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MMO Reference: DCO/2021/00003
Planning Inspectorate Reference: EN010130
Identification Number: 20048765

03 February 2025

Dear [REDACTED],

**Planning Act 2008, GTR4 Limited, Proposed Outer Dowsing Offshore Windfarm Order
Deadline 4 Submission – Summary**

On 02 May 2024, the Marine Management Organisation (the MMO) received notice under section 56 of the Planning Act 2008 (the PA 2008) that the Planning Inspectorate (“PINS”) had accepted an application made by GTR4 Limited (the Applicant) for determination of a Development Consent Order (DCO) for the construction, maintenance and operation of the proposed Outer Dowsing Offshore Wind Farm (the DCO Application) (MMO ref: DCO/2021/00003; PINS ref: EN010130). The DCO includes Deemed Marine Licences (DMLs) in Schedules 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16.

The DCO Application seeks authorisation for the construction, operation and maintenance of Outer Dowsing offshore wind farm (OWF), comprising of up to 100 wind turbine generators together with associated onshore and offshore infrastructure and all associated development (the Project).

This document comprises the summary of MMO comments in respect of the DCO Application submitted in response to Deadline 4.

This written representation is submitted without prejudice to any future representation the MMO may make about the DCO Application throughout the examination process. This representation is also submitted without prejudice to any decision the MMO may make on any associated application for consent, permission, approval or any other type of authorisation submitted to the MMO either for the works in the marine area or for any other authorisation relevant to the proposed development.

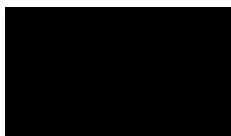


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Yours Sincerely,



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Summary of MMO Deadline 4 (1500 words)

1. Responses to the Examining Authority's (ExA) further written questions and requests for information (Ex12) (PD-020)

1.1 Operational Lifetime

- 1.1.1 The MMO considers that the Environmental Statement (ES) must be clear in the number of years that the assessment has considered operational impacts and the modelling in which the assessment has been based on will be time limited. The MMO notes the high-level summary and modelling in the Applicant's response.
- 1.1.2 The MMO notes the lack of definition of operational lifetime and is reviewing this issue. The MMO welcomes the ExA posing this question and will provide comments at Deadline 5.

1.2 Response to Natural England's concerns regarding herring and sandeel (Q2 FSE 1.1)

- 1.2.1 The MMO would like to remind the ExA that The Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture (Cefas) are not an interested party in this examination as mentioned in REP2-092. Please can all questions be directed to the MMO.
- 1.2.2 The MMO has highlighted the greatest risks in terms of potential significant adverse effects to herring and sandeel in our Deadline 4 response. The MMO defers to Natural England on how adverse impacts to species will affect/reduce prey availability.

1.3 The Applicant's Mid Examination Principle Issues Tracker (Q2 HRA 1.3)

- 1.3.1 The MMO considers all comments to still be 'in discussion' unless otherwise agreed. There has been engagement with the Applicant to discuss issues raised and the MMO continues to provide input into the Statement of Common Ground.
- 1.3.2 The MMO attended productive meetings with the Applicant on 16 and 20 January 2025 to discuss herring matters and the DMLs respectively.

1.4 Use of Noise Abatement Systems (Q2 MM 1.4)

- 1.4.1 The Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) published the Reducing Marine Noise Policy on 21 January 2025. This is included in Annex 1 of our Deadline 4 response.
- 1.4.2 This policy advises that the Applicant considers the adoption of noise reduction methods with robust evidence regarding their efficacy and capabilities. Should an Applicant choose not to apply noise reduction methods, the MMO expects a valid justification.
- 1.4.3 The MMO advises that the Applicant considers the adoption of noise reduction methods in line with the policy.



2. Comments on the Applicant's update to the draft Development Consent Order (DCO)

2.1 DCO/Deemed Marine Licence (DML)

2.1.1 The MMO raised a number of points regarding the DCO/DML. They are the following:

- Article 6 Transfer of Benefit
- Maintain and Materiality
- Determination dates
- Maintenance Reporting
- Stages of construction
- Adaptive Management
- Force Majeure
- Deployment of Cable Protection for 10 Years Post Construction
- Dropped Objects
- Chemicals
- Disposal
- Reporting and engaged agents, contractors and vessels
- Impacts to Herring
- Applicant's changes to condition wording

2.1.2 The MMO commented on amendments and comments on the Deemed Marine Licence/DCO in our Deadline 4 response.

2.1.3 The MMO will review the responses from the Maritime and Coastguard Agency and Trinity House regarding the amended navigation conditions within the DMLs. Further updates may be required to ensure the conditions meet the five tests.

2.1.4 The MMO notes the changes made to the DML by the Applicant and will review comments from relevant stakeholders.



3. Environmental Statement

3.1 General Comments

3.1.1 The MMO welcomes the Applicant's commitment to updating all ES documentation by Deadline 5.

3.2 Coastal Processes

3.2.1 The MMO requests signposting to the assessment of potential impacts from sediment and to provide predictions for secondary scour.

3.2.2 The MMO welcomes the Applicant's commitment to updating the Outline Scour and Cable Protection Management Plan (APP-295) and the Schedule of Mitigation (REP2-040) and will review the changes when submitted.

3.3 Dredge, Disposal and Chemical Use

3.3.1 The MMO considers the mitigation measures within the Schedule of Mitigation (REP2-040) to be appropriate.

3.3.2 The use of plastics in scour protection should be minimised as much as possible and the MMO requests that the Applicant considers the risks of degradation of plastic infrastructures.

3.3.3 The MMO notes the ES chapters and Outline Scour Protection and Cable Protection Management Plan will be updated at Deadline 5.

3.3.4 The MMO has requested an updated chemicals condition in the DML to reflect that submission for approval to the MMO must take place no later than ten weeks prior to use, unless otherwise agreed by the MMO in writing.

3.4 Benthic Ecology

3.4.1 The MMO welcomes the commitment to update the Outline Offshore In-Principle Monitoring Plan (APP-276) at Deadline 4 and will review.

3.4.2 The MMO believes that there is potential of the spread of INNS. The MMO considers that the colonisation of Wind Turbine Generators (WTGs) by Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) should be monitored over time.

3.4.3 The MMO considers the methodology to determine reefiness to be appropriate but the Applicant should commit to taking the patch-based approach when assessing reefiness.

3.4.4 The MMO welcomes the future supply of images of Sabellaria aggregations. The MMO will review and provide comments in due course.

3.5 Fish Ecology

3.5.1 The MMO agrees that additional fisheries-specific monitoring is not required for the purpose of addressing evidence gaps or uncertainties relating to fish populations. However, the MMO has raised other monitoring requirements regarding pre and post construction monitoring of sandeel habitat regarding sediment analysis.

3.5.2 The MMO's position on the requirement for a temporal restriction during the Banks herring spawning season remains unchanged. Following the meeting with the Applicant on 15 January 2025 regarding spatially defining the temporal piling



restriction during this season, the MMO awaits further evidence on this matter from the Applicant in the form of a consultation and discussions remain ongoing.

- 3.5.3 If the evidence from the Applicant relating to the point above is not presented for review before the final examination hearing then the conditions mentioned in Deadline 4 should be captured in the DML. These could then be reviewed/defined post consent subject to necessary supporting evidence from the Applicant.
- 3.5.4 The modelling presented by the Applicant has demonstrated that a temporal restriction on piling at the Offshore Reactive Compensation Platform (ORCP) and South-Eastern Artificial Nesting Structure (ANS) is not required during the Banks herring spawning season. The Applicant acknowledges that the Applicant has supplied revised modelling utilising the 135 decibel (dB) sound exposure threshold to establish the range of effect for behavioural responses in herring. The MMO are awaiting further evidence from the Applicant, in the form of new modelling, again based on the 135dB sound exposure threshold, for potentially spatially refining the temporal piling restriction for part of the Array area. Discussions remain ongoing.

3.6 Shellfish Ecology

- 3.6.1 The MMO considers that all comments relating to shellfish can be considered as resolved and there are no new concerns at this stage.

3.7 Underwater Noise

- 3.7.1 The MMO requests that the Applicant is clear that bubble curtains will need to be deployed for ALL high order detonations, including those under 50 kilograms (kg).
- 3.7.2 The MMO maintains that any Effective Deterrent Range (EDR) should be backed by empirical data and that Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) clearance will be subject to a separate marine licence. If this is recognised, then this comment can be considered closed.
- 3.7.3 The MMO maintains its position that it is not appropriate to use temporary threshold shift (TTS) onset thresholds as a proxy for disturbance. Recommendations on assessing disturbance are included in our Deadline 4 response.
- 3.7.4 The MMO has provided comments on the Offshore In-Principle Monitoring Plan (APP-276), Outline Marine Mammal Mitigation Protocol for Piling Activities (REP2-035) and Outline Marine Mammal Protocol for Unexploded Ordnance Clearance (REP2-037).
- 3.7.5 The MMO requests further information regarding the bathymetry and locations across the modelled domain as this would be helpful.
- 3.7.6 The MMO is still in discussion with the Applicant regarding impacts to fish species.
- 3.7.7 The MMO respectfully disagrees with the Applicant regarding the need for a policy paper to implement Noise Abatement Systems (NAS). It is important to consider its implementation proactively and provide an additional layer of protection to marine life. The MMO will review any updates on this supplied by the Applicant.
- 3.7.8 The MMO commented on the updated ranges for the new Northeast (NE) location and highlighted that the ranges for the new NE location are slightly smaller than those predicted for the previous NE location.



4. Comments on the Applicant's update to the Statements of Commonality of Statements of Common Ground (REP3-036)

4.1.1 The MMO agrees that there are ongoing discussions with the Applicant regarding the Statement of Common Ground. The MMO welcomes the progress made to date in continued discussions and recent meetings held in January.

5. Comments on other submissions received at Deadline 3

5.1.1 The MMO provided comments on other relevant submissions at Deadline 3 regarding Offshore Export Cable Corridor *Sabellaria Spinulosa* Reanalysis and Report (REP3-035), Lincolnshire County Council (REP3-057) and Natural England (REP3-066).

Yours sincerely,

[Redacted Signature]

[Redacted Name]

Marine Licensing Case Officer

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