonde and Walney offshore windfarms).	LCC does not wish to raise any concerns in regard to seascape, landscape and visual effects.	Agreed
LCC 5	Significant visual effects identified would be contained within the areas of the Fylde and Sefton coasts, where people have a high sensitivity to changes in the sea views, which are considered to be a fundamental part of the appeal of the coast and settlements at Blackpool, Lytham St Anne's and Southport. Although there would be localised significant effects on views from this section of coast, these visual effects would not result in significant effects on the perceived landscape character, which is extensively urbanised, and its urban/settled character would not be changed as a result of the Project.	LCC does not wish to raise any concerns in regard to seascape, landscape and visual effects.	Agreed

Topic	Applicants position	LCC position	Position summary
<b>Historic environment (visual impact to the setting of onshore historical assets)</b>			
LCC 6	An assessment to identify potential historical assets onshore which could be affected by the presence (visually) of the Project has also been undertaken. This included consideration of the Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (SLVIA) results, but highlighted insignificant effects.	LCC does not wish to raise any concerns in regard to visual effects on historical assets.	Agreed
<b>Traffic and Transport</b>			
LCC 7	Due to commercial processes, the Applicant was not able to confirm which port(s) would be used for each of the Project phases during the EIA process and therefore no detailed assessment of traffic and transport effects associated with the port activities can be presented at this stage. However, an Outline Port Access and Transport Plan (PATP) (APP-151) is submitted in support of the DCO Application. This captures a framework to consider impacts, and any required measures, on the road network, should the need for a further assessment be established.	LCC would like to retain engagement with the Applicant outside of the DCO examination process in regard to potential traffic impacts including any associated traffic management plans, and port selection timescales. On the assumption the port will be within Lancashire, the exact details of port facilities, development requirements and suitability of the access route (which will use primary A roads, strategic roads or roads designated as abnormal load routes, unless agreed otherwise with LCC) and will be subject of Requirements to the DCO.	Agreed
<b>Human Health</b>			
LCC 8	Potential pathways for the Project to adversely or positively affect human health receptors have been considered through the assessment, with consideration of impacts on leisure and lifestyles, employment and education, environmental conditions, community identity and society. This included impacts to transport links that were considered alongside the	LCC does not wish to raise any concerns in regard to human health effects.	Agreed

Topic	Applicants position	LCC position	Position summary
	shipping and navigation cumulative assessment, with insignificant impacts to human health identified.		
LCC 9	The assessment identified that effects would be negligible to minor adverse and negligible to moderate beneficial. Beneficial effects are expected whilst the windfarm is operational, relating to the positive impacts on climate change, and the public health improvements derived from access to clean and secure energy. Beneficial health effects due to socio-economic factors (income and employment) and workforce upskilling are also expected to be realised during all Project phases.	LCC does not wish to raise any concerns in regard to human health effects.	Agreed
<b>Socio Economics</b>			
LCC 10	The assessment shows that potential beneficial effects would arise from the increase in expenditure and the resulting boost for the economy, and the creation of employment, particularly during the construction phase. At this stage, because the port(s) used to service the Project are not confirmed and the local study area is broad, beneficial effects are shown to be negligible, and insignificant, although it is expected that the benefit would increase once the local area is refined. The Applicant has also produced an Outline Skills and Employment Plan (Document Reference 6.11) that will be further developed to maximise benefits.	LCC does not wish to raise any concerns in regard to socio economic effects.	Agreed
LCC 11	Insignificant adverse effects on the tourism economy, recreational activities or community assets were identified. No significant effects on wider economic receptors were identified.	LCC does not wish to raise any concerns in regard to socio economic effects.	Agreed

### 3 Signatures

22. The above draft SoCG is agreed between the LCC and the Applicant on the day specified below.

Signed:	
Print Name:	
Job Title:	
Date:	
Duly authorised for and on behalf of the LCC	
Signed:	
Print Name:	
Job Title:	
Date:	
Duly authorised for an on behalf of the Applicant	

## 4 References

DESNZ (2024) Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1)

DESNZ (2024) Overarching National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3)

Morecambe Offshore Windfarm Ltd (2024) Consultation Report (APP-015)

Morecambe Offshore Windfarm Ltd (2024) Draft DCO (APP-012)

Morecambe Offshore Windfarm Ltd (2024) Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (APP055)

Morecambe Offshore Windfarm Ltd (2024) Historic Environment Plan (APP-011)

Morecambe Offshore Windfarm Ltd (2024) Appendix 15.3 Settings Assessment (APP-077)

Morecambe Offshore Windfarm Ltd (2024) Chapter 19 - Human Health (APP-056)

Morecambe Offshore Windfarm Ltd (2024) Chapter 20 - Socio-economics, Tourism and Recreation (APP-057)

Morecambe Offshore Windfarm Ltd (2024) Chapter 22 - Traffic and Transport (APP-059)

Morecambe Offshore Windfarm Ltd (2024) Outline Port Access and Transport Plan (PATP) (APP-151)