



# Defence Infrastructure Organisation

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Temple Quay House  
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## By email only

Dear Sir/Madam,

### Planning Act 2008 (as amended)

#### **Application by Xlinks 1 Limited for an Order Granting Development Consent for the Xlinks Morocco – UK Power Project**

Thank you for consulting the Ministry of Defence (MOD) on the above proposed development.

The Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) Safeguarding Team represents the MOD as a consultee in UK planning and energy consenting systems to ensure that development does not compromise or degrade the operation of defence sites such as aerodromes, explosives storage sites, air weapon ranges, technical sites or maritime defence assets and interests.

The XLinks – Morocco Power Project is seeking to construct two converter stations to the immediate west of the existing Alverdiscott 400 kV substation, with associated underground electricity cables to the Cornborough Range (Landfall), North Devon, and offshore cable infrastructure within the UK Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), alongside additional works to facilitate the Proposed Development. This representation has been prepared in response to the 'Update on XLinks' Morocco – UK Power Project' letter, dated 20 January 2025.

### **Offshore Development**

The project will entail the installation of subsea cables and associated infrastructure to link the landfall in the UK out through UK EEZ waters towards Morocco.

The project maps indicate that the route for the offshore cable will pass through or close to safeguarded defence interests which include Navy Exercise Area - X5001 - Southern Fleet Exercise

Area. It will also pass through an area that contains defence maritime navigational interests and assets.

### **Onshore Development**

The project documents state that there will be a high voltage direct current connection from transition joint bays where the offshore development makes landfall, to two independent converter stations before linking into the national grid.

The onshore extent of the project boundary area identified in the submission does not occupy any statutory MOD safeguarding zones. However, it does occupy an area in which military low flying training may be conducted. The onshore boundary area is located within Low Flying Area 2 (LFA 2) in which fixed military aircraft engaged in low flying training may fly as low as 76.2 metres above terrain features. The introduction of any permanent or temporary structures 50 metres or greater in height will need to be reviewed by the MOD to identify if they will have any implications to low flying training activities and identify any mitigation measures that may be necessary.

It is acknowledged that, at this pre-examination stage, detailed designs for the various proposed structures and their locations may not have been finalised, as such these representations are limited to the principle of the development only. The MOD would wish to be consulted at all future stages of this project leading to the finalised development proposals in order to assess for any impacts to defence interests and assets from the development.

The MOD must emphasise that the advice provided within this letter is in response to the data and information detailed in the developer's documents published on the project website as of the date of this letter.

Any variation of the parameters (which include the location, dimensions, form, and finishing materials) detailed may significantly alter how the development relates to MOD safeguarding requirements and cause adverse impacts to safeguarded defence assets or capabilities. If any amendment, whether considered material or not by the determining authority, is submitted for approval, the MOD should be consulted and provided with adequate time to carry out assessments and provide a formal response.

I trust this is clear however should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

*Andy White*

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