DBS Offshore Wind

RWE Renewables UK Dogger Bank South (West) Limited

RWE Renewables UK Dogger Bank South (East) Limited

Dogger Bank South Offshore Wind Farms

Position Statement on Kittiwake Compensation Calculations

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Glossary

Term	Definition
Development Consent Order (DCO)	An order made under the Planning Act 2008 granting development consent for one or more Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP).
Dogger Bank South Offshore Wind Farms	The collective name for the two Projects, DBS East and DBS West.
Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)	The process that determines whether or not a plan or project may have an adverse effect on the integrity of a European Site or European Offshore Marine Site.
Kittiwake Strategic Compensation Plan	Document produced as part of The Crown Estates Derogation Case in support of the Round 4 Plan which must be adhered to by Dogger Bank South West, Dogger Bank East and Outer Dowsing through their agreement for lease conditions. The overall objective of the KSCP is "*to detail the development and delivery of strategic compensation to ensure the overall coherence of the UK NSN [UK National Site Network] in relation to kittiwake by identifying suitable measures, providing a pathway to those measures and in turn providing assurance that compensation will be delivered for the impact on kittiwake, subject to refinement during the project level HRA [Habitats Regulations Assessment] process which is required as a matter of law*".
Round 4 Plan	The Fourth Offshore Wind Seabed Leasing Round undertaken by The Crown Estate and adopted in January 2023.
Special Protection Area (SPA)	Strictly protected sites designated pursuant to Article 4 of the Birds Directive (via the Habitats Regulations) for species listed on Annex I of the Directive and for regularly occurring migratory species
The Applicants	RWE Renewables UK Dogger Bank South (East) Limited and RWE Renewables UK Dogger Bank South (West) Limited. The Applicants are themselves jointly owned by the RWE Group of companies (51% stake) and Masdar (49% stake).
The Projects	DBS East and DBS West (collectively referred to as the Dogger Bank South Offshore Wind Farms).

Acronyms

Acronym	Definition
AEoI	Adverse Effect on Integrity
ANS	Artificial Nesting Structure
BTO	British Trust for Ornithology
CIV	Central Impact Value
DBS	Dogger Bank South offshore wind farms
DCO	Development Consent Order
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment
ODOW	Outer Dowsing Offshore Wind
RIAA	Report to Inform Appropriate Assessment
SEP & DEP	Sheringham Shoal and Dudgeon Extension Projects
SoS	Secretary of State
UCI	Upper Confidence Interval

1 Introduction

1. RWE Renewables UK Dogger Bank South East Limited and RWE Renewables UK Dogger Bank South West Limited ('the Applicants') are applying for a single Development Consent Order (DCO) for both the Dogger Bank South (DBS) East and DBS West offshore wind farms (hereafter referred to as 'the Projects').

2. The Applicants submitted as part of their DCO application **Volume 6, Report to Inform Appropriate Assessment** (RIAA) [APP-045], which provides the information necessary for the competent authority to undertake an Appropriate Assessment (AA) to determine if there is any Adverse Effect on Integrity (AEoI) on the UK National Site Network (NSN). The RIAA was updated during the examination to take account of comments received. The final update of relevance to offshore ornithology was **RIAA HRA Part 4 of 4 (Revision 5)** [REP6-008].

3. For kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla* from the Flamborough and Filey Coast Special Protection Area (FFC SPA), the Applicants' **RIAA** [REP6-008] concludes that AEoI cannot be ruled out as a result of predicted collision mortality, when considered in-combination with other offshore wind farms (OWFs). This conclusion is consistent with the outcome of The Crown Estate's Plan Level Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) with respect to FFC SPA kittiwake and the Secretary of State's (SoS) conclusion for recently consented OWF projects (e.g. Hornsea Three, Norfolk Vanguard, Norfolk Boreas, East Anglia One North, East Anglia Two, Hornsea Four and the Sheringham Shoal and Dudgeon Extension Projects (SEP & DEP)). As such, the Applicants have put forward, as part of their consent application, measures to compensate for the predicted impacts of the Projects, which are described in the **Project-Level Kittiwake Compensation Plan (Revision 7)** [REP9-007].

4. For the **Project-Level Kittiwake Compensation Plan (Revision 7)** [REP9-007], the Applicants provided estimates of the compensation quantum required based upon different methodologies which had been accepted on previously consented projects with different ratios applied to account for variable applications of precaution and uncertainty.

5. Concurrently with the examination of the Projects, Natural England commissioned a report by the British Trust of Ornithology (BTO), on behalf of the Collaboration on Offshore Wind Strategic Compensation, to critically review methodologies available for determining compensation quanta for kittiwake (Rhoades *et al.*, 2025). This review was not available to the Applicants until late in the examination period and by the close of the examination, Natural England had not provided a view on its conclusions surrounding the report and advised the Applicants to proceed with a previously established method (Hornsea 3 part 2). The new compensation calculation methodology (hereafter the 'BTO method') was disclosed into examination by Natural England at Deadline 7.

6. The Applicants have not received any formal update from Natural England on their position regarding the BTO method. However, Natural England have provided their opinion of the BTO method to the Secretary of State (SoS) as part of their response to the SoS regarding the Outer Dowsing Offshore Windfarm project (ODOW) determination (Natural England, 2025). Following consultation with the Applicants, Natural England have confirmed that their advice would also be applicable to the Projects.

7. This document provides the compensation figures as derived through the BTO methodology, and summarises the Applicants' current position on compensation quantum calculation methodologies for kittiwake.

2 Implications of BTO review and Natural England Advice

8. In Natural England's response to SoS regarding ODOW (Natural England, 2025) they state that they support the use of the BTO method, however:

> *"Notwithstanding our support of the method proposed by BTO from an ecological standpoint, Natural England are cognisant of the advanced stage at which Outer Dowsing and the other Round 4 Projects are currently, and the risk of causing delays to consent in the context of meeting the 2030 clean power objective. We therefore suggest the Secretary of State (SoS) consider whether it is appropriate or reasonable to request that Outer Dowsing update their calculations of the compensation requirement for kittiwake at this stage in the determination phase, particularly given the range of compensation 'scenarios' already presented by Outer Dowsing (including presentation of different ratios).*
>
> *However, as outlined within our Deadline 3 submission [REP3-071], a higher degree of confidence in the compensation requirement, as a result of the application of a more robust method that considers all relevant demographic features, may justify the use of a less precautionary compensation ratio which, as Rhoades et al notes, has previously been used to account for such uncertainties. This would particularly be the case where the other uncertainties under consideration are taken into account in the calculations used by an Applicant e.g. use of the 95% Upper Confidence Interval (UCI) impact value to account for the potential for impacts to be greater than the Central Impact Value (CIV)."*

9. Based on the above, the Applicants have therefore applied the BTO method to calculate the compensation requirement as one of the figures to be considered by the SoS. These values are presented next to the 'Hornsea 3' and 'Hornsea 4' methodology-derived values for ease of comparison in **Table 2-2**, along with the Projects combined predicted annual mortality in **Table 2-1**.

Table 2-1 Combined Impact of the Projects Based on Mean Collision Risk Modelling Values (95% UCI).

	Annual FFC SPA Apportioned Impact (individuals)	
	Assuming 53% adult birds	Assuming 100% adult birds
DBS East + DBS West	104 (205)	191 (377)

Table 2-2 The Predicted Level of Compensation Required Calculated Using the Hornsea Three, Hornsea Four and BTO Approaches. Note that values have been presented based on different breeding season impacts estimated assuming 53% of birds present were adults and also 100%. Values for 1:1, 2:1 and 3:1 are presented.

	Hornsea Three Approach – numbers of pairs required to offset impact		Hornsea Four Approach – numbers of pairs required to offset impact		BTO method Approach – numbers of pairs required to offset impact	
	Assuming 53% adult birds	Assuming 100% adult birds	Assuming 53% adult birds	Assuming 100% adult birds	Assuming 53% adult birds	Assuming 100% adult birds
DBS East + DBS West (1:1 ratio)	576 (1134)	1056 (2086)	278 (548)	510 (1,007)	915 (1,804)	1,681 (3,317)
2:1 ratio	1,152 (2,268)	2,112 (4,172)	556 (1,096)	1,021 (2,015)	1,830 (3,608)	3,362 (6,634)
3:1 ratio	1,728 (3,402)	3,168 (6,258)	834 (1,644)	1,530 (3,021)	2,746 (5,412)	5,043 (9,951)

10. As per section 1.4.2.3 of **Precaution in the Ornithology Assessment and Implications for Compensation Quantum** [REP3-030] the Applicants consider that precaution should only be applied at a single stage, not multiple times in the quantum calculation process. Using the BTO method (and assuming that 100% adult apportionment is the default requirement which already applies precaution) then using the 95% UCI figure and no compensation ratio gives a compensation requirement of 3,317 pairs. Alternatively, using the mean with a 2:1 ratio gives a near identical requirement of 3,362 pairs. The 2:1 ratio would seem to be acceptable to Natural England if using the BTO method based upon their response to SoS reproduced above, noting that they have not provided a definite steer to SoS of what ratio *should* be used for the DBS Projects.
11. As set out in **Precaution in the Ornithology Assessment and Implications for Compensation Quantum** [REP3-030] there is already a great deal of precaution built into the assessment, (**Volume 6, Report to Inform Appropriate Assessment** (RIAA) [APP-045]) and the Applicants maintain that the mean impact value, rather than the 95% UCI is the appropriate number to use as it is, by definition, the most likely value for bird abundance between the upper and lower confidence intervals. There is currently no precedent for scaling compensation to the 95% UCI and the Applicants consider that to design an ANS for this value would not be appropriate for a mean impact of 104 (or 191 at 100% apportionment) kittiwakes. Given that Natural England have agreed that the BTO methodology is robust, the Applicants do not consider scaling to the upper 95%CI is necessary combined with the application of this methodology.
12. At this late stage in the consenting process, given the progress made on the ANS concept design (see section 4.2 of **Appendix A: Outline Kittiwake Strategic Implementation and Monitoring Plan [document reference 6.2.1.2]** provided at this submission) an introduction of compensation quantum well beyond this would risk severely impacting both the ANS and wider delivery programme and budget.

3 Conclusion

13. The Applicants proposals for kittiwake compensation are:

    - A project-led offshore ANS for which a marine licence was submitted in summer 2025;
    - A second offshore ANS led by ODOW (with capacity for approximately 800 kittiwake nest spaces[1] (ODOW, 2025))
        - The two projects will share nesting spaces to provide reciprocal resilience across the compensation measure (a Memorandum of Understanding has been signed by the two parties which details apportionment of nesting spaces on the respective offshore ANS and provides details of how the collaboration will work in practice),
    - An onshore ANS with an existing capacity of 240 nesting spaces built in 2023 which is already operational and being used by kittiwake if not nested on yet (this contributes towards adaptive management).

14. Together these provide a mature and deliverable compensation package with the onshore ANS already in place.

15. Noting Natural England's position in paragraph 8 on the appropriateness of using the BTO method at this point in the determination process, the Applicants consider that the illustration of the BTO numbers should provide the SoS all the necessary information required to make a decision on kittiwake compensation quantum. The Applicants reiterate the arguments summarised in the **Precaution in the Ornithology Assessment and Implications for Compensation Quantum** [REP3-030] and Applicants' Closing Statements [REP8-042].

[1] Based on Table 4-3 which has a maximum number of breeding pairs of 812 using H3 at a 3:1 ratio, ODOW state that "*the ANS for the Project could be designed to deliver all of this requirement range, with the quantum required dependent on the final decision by the Secretary of State.*"

References

Natural England (2025) Responses to Secretary of State's Consultation 1

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Outer Dowsing Offshore Wind (2025) Offshore Artificial Nesting Structures Evidence Base and Roadmap

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RWE (2025) Appendix 1 - Project-Level Kittiwake Compensation Plan (Revision 7) (Clean) REP9-007

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