

**RWE Renewables UK Dogger Bank
South (West) Limited**

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South (East) Limited**

**Dogger Bank South Offshore
Wind Farms**

**Letter of No Impediment (LoNI) for Bats and
Badgers**

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Document Title or Description:	Letter of No Impediment (LoNI) for Bats and Badgers				
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Rev No.	Date	Status/Reason for Issue	Author	Checked by	Approved by
01	July 2025	Submission for Deadline 9	RHDHV	RWE	RWE

1 Introduction

1. The Applicants have obtained Letters of No Impediment (LoNIs) for bats and badgers from Natural England as discussed with the Examining Authority at Issue Specific Hearing 4 of the Dogger Bank South Examination.
2. In response to The Examining Authority's Second Written Questions [PD-022], ENC.2.4, the Applicants advised that Natural England were consulted on a LoNI application for both species in April 2024 and were happy with all information related to badgers but requested further information on potential for roosting bat (see **The Applicants' Responses to ExQ2** [REP5-036]).
3. Natural England have since stated they see no impediment to licences being issued (and for bats, only required if they are found), should the DCO be granted. Please see Appendix A for the LoNI for bats and Appendix B for badgers.
4. The Applicant trust the LoNIs provides the necessary reassurance that the draft licence applications are of the required standard, and there is no impediment to issuing the relevant bat and badger licences in future, should they be required.

Appendix A – LoNI for Bats

Date: 03 July 2025
Our ref: Dogger Bank Offshore Wind Farm
(NATIONALLY SIGNIFICANT INFRASTRUCTURE
PROJECT)



[REDACTED]
Haskoning

Dear [REDACTED]

<p>DRAFT MITIGATION LICENCE APPLICATION STATUS: Draft bat mitigation proposal LEGISLATION: THE CONSERVATION OF HABITATS AND SPECIES REGULATIONS 2010 (as amended) NSIP: Dogger Bank Offshore Wind Farm SPECIES: UK Chiroptera</p>

Thank you for your subsequent draft bat mitigation licence application in association with the above NSIP site, received by the CASC/NEWLS Team on the 1st of July 2025. As stated in our published guidance, once Natural England is content that the draft licence application is of the required standard, we will issue a 'letter of no impediment'. This is designed to provide the Planning Inspectorate and the Secretary of State with confidence that the competent licensing authority sees no impediment to issuing a licence in future, should one be required, based on information assessed to date in respect of these proposals.

Assessment

Following our assessment of the submitted draft application documents, I can confirm that, based on the information and proposals provided, Natural England sees no impediment to a licence being issued (only required if bats are found), should the DCO be granted. However, consideration should be made for additional further surveys to identify hibernation if more significant roost are suspected. Additionally, please ensure that if bats are directly impacted, the following information is included in the formal licence submission.

- Roost location and/or structure
- Species present
- Roost characterisation and where possible approximate numbers impacted
- Detail of any species-specific mitigation (including timings of work) and compensation requirements
- Monitoring strategy should any higher conservation significance roost be identified.

Next Steps

Should the DCO be granted then the mitigation licence application (if required) must be formally submitted to Natural England. At this stage any modifications to the timings of the proposed works, e.g. due to ecological requirements of the species and roost type concerned, must be

made and agreed with Natural England before a licence is granted. Please note that there will be no charge for the formal licence application determination, should the DCO be granted, or the granting of any licence.

If other minor changes to the application are subsequently necessary, e.g. amendments to the work schedule/s then these should be outlined in a covering letter and must be reflected in the formal submission of the licence application. These changes must be agreed by Natural England before a licence can be granted. If changes are made to proposals or timings which do not enable us to reach a 'satisfied' decision, we will issue correspondence outlining why the proposals are not acceptable and what further information is required. These issues will need to be addressed before any licence can be granted.

Full details of Natural England's licensing process with regards to NSIP's can be found at the following link:

http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140605090108/http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/Images/wml-g36_tcm6-28566.pdf

As stated in the above guidance note, I should also be grateful if an open dialogue can be maintained with yourselves regarding the progression of the DCO application so that, should the Order be granted, we will be in a position to assess the final submission of the application in a timely fashion and avoid any unnecessary delay in issuing the licence.

I hope the above has been helpful. However, should you have any queries then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted Signature]

[Redacted Email Address]@naturalengland.org.uk

Annex - Guidance for providing further information or formally submitting the licence application.

Important note: when submitting your formal application please mark all correspondence 'FOR THE ATTENTION OF ((insert name/s here)).

Submitting Documents.

Documents must be sent to the Customer Services Wildlife Licensing (postal and email address at the top of this letter).

Changes to Documents –Reasoned Statement/Method Statement.

Changes must be identified using one or more of the following methods:

- underline new text/strikeout deleted text;
- use different font colour;
- block-coloured text, or all the above.

Method Statement

When submitting a revised Method Statement please send us one copy on CD, or by e-mail if less than 5MB in size, or alternatively three paper copies. The method statement should be submitted in its entirety including all figures, appendices, supporting documents. Sections of this document form part of the licence; please do not send the amended sections in isolation.

Appendix B – LoNI for Badgers

Date: 09 July 2025
Our ref: 2025-71620-SPM-NSIP
(NATIONALLY SIGNIFICANT INFRASTRUCTURE
PROJECT)



(
Haskoning, Terrestrial Ecology Practice Lead)

Sent by e-mail only

Wildlife licensing
Natural England
Horizon House
Deanery Road
Bristol
BS1 5AH
Email:
wildlife@naturalengland.org.uk
Tel: (

Dear (

DRAFT MITIGATION LICENCE APPLICATION STATUS: INITIAL APPLICATION
LEGISLATION: THE PROTECTION OF BADGERS ACT 1992 (as amended)
NSIP: Dogger Bank South Offshore Wind Farm.
SPECIES: Badger *Meles meles*

Thank you for your subsequent draft badger mitigation licence application in association with the above NSIP site, received in this office on the 20th June 2025. As stated in our published guidance, once Natural England is content that the draft licence application is of the required standard, we will issue a 'letter of no impediment'. This is designed to provide the Planning Inspectorate and the Secretary of State with confidence that the competent licensing authority sees no impediment to issuing a licence in future, based on information assessed to date in respect of these proposals.

Assessment

Following our assessment of the resubmitted draft application documents, I can now confirm that, on the basis of the information and proposals provided, Natural England sees no impediment to a licence being issued, should the DCO be granted.

However, please note the following issues have been identified within the current draft of the method statement that will need to be addressed before the licence application is formally submitted. Please do ensure that the Method Statement is revised to include these changes prior to formal submission. For clarity these include:

Application Form

Please include an application form ([A24](#)) when submitting your formal licence application.

The reference number '2025-71620-SPM-NSIP' must be detailed in the Pre-Submission Screening Service text box in section 4. When the licence application is formally submitted, 'No' should be selected for the first draft application box and 'Yes' ticked for the formal application box.

Named Ecologist

The Named Ecologist must have appropriate experience to undertake the licensable methods

requested. Full details of the named ecologist and their experience should be provided within section 11 of the above referenced application form.

Surveys

While Natural England acknowledge that standard badger survey methodologies have been applied, the method statement provides very little data on the surveys. Please include more detail in the formal licence submission.

Please include details of how sett no.15 has been classified as an annex sett as sett no. 8 has also been classified as an annexe.

Please provide details of all badger setts found during the surveys including those that are to be retained.

Given the dynamic nature of badger setts (that they can change in usage, size, status over time), a final walkover survey should be undertaken within 3 months prior to the formal licence being submitted. The Method Statement will need to be amended and updated if badger usage of the site has changed in the interim period.

Figures

Natural England highly recommends providing maps/figures as part of the formal licence application that zoom in on the setts that are proposed to be closed under licence. Each sett entrance must be shown and labelled as active, partially active or disused. Where setts have multiple entrances, each entrance must be numbered. The directions of sett tunnels must also be shown on the figures.

It would be useful to provide figures showing the final design of the scheme with the sett locations highlighted to understand what the areas around the setts will look like when the development has been completed and to consider any post-development impacts to badgers.

We advise providing recent photographs of the setts that are proposed to be closed under licence as part of the formal licence application. If the setts have multiple entrances, we recommend providing photos of all the entrances, particularly if there is uncertainty about whether the sett and/or entrances display signs of being in current use by a badger. For setts with multiple entrances, the photographs should be numbered so that entrances can be identified from the figures showing the location of each sett entrance.

Method for closure of Setts

The proposed methods for closure of the badger setts are in line with best practice.

Please note that any changes to the licence can take up to 6 weeks. This should be worked into any work schedule to avoid delays should new setts be identified during construction.

Compensation

Should any of the sett classifications change during the pre-construction surveys and a main sett is required to be closed to facilitate construction an artificial badger sett will be required as compensation for the welfare of the badgers.

With no main sett being identified during the surveys and all setts listed in the method statement scheduled for closure or potential closure it is uncertain that badgers would have sufficient sett resources available to maintain their welfare needs.

If no setts are to be retained and no alternative setts are located within the impacted clans territory there will be a requirement to provide an artificial badger sett. Badgers cannot be left without a place of shelter and should be left with sufficient resources to maintain themselves.

General Advice (ABS):

Construction of an artificial setts must be complete prior to the exclusion works and there should be evidence that the badgers have found the sett. Evidence could be gained from a variety of monitoring techniques. Attractive bait such as peanuts as well as bedding can be used to assist the badgers locate the artificial sett.

Artificial setts must be constructed:

- in a suitable location,
- within the territory of the affected badger social group
- away from main roads, public rights of way or sources of danger to badgers,
- using materials and in a manner which is sufficiently robust for long-term use by badgers,
- made of materials not harmful to badgers,
- of a size to reflect the importance and extent of the sett to be lost
- provide a dry and well-ventilated (but not draughty) refuge,
- ideally with vegetative cover immediately around the structure.
- with the minimum internal diameter of artificial tunnels, chambers and sett entrances, being 300mm.

NB: it is mentioned several times within the method statement that 'need for a licence has not yet been determined by Natural England.' Please note that it is not Natural England's role to decide if a licence is required, this is the responsibility of the applicant and their ecologist.

Next Steps

Should the DCO be granted then the mitigation licence application must be formally submitted to Natural England. At this stage any modifications to the timings of the proposed works, e.g. due to ecological requirements of the species concerned, must be made and agreed with Natural England before a licence is granted.

If other minor changes to the application are subsequently necessary, e.g. amendments to the work schedule/s then these should be outlined in a covering letter and must be reflected in the formal submission of the licence application. These changes must be agreed by Natural England before a licence can be granted. If changes are made to proposals or timings which do not enable us to meet reach a 'satisfied' decision, we will issue correspondence outlining why the proposals are not acceptable and what further information is required. These issues will need to be addressed before any licence can be granted.

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I hope the above has been helpful. However, should you have any queries then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

Senior Wildlife Officer

Wildlife Licensing – Chargeable Advice and Strategic Casework

Tel: [REDACTED]

E-mail: [REDACTED]

Annex - Guidance for providing further information or formally submitting the licence application.

Important note: when submitting your formal application please mark all correspondence 'FOR THE ATTENTION OF (Cassandra Jackson)'.

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