

The Planning Inspectorate
National Infrastructure Planning
Temple Quay House
2 The Square
Bristol
BS1 6PN
United Kingdom

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By email: doggerbanksouth@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

To Whom It May Concern,

Second Written Questions relating to the proposed Dogger Bank South Offshore Wind Farm

Thank you for consulting JNCC on the Second Written Questions relating to the Dogger Bank South wind farm.

The advice contained within this minute is provided by JNCC as part of our statutory advisory role to the UK Government and devolved administrations on issues relating to nature conservation in UK offshore waters (beyond the territorial limit).

We have focused our comments on questions **OR 2.32**, and **HRA 2.2**.

Ornithology Comments

OR.2.32 Gannets – macro-avoidance

The ExA is aware of an outstanding issue in that the RSPB and NE do not agree on the macro-avoidance correction factor to be applied to the gannet collision assessment. The applicants revised their assessment in line with NE advice [RR-049, G16] and have also presented the collision risk modelling without the application of the macro-avoidance correction factor. However, the RSPB disagreed with NE's advice [RR-049], [REP1-087], [REP4-071] stating that the JNCC also do not accept NE's advised approach and considered this would have a material impact on resulting impact assessments.

Could the JNCC submit its latest position on this matter along with justification and evidence into the examination at DL5?

In the RSPB's Relevant Representation [RR-049] and Written Representation [paragraph 4.18, REP1-087] it is stated that the use of a 70% reduction in baseline densities of gannet used in Collision Risk Modelling it is not accepted by all the Statutory Nature Conservation Organisations, and references JNCC et al. (2024):

“However, while, Natural England support this approach, it is not accepted by all the Statutory Nature Conservation Organisations (JNCC et al, 2024) ...”

JNCC wish to highlight that the document being referred to is the Joint Statutory Nature Conservation Body (SNCB) Collision Risk Advice note, a joint piece of guidance, rather than solely JNCC advice. It states the “Potential application of macro-avoidance rates to gannet may differ between countries and therefore should be discussed with the relevant SNCB.”, not that there is a blanket lack of agreement between SNCBs.

JNCC's position is that we are content with the approach used to apply a 70% macro avoidance rate for gannet, and while we have not advised in this regard on the Dogger Bank South Offshore Wind Farms Project, as responsibility to provide statutory nature conservation advice on offshore wind energy projects in offshore English waters are delegated to Natural England, we have been content with this approach in other recent projects (e.g. Mona Offshore Wind Farm project [APP-042]; Morecambe Offshore Wind Farm project [REP6-044]).

Marine Mammals Comments

HRA 2.2 Scottish sites

It is noted that whilst NE is authorised to exercise the JNCC's functions as a statutory consultee in respect of applications for offshore renewable energy installations in offshore waters (0-200nm) adjacent to England, this authorisation does not extend to sites in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. UK National Site Network sites in Scotland for which JNCC has joint or sole responsibility have been identified in the application documents for the proposed development, specifically the Moray Firth SAC. Could you submit your position on the applicants' conclusions in the RIAA [APP-047] for the Moray Firth SAC?

Moray Firth SAC is in Scottish territorial waters and solely managed by NatureScot. Given this, and that the bottlenose dolphin population associated with the Moray Firth SAC is a coastal population, we defer to NatureScot regarding this site.

Please contact me with any questions regarding the advice provided.

Yours sincerely,

[Redacted Signature]

Senior Marine Industries Adviser

Email: [Redacted] [jncc.gov.uk](mailto:[Redacted]@jncc.gov.uk)