

MORGAN AND MORECAMBE OFFSHORE WIND FARMS: TRANSMISSION ASSETS

Strategy for Wildlife Hazard Management Plan F01



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1 Strategy for Wildlife Hazard Management Plan

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1.1 The purpose of this document is to set out the strategy for preparing a wildlife hazard management plan for the Transmission Assets. This document will be used to support ongoing discussions between the Applicants, Blackpool Airport and BAE Systems (“BAE”) with regards to the safeguarding of Blackpool Airport and Warton Aerodrome.
- 1.1.1.2 The document follows on from Issue Specific Hearing 1 (ISH1) where the Applicants confirmed ongoing engagement with Blackpool Airport and BAE to agree a strategy for a wildlife hazard management plan. The Applicants understand that existing bird strike risk assessments, supported by wildlife hazard management plans are in place for Blackpool Airport and Warton Aerodrome. Therefore any additional mitigation measures required as a consequence of the Transmission Assets would become part of these existing plans following the identification of any additional bird strike risk above the level already identified in areas by Warton or Blackpool Airports. The principles of this approach have been verbally agreed with Blackpool Airport. The proposed approach would ensure both airports’ operations were aligned with CAP 772 and ensure bird strike risk at the aerodromes does not increase due to the Transmissions Assets.
- 1.1.1.3 The Transmission Assets are partially located in, and within close proximity to, internationally and nationally important ecological areas, many of which are designated due to the bird species they support. The Applicants are proposing ecological mitigation measures and biodiversity benefit areas (set out in the outline Ecological Management Plan (oEMP) (APP-212) and Biodiversity Benefit Statement (AS-054)) that will upgrade the quality of suitable areas already used by birds that are displaced by temporary and permanent habitat loss and disturbance from the construction of the Transmission Assets. The bird mitigation areas will be designed and managed to ensure that the habitat features within these areas are able to support the bird populations which could be displaced as a result of the Transmission Assets. The wildlife attractant habitat risk assessment at the ecological mitigation, biodiversity benefit areas and construction works areas will be compiled by the Applicants to be assessed by Blackpool Airport and BAE for any potential increase in bird strike risk; and any management measures (as outlined in the Hazard Wildlife Management Plan) to reduce or manage this risk will be applied with agreement by Blackpool and Warton.
- 1.1.1.4 The ecological mitigation areas are identified on the Works Plans – Onshore and Intertidal Part 1 and Part 2 (AS-016 and AS-017, respectively) as follows:
- Work Area 49A49B – permanent mitigation area at Fairhaven Saltmarsh
 - Work Area 35A35B – temporary construction mitigation area at Lytham Moss
 - Work Area 49B – pond creation at Moss Side
 - Work Area 49A – pond creation at the Morgan onshore substation

- Work Area 49A49B – permanent mitigation area south of Newton-with-Scales
- Work Area 35A35B – temporary construction mitigation area at Lea Marsh

1.1.1.5 The Onshore Order Limits also includes areas where habitat creation and enhancement measures are proposed to achieve biodiversity benefit for the Transmission Assets' above ground infrastructure. The biodiversity benefit areas are identified in Figure 1.6 of the Onshore Biodiversity Benefit Statement (AS-054). These are Work Area 44A44B on the Works Plans – Onshore and Intertidal Part 2 (AS-017). The process for provision of further detail on these areas is outlined in Section 1.3.

1.1.1.6 The purpose of the wildlife hazard management plan is to identify measures for managing the wildlife and any potential increase in bird strike risk associated with the Transmission Assets' areas of disturbance due to construction activities, ecological mitigation and biodiversity benefit areas. The Applicants will work with Blackpool Airport and BAE to identify any potential increased bird strike risk and agree management of these areas.

1.1.1.7 The strategy for Transmission Assets' wildlife hazard management plan comprises the following stages, which are described in further detail below:

- Baseline information on the specific species of birds, number of birds (from desktop sources and site-specific surveys) and the distribution of them to agree a baseline so that an understanding of any potential 'increase' associated with the Transmission Assets can be understood. The study area within which any baseline surveys are to be undertaken will be identified and agreed with Blackpool Airport and BAE;
- Provision of site-specific information on the environmental mitigation and biodiversity benefit areas via update of the oEMP (APP-212) to include detailed information on ecological mitigation measures proposed and their objectives (e.g. locations and outline details on proposed enhancements of existing habitat features including consideration of micro-siting possibilities, timing of implementation, supplementary feeding proposals (where applicable) and details on target species);
 - Further information on the site selection process, including the consideration of aviation risks, for the environmental mitigation and biodiversity benefit areas to provide context behind the location and siting. This information will be provided to BA and BAE and submitted into the Transmission Assets Examination as a standalone technical note;
- Review and update of the existing bird strike risk assessment to be undertaken by the airport / aerodrome operator; following a wildlife attractant habitats risk assessment for all on-aerodrome and off-aerodrome areas within the study area to be undertaken by the Transmission Assets. The wildlife attractant habitat risk assessment will identify any bird species which may be attracted to the works areas due to increase in potential food sources, standing water or any other factor which may attract birds.

- Outline Wildlife Hazard Management Plan (to be appended to the oEMP) – targeting Deadline 3.
 - Provision of an indicative (based on early design work on the environmental mitigation and biodiversity benefit areas) wildlife attractant habitats risk assessment to inform review of the existing bird strike risk assessments owned and implemented by Blackpool Airport and Warton Aerodrome.
 - Inclusion of indicative active risk management mitigations to reduce any increased bird strike risk – noting that the Wildlife Hazard Management Plan is only outline at this stage in the Transmission Asset’s development, but will be a live document adjusted as construction plans mature and then subsequent works progress.

1.2 Baseline technical note

- 1.2.1.1 The baseline technical note will consider the baseline bird numbers and how birds currently use the bird survey area. The bird survey area is proposed to comprise the Transmission Assets Order Limits: Onshore (landward of Mean High Water Springs (MHWS)) and the Intertidal Infrastructure Area (excluding the proposed mitigation area at Fairhaven Saltmarsh, Lytham St. Annes) plus a 500 metre (m) buffer, up to Highest Astronomical Tide (HAT). This is illustrated in Figure 4.2 of Volume 3, Figures – Part 3 of 7 (APP-133).
- 1.2.1.2 The Applicants undertook extensive site-specific bird surveys within the bird survey area during 2022 and 2024. The results are reported in the following reports:
- Volume 3, Annex 4.1: Breeding birds technical report (APP-091)
 - Volume 3, Annex 4.2: Wintering and migratory birds – Part 1 and Part 2 (APP-092 and APP-093)
 - Volume 3, Annex 4.3: Intertidal birds technical report (APP-094)
- 1.2.1.3 The survey results were supplemented by desk-based data from groups including Fylde Bird Club, the British Trust for Ornithology, and the Queensway Farmland Conservation Area and Nature Park. Relevant data provided by these groups is included within the reports listed in paragraph 1.2.1.2.
- 1.2.1.4 Drawing on the collated baseline information the Applicants will focus on those species at risk of collision with aircraft. The Applicants propose to group these species according to the following categories:

Table 1.1: Species category groups

Species group	Species
Swans	Mute Swan
	Bewick's Swan
	Whooper Swan

Species group	Species
Geese	Canada Goose
	Greylag Goose
	Pink-footed Goose
Ducks	Shelduck
	Mallard
	Wigeon
	Teal
Waders	Oystercatcher
	Golden Plover
	Lapwing
	Redshank
	Black-tailed Godwit
	Curlew
Gulls	Black-headed Gull
	Common Gull
	Herring Gull
	Lesser Black-backed Gull
	Great Black-backed Gull
Corvids	Magpie
	Jackdaw
	Rook
	Carrion Crow
Pigeons	Feral Pigeon
	Woodpigeon
Starling	Starling
Winter thrushes	Redwing
	Fieldfare

1.2.1.5 These grouping categories are consistent with those used by Blackpool Airport in its existing wildlife hazard management plan. The Applicants will seek agreement from Blackpool Airport and BAE that these species are those which present the risk of collision.

1.2.1.6 The Applicants will present the baseline data for these species (using the survey data presented in the documents listed in paragraph 1.2.1.2). The Applicants will also include any baseline data provided by Blackpool Airport and BAE. The aim of this exercise is to provide an agreed baseline of which

species are at risk of collision with aircraft and the numbers of these species recorded within the vicinity of the Transmission Assets Onshore Order Limits since September 2022.

1.2.1.7 The baseline technical note will also present an overview of how these bird species use the area around the Transmission Assets Onshore Order Limits including:

- the location of the roost sites (based on Natural England data);
- the foraging ranges of these species (noting that not all land within the identified range will be suitable foraging habitat); and
- key concentrations of bird species numbers.

1.2.1.8 Finally, the technical note will consider published data for these species to highlight regional fluctuations in bird numbers and where possible, to provide an understanding of how the species may be affected by climate change.

1.3 Site Selection of the Environmental Mitigation and Biodiversity Benefit Areas

1.3.1.1 The Applicants will also provide a technical note at Deadline 2 that clarifies the site selection process that was followed to identify the Transmission Assets' environmental mitigation and biodiversity benefit areas. This includes the criteria that was applied to identify these areas (such as proximity of the parcel to the location of the impact; the size of land parcel) and how feedback was considered, including consideration of aviation risks. Alongside the description of the site selection process, the Applicants will also set out why each ecological mitigation and biodiversity benefit area was selected.

1.4 Update of the oEMP

1.4.1.1 The oEMP will also be updated to provide further detail on the design and habitat mitigation measures that are proposed for each of the environmental mitigation and biodiversity benefit areas. This will include the specific features provided for the displaced target species and will also consider where other species may be attracted and how this will affect wildlife movement patterns and subsequent wildlife attractant habitats risk assessment in response. Where possible, this will be based on case studies and evidence from other projects. Where appropriate, indicative locations of specific features (e.g. feeding areas and / or scrapes) will be identified. Information will also be provided on the ongoing management measures that will be implemented during the construction and operation of the Transmission Assets (e.g. cutting rotations) following the identification of any elevated bird strike risk (CAP 772 Chapter 4 – Risk Identification. The measures will take into account the guidance within CAP 772 Wildlife hazard management at aerodromes (CAA, 2017) Chapter 5 – Habitat Management). The oEMP will also set out the principles of the ongoing monitoring strategy in relation to the delivery of the ecological mitigation (i.e. not with an aviation

perspective, but whether the ecological mitigation sites are performing ecologically / ornithologically as intended).

1.5 Wildlife hazard management plan(s)

- 1.5.1.1 The Applicants will prepare an outline Wildlife Hazard Management Plan that will take into account the guidance provided in CAP772 (CAA, 2017), the outcome of any bird strike risk assessments undertaken by Blackpool Airport and Warton Aerodrome, and the measures within the existing wildlife hazard management plans for Blackpool Airport and Warton Aerodrome.
- 1.5.1.2 The wildlife hazard management plan will form a new appendix to the oEMP. Blackpool Airport and BAE Systems will be named consultees for the discharge of the wildlife hazard management plan. This will be secured via a new sub-paragraph of Requirement 12 on the face of the draft Development Consent Order.
- 1.5.1.3 The wildlife hazard management plan will explain how the mitigation measures within the oEMP and other construction management plans (e.g. the Code of Construction Practice) will manage the risk of bird strike and the strategy to be agreed for monitoring the effectiveness of these measures, including the duration, frequency, vantage points, and reporting procedures for the monitoring.
- 1.5.1.4 Key to the strategy will be the process for proactive identification of increased risk with implementation of mitigations, reviewing monitoring results and adapting the management measures quickly, where necessary. These adaptive management measures (e.g. changes to ecological mitigation areas layout, maintenance, scaring tactics) will be outlined in a mitigation hierarchy that will form the basis of any response period. The monitoring strategy will also include a commitment for ongoing monitoring post construction at the permanent mitigation areas (with an aviation perspective, as opposed to the monitoring proposed under Section 1.4). Temporary mitigation areas will be reinstated to their previous condition post-construction, as per Requirement 16 of the draft DCO (REP1-008).
- 1.5.1.5 The outline wildlife hazard management plan will form the basis of bespoke wildlife hazard management plans to be secured for Blackpool Airport and BAE (on behalf of Warton Aerodrome) as part of the discharge of Requirement 12 post-consent. This will allow Blackpool Airport and Warton Aerodrome to absorb the Transmission Assets wildlife hazard management plans into their existing plans.

The outline wildlife hazard management plan will also be required to be agreed with Natural England from an ecological mitigation approval perspective.