

# MORGAN AND MORECAMBE OFFSHORE WIND FARMS: TRANSMISSION ASSETS

Annex 3.3 to Applicants' Response to WRs: Response to Natural England's Risk and Issues Log



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Morecambe Offshore Windfarm Ltd**

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## Glossary

Term	Meaning
400 kV grid connection cables	Cables that will connect the proposed onshore substations to the existing National Grid Penwortham substation.
400 kV grid connection cable corridor	The corridor within which the 400 kV grid connection cables will be located.
Applicants	Morgan Offshore Wind Limited (Morgan OWL) and Morecambe Offshore Windfarm Ltd (Morecambe OWL).
Biodiversity benefit	<p>An approach to development that leaves biodiversity in a better state than before. Where a development has an impact on biodiversity, developers are encouraged to provide an increase in appropriate natural habitat and ecological features over and above that being affected.</p> <p>For the Transmission Assets, biodiversity benefit will be delivered within identified biodiversity benefit areas within the Onshore Order Limits. Further qualitative benefits to biodiversity are proposed via potential collaboration with stakeholders and local groups, contributing to existing plans and programmes, both within and outside the Order Limits.</p>
Code of Construction Practice	A document detailing the overarching principles of construction, contractor protocols, construction-related environmental management measures, pollution prevention measures, the selection of appropriate construction techniques and monitoring processes.
Commitment	This term is used interchangeably with mitigation and enhancement measures. The purpose of commitments is to avoid, prevent, reduce or, if possible, offset significant adverse environmental effects. Primary and tertiary commitments are taken into account and embedded within the assessment set out in the ES.
Construction Traffic Management Plan	A document detailing the construction traffic routes for heavy goods vehicles and personnel travel, protocols for delivery of Abnormal Indivisible Loads to site, measures for road cleaning and sustainable site travel measures.
Design envelope	A description of the range of possible elements and parameters that make up the Transmission Assets options under consideration, as set out in detail in Volume 1, Chapter 3: Project Description. This envelope is used to define the Transmission Assets for EIA purposes when the exact engineering parameters are not yet known. This is also referred to as the Maximum Design Scenario or Rochdale Envelope approach.
Development Consent Order	An order made under the Planning Act 2008, as amended, granting development consent.
Direct pipe	A cable installation technique which involves the use of a mini (or micro) tunnel boring machine and a hydraulic (or other) thruster rig to directly install a steel pipe between two points.

Term	Meaning
Environmental Impact Assessment	The process of identifying and assessing the significant effects likely to arise from a project. This requires consideration of the likely changes to the environment, where these arise as a consequence of a project, through comparison with the existing and projected future baseline conditions.
Environmental Statement	The document presenting the results of the Environmental Impact Assessment process.
Evidence Plan Process	A voluntary consultation process with specialist stakeholders to agree the approach to, and information to support, the EIA and Habitats Regulations Assessment processes for certain topics.
Generation Assets	The generation assets associated with the Morgan Offshore Wind Project and the Morecambe Offshore Windfarm include the offshore wind turbines, inter-array cables, offshore substation platforms and platform link (interconnector) cables to connect offshore substations.
Intertidal area	The area between Mean High Water Springs and Mean Low Water Springs.
Intertidal Infrastructure Area	The temporary and permanent areas between MLWS and MHWS.
Landfall	The area in which the offshore export cables make landfall (come on shore) and the transitional area between the offshore cabling and the onshore cabling. This term applies to the entire landfall area at Lytham St. Annes between Mean Low Water Springs and the transition joint bay inclusive of all construction works, including the offshore and onshore cable routes, intertidal working area and landfall compound(s).
Local Authority	A body empowered by law to exercise various statutory functions for a particular area of the United Kingdom. This includes County Councils, District Councils and County Borough Councils.
Local Highway Authority	A body responsible for the public highways in a particular area of England and Wales, as defined in the Highways Act 1980.
Main rivers	The term used to describe a watercourse designated as a Main River under the Water Resources Act 1991 and shown on the Main River Map. These are usually larger rivers or streams and are managed by the Environment Agency.
Marine licence	The Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 requires a marine licence to be obtained for licensable marine activities. Section 149A of the Planning Act 2008 allows an applicant for to apply for 'deemed marine licences' in English waters as part of the development consent process
Maximum design scenario	The realistic worst case scenario, selected on a topic-specific and impact specific basis, from a range of potential parameters for the Transmission Assets.
Mean High Water Springs	The height of mean high water during spring tides in a year.
Mean Low Water Springs	The height of mean low water during spring tides in a year.
Micro-tunnel / micro-tunnelling	A tunnelling technique involving the use of a hydraulic (or other) jacking rig and a mini (or micro) tunnel boring machine to install a concrete tunnel between two points.
Mitigation measures	This term is used interchangeably with Commitments. The purpose of such measures is to avoid, prevent, reduce or, if possible, offset significant adverse environmental effects.



Term	Meaning
Morecambe Offshore Windfarm: Generation Assets	The offshore generation assets and associated activities for the Morecambe Offshore Windfarm.
Morecambe Offshore Windfarm: Transmission Assets	The offshore export cables, landfall, and onshore infrastructure required to connect the Morecambe Offshore Windfarm to the National Grid.
Morecambe OWL	Morecambe Offshore Windfarm Ltd is a joint venture between Zero-E Offshore Wind S.L.U. (Spain) (a Cobra group company) (Cobra) and Flotation Energy Ltd.
Morgan and Morecambe Offshore Wind Farms: Transmission Assets	The offshore export cables, landfall, and onshore infrastructure for the Morgan Offshore Wind Project and the Morecambe Offshore Windfarm. This includes the offshore export cables, landfall site, onshore export cables, onshore substations, 400 kV grid connection cables and associated grid connection infrastructure such as circuit breaker compounds.  Also referred to in this report as the Transmission Assets, for ease of reading.
Morgan Offshore Wind Project: Generation Assets	The offshore generation assets and associated activities for the Morgan Offshore Wind Project.
Morgan Offshore Wind Project: Transmission Assets	The offshore export cables, landfall and onshore infrastructure required to connect the Morgan Offshore Wind Project to the National Grid.
Morgan OWL	Morgan Offshore Wind Limited is a joint venture between bp Alternative Energy Investments Ltd. and Energie Baden-Württemberg AG (EnBW).
National Grid Penwortham substation	The existing National Grid substation at Penwortham, Lancashire.
National Policy Statement(s)	The current national policy statements published by the Department for Energy and Net Zero in 2023 and adopted in 2024.
Offshore booster station	A fixed structure located along the offshore export cable route, containing electrical equipment to ensure bulk wind farm capacity can be fully transmitted to the onshore substations.
Offshore substation platform(s)	A fixed structure located within the wind farm sites, containing electrical equipment to aggregate the power from the wind turbine generators and convert it into a more suitable form for export to shore.
Offshore export cables	The cables which would bring electricity from the Generation Assets to the landfall.
Offshore export cable corridor	The corridor within which the offshore export cables will be located.
Offshore Permanent Infrastructure Area	The area within the Transmission Assets Offshore Order Limits (up to MLWS) where the permanent offshore electrical infrastructure (i.e. offshore export cables) will be located.
Offshore Order Limits	See Transmission Assets Order Limits: Offshore (below).
Offshore substation platform(s)	A fixed structure located within the wind farm sites, containing electrical equipment to aggregate the power from the wind turbine generators and convert it into a more suitable form for export to shore.
Onshore export cables	The cables which would bring electricity from the landfall to the onshore substations.

Term	Meaning
Onshore export cable corridor	The corridor within which the onshore export cables will be located.
Onshore Infrastructure Area	The area within the Transmission Assets Order Limits landward of MHWS. Comprising the offshore export cable corridor from MHWS to the transition joint bay, onshore export cable corridor, onshore substations and 400 kV grid connection cable corridor, and associated temporary and permanent infrastructure including temporary and permanent compound areas and accesses. Those parts of the Transmission Assets Order Limits proposed only for ecological mitigation and/or biodiversity benefit are excluded from this area.
Onshore Order Limits	See Transmission Assets Order Limits: Onshore (below).
Onshore substations	The onshore substations will include a substation for the Morgan Offshore Wind Project: Transmission Assets and a substation for the Morecambe Offshore Windfarm: Transmission Assets. These will each comprise a compound containing the electrical components for transforming the power supplied from the generation assets to 400 kV and to adjust the power quality and power factor, as required to meet the UK Grid Code for supply to the National Grid.
Preliminary Environmental Information Report	A report that provides preliminary environmental information in accordance with the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. This is information that enables consultees to understand the likely significant environmental effects of a project, and which helps to inform consultation responses.
Renewable energy	Energy from a source that is not depleted when used, such as wind or solar power.
Scour protection	Protective materials to avoid sediment being eroded away from the base of the foundations due to the flow of water.
Substation	Part of an electrical transmission and distribution system. Substations transform voltage from high to low, or the reverse by means of electrical transformers.
The Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero	The decision maker with regards to the application for development consent for the Transmission Assets.
Transmission Assets	See Morgan and Morecambe Offshore Wind Farms: Transmission Assets (above).
Transmission Assets Order Limits	The area within which all components of the Transmission Assets will be located, including areas required on a temporary basis during construction and/or decommissioning (such as construction compounds).
Transmission Assets Order Limits: Offshore	The area within which all components of the Transmission Assets seaward of Mean Low Water Springs will be located, including areas required on a temporary basis during construction and/or decommissioning.  Also referred to in this report as the Offshore Order Limits, for ease of reading.
Transmission Assets Order Limits: Onshore	The area within which all components of the Transmission Assets landward of Mean High Water Springs will be located, including areas required on a temporary basis during construction and/or decommissioning (such as construction compounds).

Term	Meaning
	Also referred to in this report as the Onshore Order Limits, for ease of reading.



## Acronyms

Acronym	Meaning
AIS	Air Insulated Switchgear
AOD	Above Ordnance Datum
BCA	Bilateral Grid Connection Agreement
CoCP	Code of Construction Practice
CoT	Project Commitment
CBRA	Cable Burial Risk Assessment
CfD	Contracts for Difference
CMS	Construction Method Statement
CSIP	Cable Specification and Installation Plan
CTMP	Construction Traffic Management Plan
DCO	Development Consent Order
DECC	Department of Energy and Climate Change
Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DESNZ	Department for Energy Security & Net Zero
dML	Deemed Marine Licence
EnBW	Energie Baden-Württemberg AG
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EMP	Environmental Management Plan
EPP	Evidence Plan Process
ES	Environmental Statement
EWG	Expert Working Group
GIS	Gas Insulated Switchgear
HDD	Horizontal Directional Drilling
HGV	Heavy goods vehicle
HNDR	Holistic Network Design Review
HVAC	High Voltage Alternating Current
IALA	International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities
IAQM	Institute of Air Quality Management
LAT	Lowest Astronomical Tide
MCA	Maritime and Coastguard Agency
MCZ	Marine Conservation Zone
MDS	Maximum Design Scenario

Acronym	Meaning
MHWS	Mean High Water Springs
MLWS	Mean Low Water Springs
MMO	Marine Management Organisation
MPS	Marine Policy Statement
MTBM	Mini (or micro) tunnel boring machine
NGESO	National Grid Electricity System Operator
NPS	National Policy Statement
NSIP	Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project
O&M	Operation and Maintenance
OSP	Offshore Substation Platform
OTNR	Offshore Transmission Network Review
PDE	Project Design Envelope
PEIR	Preliminary Environmental Information Report
PPP	Pollution Prevention Plan
PRoW	Public rights of way
SAC	Special Areas of Conservation
SAR	Search and Rescue
SPA	Special Protection Area
SNCBs	Statutory Nature Conservation Bodies
SSSI	Sit of Special Scientific Interest
SWMP	Site Waste Management Plan
TEP	Technical Engagement Plan
TJB	Transition Joint Bay
UK	United Kingdom
UXO	Unexploded Ordnance
WSI	Written scheme of investigation

## Units

Unit	Description
%	Percentage
dB	Decibels
Kg	Kilogram
kHz	Kilohertz

Unit	Description
KJ	Kilojoules
km	Kilometres
km <sup>2</sup>	Kilometres squared
kV	Kilovolt
m	Metres
m <sup>2</sup>	Metres squared
m <sup>3</sup>	Metres cubed
nm	Nautical mile
μPa	micropascal

# 1 The Applicants' submission at Deadline 3 on 07 July 2025

## 1.1 Introduction

1.1.1.1 Following Deadline 1, Morgan Offshore Wind Limited and Morecambe Offshore Windfarm Limited (hereafter, 'the Applicants') have taken the opportunity to review each of the Written Representations (WRs) and post hearing submissions received from stakeholders who registered as Interested Parties in the Examination.

1.1.1.2 Details of the Applicants' response to each of the Written Representations (WRs) and post hearing submissions are set out in the subsequent sections of this document and its annexes.

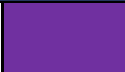
- Principal Areas of Disagreement Summary Statement (PADSS) (section 2.2)
- DCO and dMLs (section 2.3)
- Physical Processes (section 2.4)
- Benthic Subtidal and Intertidal Ecology (section 2.5)
- Fish and Shellfish Ecology (section 2.6)
- Marine Mammals (section 2.7)
- Offshore Ornithology (section 2.8)
- Onshore Ecology (section 2.9)
- Onshore and Intertidal Ornithology (section 2.10)
- Fylde MCZ (section 2.11)
- Benthic Compensation (section 2.12)
- Response to Appendix J2 Stage 2 MCZ Assessment and without prejudice MEEB (Appendix A)

1.1.1.3 The Applicants have numbered the WRs and post hearing submissions in line with the Planning Inspectorate's document library, with subsequent paragraph number, e.g. REP1-001.1, REP1-001.2, etc.

## 2 Comments on NE's Risk and Issue Log

2.1.1.1 The Applicants' comments on Natural England's (NE) Risk and Issue Log are presented in Table 2.2 to Table 2.12.

**Table 2.1: NE's Risks and Issues Log colour coding**

Description	Colour
<b>Purple</b> Note for Examiners and/or competent authority. May relate to DCO/DML	

Description	Colour
<p><b>Red</b></p> <p>Natural England considers that unless these issues are resolved it will have to advise that (in relation to any one of them, and as appropriate) it is not possible to ascertain beyond reasonable scientific doubt that the project will not affect the integrity of an SAC/SPA/Ramsar and/or significantly hinder the conservation objectives of an MCZ and/or damage or destroy the interest features of a SSSI and/or comply fully with the Environmental Impact Assessment requirements.</p> <p>Addressing these concerns <u>may</u> require the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• new baseline or survey data; and/or</li> <li>• significant revisions to baseline characterisation and/or impact modelling and/or</li> <li>• significant design changes; and/or</li> <li>• significant mitigation</li> </ul> <p>In addition, Natural England may use this category to highlight where there is a significant risk that an issue will not be sufficiently addressed within the Examination timescales. Consequently, issues that start out as Amber may progress to Red in the latter stages of the examination.</p>	
<p><b>Amber</b></p> <p>Natural England does not agree with the applicant's position or approach and consider that this could make a material difference to the outcome of the decision-making process for this project.</p> <p>Natural England considers that these matters <u>may</u> be resolved through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provision of additional evidence or justification to support conclusions; and/or</li> <li>• revisions to impact assessment methodology and/or assessment conclusions; and/or</li> <li>• minor to moderate revisions to impact modelling; and/or</li> <li>• well-designed mitigation measures that are adequately secured through the draft DCO/dML and/or</li> <li>• amendments to draft plans</li> </ul> <p>If these issues are not addressed or are unlikely to be resolved by the end of the Examination, then they may become a Red risk as set out above.</p>	
<p><b>Yellow</b></p> <p>Natural England doesn't agree with the Applicant's position or approach. We would ideally have liked this to be addressed but are satisfied that for this particular project it is unlikely to make a material difference to our advice or the outcome of the decision-making process and would not expect these matters to be an ongoing focus of the examination. However, we reserve the right to revise our opinion should further evidence be presented.</p> <p>It should be noted by interested parties that just because these issues/comments are not raised as significant concerns in this instance, it should not be understood or inferred that Natural England would be of the same view in other cases or circumstances. Once a Risk or Issue has been categorised as yellow, Natural England will not make further comment on the matter at subsequent deadlines, unless specifically requested to through ExA Questions. These rows will then be hidden at subsequent deadlines in order to rationalise the risk and issues log.</p>	

Description	Colour
<p><b>Green</b></p> <p>Natural England is in broad agreement with the Applicant's approach and has no significant outstanding concerns.</p> <p>As above, we reserve the right to revise our opinion should new evidence be presented.</p> <p>Once a Risk or Issue has been categorised as green, Natural England will not make further comment on the matter at subsequent deadlines, unless specifically requested to through ExA Questions. These rows will then be hidden at subsequent deadlines in order to rationalise the risk and issues log.</p>	



## 2.2 Principal Areas of Disagreement Summary Statement (PADSS)

Table 2.2: Responses to Principal Areas of Disagreement Summary Statement (PADSS)

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	NE Rel Rep RAG rating and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 3
Taken from NE's Relevant and Written Representations			
Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets - Principal Areas of Disagreement Summary Statement (PADSS)			
NE1	<p><b><u>Development Consent Order (DCO and deemed Marine Licence (dML)</u></b></p> <p>Definition of commence with respect to the offshore works.</p> <p>This definition is linked directly to the definition of offshore preparation works and excludes the works detailed under offshore preparation from the definition of commence. We would note that this definition of commence is different to those used and accepted under a wide number of consented offshore wind projects.</p> <p>The definition of commence and offshore preparations works within the DCO and all three DMLs must be amended.</p> <p>It is possible this issue could be progressed following amendments requested.</p>		<p>Natural England did not provide an update to the PADSS at Deadline 2, therefore the Applicants' response to the Relevant Representations and at Deadline 2 still apply, which is included below for ease of reference:</p> <p>Please see the Applicants' response to row RI_A1 in Table 2.3 of REP2-034.</p> <p>The Applicants and Natural England will be meeting on the 22 July 2025 to review the PADSS and Risks and Issues log with respect to offshore matters, which will allow the parties to provide updated positions at any issue specific hearings in week commencing 28 July and at Deadline 4.</p>
NE2	<p>Duration of submitting pre-construction plans before construction begins.</p> <p>Due to the increasing complexity of construction of large offshore works, the proposed four month consultation period is no longer appropriate.</p> <p>The Applicant should amend the dMLs to allow for documents to be submitted at least six months prior to commencement.</p> <p>It is possible this issue could be progressed following amendments requested.</p>		<p>Natural England did not provide an update to the PADSS at Deadline 2, therefore the Applicants response to the Relevant Representations and at Deadline 2 still apply, which is included below for ease of reference:</p> <p>Please see the Applicants response to row RI_A2 in Table 2.3 of REP2-034.</p> <p>The Applicants and Natural England will be meeting on the 22 July 2025 to review the PADSS and Risks and Issues log with respect to offshore matters, which will allow the parties to provide updated positions at any issue specific hearings in week commencing 28 July and at Deadline 4.</p>
NE3	<p><b><u>Benthic Ecology and Physical Processes</u></b></p> <p>Worst Case Scenario (WCS) during construction, operation and maintenance.</p> <p>Natural England advise that there are a number of potential impacts</p>		<p>Natural England did not provide an update to the PADSS at Deadline 2, therefore the Applicants response to the Relevant Representations and at Deadline 2 still apply, which is included below for ease of reference:</p> <p>The Applicants have responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.41 of their response to Natural England (PDA-014) and have provided detailed responses with respect to the MDS assessed, in RR-1601.B.5 to RR-1601.B.11 (PDA-016) and RR-1601.C.7 to RR-1601.C.18 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).</p>

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	NE Rel Rep RAG rating and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 3
Taken from NE's Relevant and Written Representations			
Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets - Principal Areas of Disagreement Summary Statement (PADSS)			
	<p>both on benthic ecology and physical processes which have not been adequately considered or assessed within the Environmental Statement (ES).</p> <p>Natural England advises that the ES and where relevant, Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) assessment, are updated to consider all potential pathways of effect on intertidal and subtidal benthic habitats.</p> <p>It is possible this issue could be progressed if the Applicant follows SNCB advice.</p>		<p>The Applicants and Natural England will be meeting on the 22 July 2025 to review the PADSS and Risks and Issues log with respect to offshore matters, which will allow the parties to provide updated positions at any issue specific hearings in week commencing 28 July and at Deadline 4.</p>
NE4	<p>Removal of infrastructure at the decommissioning stage.</p> <p>Natural England is concerned that there is currently no commitment to the removal of cable/scour protection at end of project life.</p> <p>Natural England advise that the Applicant should include a commitment to remove cable/scour protection at end of project life and this should be secured within the DCO.</p> <p>It is possible this issue could be progressed if the Applicant follows SNCB advice.</p>		<p>Natural England did not provide an update to the PADSS at Deadline 2, therefore the Applicants response to the Relevant Representations and at Deadline 2 still apply, which is included below for ease of reference:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The Applicants have responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.42 of their response to Natural England (PDA-014). The Applicants would also draw attention to the updated outline Cable Specification and Installation Plan submitted at Deadline 2 (REP2-022), which removed 'rock dump' from the list of cable protection types to be used within the Fylde MCZ.</p> <p>The Applicants and Natural England will be meeting on the 22 July 2025 to review the PADSS and Risks and Issues log with respect to offshore matters, which will allow the parties to provide updated positions at any issue specific hearings in week commencing 28 July and at Deadline 4.</p>
NE5	<p>Lack of cable protection location and design information.</p> <p>There is currently insufficient information on the anticipated location, extent and design of cable protection measures placed along the Export Cable Corridor (ECC). Therefore, we are unable to fully understand the potential impacts of cable protection on sediment transport pathways, particularly within Fylde MCZ.</p> <p>Natural England advise that where possible, further information is provided on the anticipated location, extent and design of cable protection measures. Potential resolution.</p>		<p>Natural England did not provide an update to the PADSS at Deadline 2, therefore the Applicants response to the Relevant Representations and at Deadline 2 still apply, which is included below for ease of reference:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The Applicants have responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.43 of their response to Natural England (PDA-014).</p> <p>The Applicants and Natural England will be meeting on the 22 July 2025 to review the PADSS and Risks and Issues log with respect to offshore matters, which will allow the parties to provide updated positions at any issue specific hearings in week commencing 28 July and at Deadline 4.</p>

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	NE Rel Rep RAG rating and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 3
Taken from NE's Relevant and Written Representations			
Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets - Principal Areas of Disagreement Summary Statement (PADSS)			
	This is subject to the Applicant providing further information on cable protection location and design.		
NE6	<p>Mitigation measures for Section 41 Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 Habitats.</p> <p>Natural England notes that no further mitigation in relation to physical processes or benthic receptors has been proposed. Additionally, there is no consideration for relevant NERC habitats.</p> <p>Natural England advises that impacts to priority habitats listed under Section 41 of the NERC Act (2006) are avoided and due consideration is demonstrated. We advise that relevant Application documents should be updated accordingly, and this is secured within the DCO/DMLs.</p> <p>It is possible this issue could be progressed if the Applicant follows SNCB advice.</p>		<p>Natural England did not provide an update to the PADSS at Deadline 2, therefore the Applicants response to the Relevant Representations and at Deadline 2 still apply, which is included below for ease of reference:</p> <p>The Applicants have responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.44 of their response to Natural England (PDA-014).</p> <p>The Applicants and Natural England will be meeting on the 22 July 2025 to review the PADSS and Risks and Issues log with respect to offshore matters, which will allow the parties to provide updated positions at any issue specific hearings in week commencing 28 July and at Deadline 4.</p>
NE7	<p>Lasting habitat loss/change from the placement of cable protection.</p> <p>Natural England disagrees with the Applicant that 3.04ha of lasting habitat change/loss of subtidal sand and subtidal mud interest features from Fylde MCZ from the placement of cable protection will maintain the conservation objectives of the site.</p> <p>We advise that the Project is likely to cause lasting impacts on benthic features within Fylde MCZ.</p> <p>Every effort should be made to reduce impacts through the adoption of robust mitigation measures.</p>		<p>Natural England did not provide an update to the PADSS at Deadline 2, therefore the Applicants response to the Relevant Representations and at Deadline 2 still apply, which is included below for ease of reference:</p> <p>The Applicants have responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.45 of their response to Natural England (PDA-014). The Applicants' provided a Stage 2 MCZ Assessment, including a without prejudice, in-principle Measures of Equivalent Environmental Benefit (MEEB) Plan, at Deadline 1 (REP1-059).</p> <p>The Applicants and Natural England will be meeting on the 22 July 2025 to review the PADSS and Risks and Issues log with respect to offshore matters, which will allow the parties to provide updated positions at any issue specific hearings in week commencing 28 July and at Deadline 4.</p>
NE8	<p><b><u>Fish and Shellfish Ecology</u></b></p> <p>Long term loss of supporting habitat and potential loss of prey species (sandeel).</p> <p>Dynamics between predator prey relationships for piscivorous birds and sand eel could be impacted due to loss of prey species.</p>		<p>Natural England did not provide an update to the PADSS at Deadline 2, therefore the Applicants response to the Relevant Representations and at Deadline 2 still apply, which is included below for ease of reference:</p> <p>The Applicants have responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within the response RR-1601.46 (PDA-014).</p> <p>The Applicants and Natural England will be meeting on the 22 July 2025 to review the PADSS and Risks and Issues log with respect to offshore matters, which will allow the parties to provide updated positions at any issue specific hearings in week commencing 28 July and at Deadline 4.</p>

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	NE Rel Rep RAG rating and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 3
Taken from NE's Relevant and Written Representations			
Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets - Principal Areas of Disagreement Summary Statement (PADSS)			
	Natural England advise that the loss of prey species (sandeel) due to long term habitat loss (from scour/cable protection) of supporting habitat should be assessed and updated in the final ES chapter.  It is possible this issue could be progressed with further provision of information.		
NE9	Ribble Estuary MCZ assessment.  Natural England do not agree that smelt should be screened out, further assessment is required as the activity may be capable of affecting the protected feature of the MCZ. There is potential for electro-magnetic field (EMF) to cause barrier effects that hinder smelt movements in and out of the estuary.  Complete an assessment on potential EMF impacts.		Natural England did not provide an update to the PADSS at Deadline 2, therefore the Applicants response to the Relevant Representations and at Deadline 2 still apply, which is included below for ease of reference:  The Applicants have responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within the response RR-1601.47 (PDA-014).
NE10	<b><u>Marine Mammals</u></b>  UXO clearance  UXO clearance is included as a licenced activity in the DCO/marine licence (which includes high order clearance).  We advise that a separate licence is sought for UXO clearance due to the lack of information available and the over precaution that must be incorporated into the impact assessment at this stage.  Natural England advise that UXO clearance should be authorised under a standalone marine licence post consent and removed from the draft DCO.  It is possible this issue could be progressed by removing UXO clearance from the DCO/DML.		Natural England did not provide an update to the PADSS at Deadline 2, however this point has been raised by Natural England at Deadline 2 and the Applicants have responded at row RI_A5 below. The Applicants and Natural England will be meeting on the 22 July 2025 to review the PADSS and Risks and Issues log with respect to offshore matters, which will allow the parties to provide updated positions at any issue specific hearings in week commencing 28 July and at Deadline 4.
NE11	<b><u>Offshore Ornithology</u></b>  No assessment of long-term loss of habitat supporting prey species for the offshore ornithological features of Liverpool Bay Special Protection Area (SPA).		Natural England did not provide an update to the PADSS at Deadline 2, therefore the Applicants response to the Relevant Representations and at Deadline 2 still apply, which is included below for ease of reference:  Please see the Applicants' response to RR-1601.49 in PDA-014.  The Applicants and Natural England will be meeting on the 22 July 2025 to review the PADSS and Risks and Issues log with respect to offshore matters, which will allow the parties to provide updated positions at any issue specific hearings in week commencing 28 July and at Deadline 4.

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	NE Rel Rep RAG rating and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 3
Taken from NE's Relevant and Written Representations			
Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets - Principal Areas of Disagreement Summary Statement (PADSS)			
	<p>The Applicant has not screened in long term loss of habitat supporting prey species (due to scour/cable protection) for the offshore ornithological features of Liverpool Bay SPA as an impact pathway for Likely Significant Effect (LSE).</p> <p>The Applicant should include an assessment of the indirect effect of long-term habitat loss due to scour/cable protection for prey species of the offshore ornithological features of Liverpool Bay SPA.</p> <p>It is possible this issue could be progressed with further provision of information.</p>		
NE12	<p>"Assessment and conclusion of no adverse effect on site integrity for the red-throated diver and common scoter features of Liverpool Bay SPA.</p> <p>Natural England do not agree that an adverse effect on site integrity for the red-throated diver and common scoter features of Liverpool Bay SPA can be ruled out due to the displacement and disturbance impacts of the Project in-combination with other projects during the sensitive winter period.</p> <p>The Project's impact can be removed by the Applicant committing to a full restriction on construction activity within the wintering months of November-March inclusive.</p> <p>Potential resolution.</p> <p>This is subject to the Applicant bringing forward an appropriate seasonal restriction to address the potential impacts to the species.</p>		<p>Please see the Applicants' response to RR-1601.50 in PDA-014. Please also see the Applicants response to row NE19.</p> <p>The 'Measures to minimise disturbance to marine mammals and rafting birds from vessels' (REP2-025) and Commitment Register (REP2-010) and draft DCO (REP2-004) submitted at Deadline 2, detail the Project's commitment to seasonal restrictions within the Liverpool Bay SPA. In summary, the commitment is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CoT111: Development of, and adherence to, an offshore Environmental Management Plan(s) which will include Measures to minimise disturbance to marine mammals and rafting birds from vessels. The Measures to minimise disturbance to marine mammals and rafting birds from vessels includes timing restriction on all offshore export cable installation activities between November and March (inclusive) within the original boundary of the Liverpool Bay/Bae Lerpwl SPA (as designated in 2010) and including a 2 km buffer, unless otherwise agreed with the MMO, in consultation with Natural England.</li> </ul> <p>The commitment is secured via DCO Schedule 14 (Marine Licence 1: Morgan Offshore Wind Project Transmission Assets) Part 2 – Condition 18(1)(f) (Pre-construction plans and documentation) and DCO Schedule 15 (Marine Licence 2: Morecambe Offshore Wind Farm Transmission Assets), Part 2 – 18(1)(f) (Pre-construction plans and documentation).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CoT130: No clearance of unexploded ordnance (UXO) will be undertaken within Liverpool Bay/Bae Lerpwl SPA between November and March (inclusive).</li> </ul> <p>This is secured via DCO Schedule 14 (Marine Licence 1: Morgan Offshore Wind Project Transmission Assets) Part 2 – Condition 18(1)(f) (Pre-construction plans and documentation) and DCO Schedule 15 (Marine Licence 2: Morecambe Offshore Wind Farm Transmission Assets), Part 2 – 18(1)(f) (Pre-construction plans and documentation)</p> <p>Additionally, the following measures are included in the Measures to Minimise Disturbance to Marine Mammals and Rafting Birds from vessels (REP2-025) and applied, wherever possible, during transit through Liverpool Bay/Bae Lerpwl SPA and out to 2 km from the Liverpool Bay/Bae Lerpwl SPA boundary to and from port and works areas, in line with Natural England's Best Practice Protocol for Vessels in Red Throated Diver SPAs guidance on selecting routes that avoid known aggregations of birds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>maintaining direct transit routes (to minimise transit distances through areas used by divers); and</li> <li>avoidance of over-revving of engines (to minimise noise disturbance).</li> </ul> <p>Specific measures to minimise disturbance to rafting birds (specifically common scoter and red-throated diver as features of the Liverpool Bay/Bae Lerpwl SPA) will also be implemented as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the over-wintering period when red-throated diver and common scoter will most likely to be present in highest numbers in the areas of the Transmission Assets is from 1 November to 31 March; therefore, in order to minimise disturbance to ornithological receptors, offshore export cable installation will not take place from 1 November to 31 March (inclusive) within the Liverpool Bay/Bae Lerpwl SPA 2010 Boundary including a 2 km buffer unless otherwise agreed with the MMO, in consultation with Natural England.</li> </ul>



ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	NE Rel Rep RAG rating and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 3
Taken from NE's Relevant and Written Representations			
Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets - Principal Areas of Disagreement Summary Statement (PADSS)			
NE13	<p><b><u>Onshore Ecology and Nature Conservation</u></b></p> <p>Impacts to sand dune Lytham St Annes SSSI features.</p> <p>Issues remain around certain features particularly changes to the water table, dewatering effects during construction using Transition Joint Bays (TJB) and the impacts on dune slack vegetation.</p> <p>The Applicant needs to more thoroughly assess the impacts on dune slack vegetation and consider a more precautionary approach with regards to the recoverability / resilience of the dune slacks relating to dewatering effects.</p> <p>It is possible this issue could be progressed with further provision of information including additional monitoring of water table pre- and post- construction and sufficient baseline data.</p>		<p>Further information has been provided to supplement the Applicants' response at Procedural Deadline A RR-1601.G 1601.G.1 (PDA-014 and PDA-021). This information includes an Outline Hydrogeological Risk Assessment (S_D3_6) informed by existing hydrogeological information from desk study information, Ground Investigation data, and National Vegetation Classification and Phase 1 habitat survey data presented in the Volume 3 Annex 3.3: Phase 1 Habitat, National Vegetation Classification and Hedgerow of the ES (REP2-014).</p> <p>The Applicants arranged a follow-on meeting with Natural England to share and discuss the concerns in relation to the Lytham St. Annes Dunes. This took place on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2025. The Applicants have incorporated Natural England's comments into the production of the Outline Hydrogeological Risk Assessment (S_D3_6).</p> <p>The Applicants have made a commitment (CoT128 of Volume 1, Annex 5.3: Commitments Register of the ES (REP2-010)) to undertake hydrogeological risk assessment(s) in relation to the crossing of the Lytham St Annes Dunes SSSI. These assessment(s) will be used to inform the detailed site-specific crossing design(s) for the installation of the offshore export cables beneath Lytham St Annes Dunes SSSI. This is secured by Requirement 12 of Schedules 2A and 2B of the draft DCO (REP2-004).</p>
NE14	<p>Additional information required on Direct Pipe Trenchless Technique to be able to fully assess the potential impacts to Lytham St. Annes Dunes SSSI.</p> <p>Insufficient detail on Direct Pipe, to fully assess the potential impacts on the SSSI.</p> <p>No inclusion of an outline contingency plan and no assessment of the Worst Case Scenario (WCS) i.e. no other option assessed if Direct Pipe is not an option.</p> <p>Provide further detail on the Direct Pipe methodology to be able to fully assess the potential impacts to the SSSI.</p> <p>Assess the WCS including a contingency should Direct Pipe not be possible.</p> <p>It is possible this issue could be progressed with further provision of information."</p>		<p>The Applicants have responded to Natural England's comments regarding dewatering in Row ID NE 13 above.</p> <p>The Applicants have provided a detailed response regarding St Annes Old Links Golf Course BHS previously within RR-1601 1601.53 (PDA-014).</p>



ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	NE Rel Rep RAG rating and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 3
Taken from NE's Relevant and Written Representations			
Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets - Principal Areas of Disagreement Summary Statement (PADSS)			
NE15	<p>Lack of sand dune habitat survey effort.</p> <p>From the information provided, Natural England advise that there is insufficient evidence for us to be able to advise on the scale and significance of impacts to dune slacks at St. Annes Old Links Golf Course BHS.</p> <p>The Applicant needs to undertake detailed dune slack surveys across the Study Area to inform the EIA. These surveys need to be undertaken during summer 2025.</p> <p>It is possible this issue could be progressed with further imminent survey effort and provision of information.</p>		<p>The Applicants have provided a detailed response regarding St Annes Old Links Golf Course BHS previously within RR-1601 1601.53 (PDA-014). The Applicants will be undertaking an updated NVC survey in July 2025 (subject to landowner permission). The survey report will be submitted into the examination.</p>
NE16	<p>Lack of Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) survey effort.</p> <p>From information provided, Natural England advise that there is insufficient evidence for us to be able to advise on the scale and significance of impacts to soils.</p> <p>The Applicant needs to undertake a detailed ALC and soil survey of the agricultural land across the full Study Area to inform the EIA. These surveys need to be undertaken during summer 2025. Natural England advises that the commitment to restore land needs to be secured in the DCO.</p> <p>It is possible this issue could be progressed with further imminent survey effort and provision of information.</p>		<p>The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.6 (PDA-021) and within the Applicants' response to Hearing Action Points due at Deadline 1 (REP1-037). The Applicants maintain their position that further survey is not required.</p> <p>The Applicants note that Natural England have stated within their Deadline 2 Cover Letter (REP1-091) that they are reviewing this document and will be providing an update to the Risk and Issue Log at Deadline 3.</p>
NE17	<p>Developing on areas of restorable peat.</p> <p>There is insufficient information to ascertain whether the proposal will have direct or indirect impacts on deep peat. Provide further evidence to show if restorable peat is present. This should include peat data for the route of the cables and include soil cores in the areas mapped as deep peat England Peat Status</p>		<p>The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.7 (PDA-021).</p>

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	NE Rel Rep RAG rating and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 3
Taken from NE's Relevant and Written Representations			
Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets - Principal Areas of Disagreement Summary Statement (PADSS)			
	Greenhouse Gas and Carbon Storage. It is possible this issue could be progressed with further provision of information.		
NE18	<p><b><u>Onshore and Intertidal Ornithology</u></b></p> <p>Impacts to Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA/Ramsar site intertidal waterbirds due to the landfall works.</p> <p>Natural England advise that the proposed level of restriction to the landfall works is insufficient to avoid an adverse effect on the Ribble &amp; Alt Estuaries SPA/Ramsar site.</p> <p>The Applicant should develop comprehensive seasonal restrictions for the key intertidal species and months of the year. These should be underpinned by updated HRA conclusions based on data from site specific surveys, and a more thorough assessment of the potential habitat loss/disturbance effects and their implications for SPA/Ramsar site species.</p> <p>Potential resolution</p> <p>This is subject to the Applicant bringing forward an appropriate level of seasonal restriction to address the potential impacts to the species.</p>		<p>The Applicants have responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.56 of their response to Natural England (PDA-014).</p> <p>The Applicants would also draw attention to the update to CoT129 (Volume 1, Annex 5.3: Commitments Register (REP2-010)) which strengthens the working restrictions within the intertidal area to a full restriction between Nov – Mar. This will remove all impacts for intertidal birds over the sensitive winter period (Nov – Mar). The Applicants also provided additional information on impacts to the passage features via a technical note (REP2-045).</p>
NE19	<p>Lack of an in-principle derogations case for impacts to intertidal SPA/Ramsar site waterbirds.</p> <p>Unless effective seasonal restrictions for the wintering and passage periods can be committed to, we advise that an in-principle derogations case will need to be developed. This would need to demonstrate no alternative solutions to delivering the public interest objectives of the project and Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI).</p> <p>A robust in-principle derogations case should be submitted into the Examination, including a demonstration that a greater degree</p>		<p>The Applicants have responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.57 of their response to Natural England (PDA-014) with further information in NE18 above.</p> <p>The Applicants and Natural England can confirm that the parties met on 28 April 2025 to discuss potential ornithological impacts associated with the Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA/Ramsar site and Liverpool Bay SPA. Following on from the meeting, the Applicants prepared further information to aid Natural England agreeing that there are no Adverse Effects on Integrity of the Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site and Liverpool Bay SPA.</p> <p>The Applicants have made the commitment CoT129 (Volume 1, Annex 5.3: Commitments Register (REP2-010)) which strengthens the working restrictions within the intertidal area to a full restriction between Nov – Mar. This will remove all impacts for intertidal birds over the sensitive winter period (Nov – Mar). The Applicants also provided additional information on impacts to the passage features via a technical note (REP2-045). Therefore the Applicants consider that an in-principal derogation case is not required for Liverpool Bay SPA or the Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA/Ramsar Site.</p>

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	NE Rel Rep RAG rating and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 3
Taken from NE's Relevant and Written Representations			
Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets - Principal Areas of Disagreement Summary Statement (PADSS)			
	<p>of seasonal restriction is not achievable, and a far more detailed submission regarding the installation and management of the compensatory measures.</p> <p>Potential resolution.</p> <p>This is subject to the Applicant providing an in-principle derogations case demonstrating that there are no alternative solutions to delivering the project's objectives, including a greater degree of seasonal restriction, and a detailed proposal for compensatory measures."</p>		
NE20	<p>"Impacts to Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA/Ramsar terrestrial waterbirds.</p> <p>Natural England advise that there is not currently enough information within the Application to rule out impacts for wintering, passage and terrestrial features of Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA/Ramsar site.</p> <p>We require further clarity from the Applicant on the following aspects: HRA conclusions should be based on data from site specific surveys, habitat loss and its implications for SPA/Ramsar site species should be further quantified, proposed mitigation areas need further justification on their appropriateness.</p> <p>Potential resolution.</p> <p>This is subject to the Applicant providing further information to support their HRA conclusions, consideration of spatial scheduling to reduce the level of impact, and greater detail on the proposed mitigation habitats."</p>		<p>The Applicants have responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.58 of their response to Natural England (PDA-014).</p> <p>The Applicants are currently engaging with Natural England and are committed to providing enough detail to satisfy Natural England that there will be no adverse effects on site integrity for the Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA/Ramsar terrestrial waterbirds. Information submitted at Deadline 2 included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Applicants have provided Natural England with noise modelling information and information regarding the proposed construction accesses to the north of Newton Marsh SSSI. The Applicants submitted a technical note on Newton Marsh SSSI and River Ribble Crossing (REP2-044) at Deadline 2.</li> <li>Updated Outline Ecological Management Plan (REP2-018) which contains further details on the Lytham Moss and Newton with Scales mitigation areas.</li> </ul>
NE21	<p>Mitigation of impacts to Newton Marsh SSSI.</p> <p>Impacts to Newton Marsh SSSI have not been sufficiently assessed. There is minimal information on what works will take place in close proximity to this site and how the work will be managed to not affect the site.</p>		<p>The Applicants have responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.59 of their response to Natural England (PDA-014).</p> <p>The Applicants have provided Natural England with noise modelling information and information regarding the proposed construction accesses to the north of Newton Marsh SSSI. The Applicants submitted a technical note on Newton Marsh SSSI and River Ribble Crossing (REP2-044) at Deadline 2.</p>

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	NE Rel Rep RAG rating and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 3
Taken from NE's Relevant and Written Representations			
Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets - Principal Areas of Disagreement Summary Statement (PADSS)			
	Natural England advise that further consideration of Newton Marsh SSSI is included and updated within the assessment. Further justification should be provided on how the Applicant has concluded no risk to the site and what mitigation measures might be implemented.  It is possible this issue could be progressed with further provision of information.		
NE22	<p><b><u>Fylde MCZ</u></b></p> <p>MCZ assessment and Measures of Equivalent Environmental Benefit (MEEB).</p> <p>Natural England do not agree with the Applicants conclusion of no likelihood of hindering the conservation objectives of Fylde MCZ, which has been designated for subtidal sand and subtidal mud. It is our opinion that the impact on Fylde MCZ will be long term and will alter the extent of the physical attributes and distribution of biological communities supported by these features.</p> <p>Natural England advise that every effort should be made to reduce the impacts through the adoption of robust mitigation measures, including commitments to remove infrastructure at the decommissioning phase.</p> <p>Natural England advise that the MCZ assessment should proceed to a stage 2 assessment and provide a without prejudice MEEB case.</p> <p>Unless the Applicant's position changes, it is unlikely that there will be agreement between the Applicant and Natural England during examination on this issue.</p>		<p>The Applicants have responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.45 of their response to Natural England (PDA-014). The Applicants' provided a Stage 2 MCZ Assessment, including a without prejudice, in-principle Measures of Equivalent Environmental Benefit (MEEB) Plan, at Deadline 1 (REP1-059). Please also see the Applicants response to row NE04.</p> <p>The Applicants and Natural England will be meeting on the 22 July 2025 to review the PADSS and Risks and Issues log with respect to offshore matters, which will allow the parties to provide updated positions at any issue specific hearings in week commencing 28 July and at Deadline 4.</p>

## 2.3 Risk and Issues Log – DCO and dMLs

Table 2.3: Responses to questions regarding the DCO and dMLs.

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 2	NE comment at Deadline 2 (Consultation, actions, progression)	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants' comment at Deadline 3
RI_A1	The definition of commence and offshore preparations works within the DCO and all three DMLs must be amended by the Applicant to exclude all works except pre-construction surveys to inform the construction plans and mitigation.		<p>The Applicants refer Natural England to the updated draft Development Consent Order (DCO) submitted at Deadline 1 (REP1-008) which incorporates its suggested amends to the definition of "commence" in Article 2 of the draft DCO and each of the offshore deemed marine licences (DMLs) at Schedules 14 and 15 of the draft DCO (REP1-008).</p> <p>The Applicants note that no change is necessary to the definition of "commence" in the River Ribble DMLs at Schedules 16 and 17 of the draft DCO (REP1-008). The Applicants have explained the amendments made to these definitions in the Schedule of Changes to the draft DCO submitted at Deadline 1 (REP1-066).</p> <p>Accordingly, the Applicants confirm that the definition of "offshore site preparation activities" has been deleted in Article 2 and each of the DMLs at Schedules 14 and 15 of the draft DCO (REP1-008).</p>	Resolved: NE welcomes the updated wording for the definition of "commence" in Article 2 (a) of the DCO and dMLs 1 and 2.		The Applicants welcome the decision to resolve this issue at Deadline 2.
RI_A2	Due to the increasing complexity of construction of large offshore works, we advise that six months is considered an appropriate period prior to construction, not four months as stated in Schedule 14 and 15 Part 2 Condition 19(10, [APP-005].		The Applicants refer Natural England to Condition 19(1) of the offshore DMLs at Schedules 14 and 15 of the updated draft DCO submitted at Deadline 1 (REP1-008), which incorporates this amendment. This is noted in the Schedule of Changes to the draft Development Consent Order submitted at Deadline 1 (REP1-066).	Resolved: NE welcomes the update to the DCO Schedules 14 and 15 Part 2 Condition 19 (1) requiring pre-construction documentation to be submitted at least six months prior to commencement.		The Applicants welcome the decision to resolve this issue at Deadline 2.
RI_A3	The definition of 'maintain' within the DCO and schedules 14-17 of the deemed Marine Licences (dML) restricts work that is materially different or has materially different impacts. The Applicant should amend the wording to ensure maintenance works do not lead to impacts in excess of those assessed within the ES.		<p>The Applicants refer Natural England to the updated draft DCO submitted at Deadline 1 (REP1-008) which incorporates the proposed amendments to the definition of "maintain" in Article 2 and the offshore DMLs at Schedules 14 and 15 of the draft DCO (REP1-008). This is noted in the Schedule of Changes to the draft DCO submitted at Deadline 1 (REP1-066).</p> <p>The Applicants note that no change is necessary to the definition of maintain in the River Ribble DMLs at Schedules 16 and 17 of the draft DCO (REP1-008).</p>	Resolved: NE welcomes the updated wording for the definition of "maintain" in Article 1, Part 1 of the draft DCO and in Article 1, Part 1 of each of the dMLs at Schedules 14-17.		The Applicants welcome the decision to resolve this issue at Deadline 2.



ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 2	NE comment at Deadline 2 (Consultation, actions, progression)	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants' comment at Deadline 3
RI_A4	The Applicant should remove the definition of Natural England in Article 2 (1) [APP-005] and replace with a definition of Statutory Nature Conservation Body (SNCB), all references to Natural England throughout the DCO and DML (and Schedules) should be amended to state the relevant SNCB.		The Applicants refer Natural England to section RR-1601.A.5 of their response to Natural England – Appendix A (PDA-015). The Applicants consider that the tailpiece to the definition 'or any successor body to its functions' is sufficient to future proof against any changes to a statutory body. In the Applicants' experience, the use of 'Natural England' rather than relevant Statutory Nature Conservation Body is clearer for the relevant local planning body and avoids any uncertainty as to which nature conservation body should be consulted.	No change.		The Applicants have removed the definition of Natural England and instead now use the definition of Statutory Nature Conservation Body throughout the draft DCO (C1/F05).
RI_A5	The Applicant should amend [APP-005] Schedule 2A Table 3 of the DCO to include maximum number and size of UXOs to remove using high order detonations. This should also be updated in Schedule 2B table 4 and in Schedules 14 and 15. If the information required to undertake a full assessment is not yet available, UXO clearance should not be included as a licensed activity in the DCO - a standalone Marine Licence should be sought post-consent from the MMO.		<p>The Applicants confirm that high order unexploded ordnance clearance is not a licensable activity under the offshore DMLs at Schedules 14 and 15 of the draft DCO (REP1-008).</p> <p>The Applicants refer Natural England to the updated draft DCO submitted at Deadline 1 (REP1-008) which incorporates amendments to remove "high order unexploded ordnance clearance" from the offshore DMLs at Schedules 14 and 15 of the draft DCO (REP1-008). This is noted in the Schedule of Changes to the draft DCO submitted at Deadline 1 (REP1-066). Conditions 20(7) of Schedules 14 and 15 of the draft DCO (REP1-008) specify the total number of low order unexploded ordnance clearance which are authorised under each offshore DML and further, condition 20(8) of the same confirms that no high order unexploded ordnance clearance is permitted.</p> <p>The Applicants therefore do not consider it necessary to amend Table 3 at Requirement 2 of Schedules 2A and 2B of the draft DCO (REP1-066).</p>	No change: The Applicant has proposed to remove high order unexploded ordnance (UXO) detonations and restrict the project to low order detonations. NE maintains its position that UXO detonation should be subject to a separate marine licence post consent, regardless of whether the removal is low or high order. Further, that the maximum number of detonations (low or high order), should be recorded on any consent granted. However, without prejudice to our position, we accept that low order removal is preferred. Additionally, whilst we welcome the inclusion of the maximum number of UXO's to be removed by low order, further information on how this number was derived should be provided.		<p>The Applicants acknowledge Natural England's 'without-prejudice' reference for restricting UXO clearance to low order methods only, as set out in the draft DCO (REP2-004). The Applicants understand that Natural England welcome the inclusion of a maximum number of UXOs to be cleared by low order methods in the draft DCO (REP2-004).</p> <p>The maximum number of UXOs likely to require clearance was established via a site-specific desktop study, which was commissioned for the Transmission Assets. This desktop study was undertaken to estimate potential UXO to be cleared (as set out under paragraph 3.12.3.3 of Volume 1, Chapter 3: Project description (REP2-008)), and considered multiple aspects such as past UXO quantities seen on similar projects, geophysical data available for the project, the historic use of project area and location of landfalls, ports/harbours, and carried out a risk assessment for the project. The Applicants consider therefore this represents a robust site-specific baseline to identify potential UXOs, prior to more detailed site investigation surveys being undertaken post consent.</p> <p>The Applicants consider that it is appropriate and justified to include low order UXO clearance activities within the offshore DMLs at Schedules 14 and 15 of the draft DCO (REP2-004). This has been assessed through the EIA and relevant controls are secured through Condition 20 (low order unexploded ordnance clearance) of Schedules 14 and 15 of the draft DCO (REP2-004). Detailed Marine Mammal Mitigation Protocols (MMMPs) will be developed and implemented in accordance with the Outline MMMP to reduce the risk of injury to marine mammals and provide for the use of low order UXO clearance only. These MMMPs must be approved by the MMO in consultation with Natural England as the "relevant statutory nature conservation body" and the MCA, meaning that Natural England will have appropriate oversight of any licensed UXO clearance activities. All low order UXO clearance activities must be undertaken in accordance with the approved documents.</p> <p>This is secured by CoT64 of the Commitments Register (REP2-010). The MMMPs will require implementation of a mitigation hierarchy for UXO clearance, prioritising avoidance of UXOs and the use of low order techniques. However, avoidance may not always be possible, depending on the circumstances surrounding each UXO, in which case the Applicants consider it necessary for low order UXO to be authorised under each of the offshore DMLs at Schedules 14 and 15 of the draft DCO (REP2-004). If</p>



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						high order UXO clearance is required, a separate marine licence will be applied for and will include consideration of secondary mitigation measures such as Noise Abatement Systems (NAS) (CoT 64 of the Commitments Register (REP2-010)).
RI_A6	The Applicant has committed to Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), but has not included it as a DCO requirement. The Applicant should include a requirement that secures the delivery and maintenance of BNG as a matter of good practice.		The Applicants refer Natural England to section RR-RR1601.A.7 of their response to Natural England – Appendix A (PDA-015). This response makes clear the biodiversity benefit areas have been put forward on a voluntary basis and the Applicants are committed to delivering those measures where they are able to acquire the land and rights to do so. The Applicants do not consider it appropriate to include a biodiversity net gain (BNG) Requirement in the draft DCO (REP1-008), but will endeavour to deliver BNG measures where possible.	No change.		The Applicants refer Natural England to their position as stated in their Response to Natural England's Relevant Representation (RR-1601.A.7) and their Response to Natural England's Risk and Issues Log (REP2-034) at Deadline 2. These responses make clear that there is currently no legal requirement to provide for biodiversity net gain ( <b>BNG</b> ) in applications for development consent under the Planning Act 2008 and that the Transmission Assets are exempt from any future legal requirement as the requirement will not apply retrospectively to applications made before the provisions come into force. On that basis, the biodiversity benefit areas have been put forward on a voluntary basis and the Applicants are committed to delivering those measures where they are able to acquire the land and rights to do so. The biodiversity benefit areas are also not required to mitigate any environmental impacts identified through the EIA. The Applicants therefore do not consider it appropriate to include a BNG Requirement in the draft DCO (REP2-004) but will endeavour to deliver BNG measures where possible.
RI_A7	Micro-siting around features of conservation importance, such as reef of Annex I quality, is a standard mitigation. We request that the requirement to consider micro-siting around features of conservation importance be secured within the DMLs, as it is currently with respect to archaeological interest features.		The Applicants refer Natural England to the updated draft DCO submitted at Deadline 1 (REP1-008) which incorporates this amendment at Condition 18 of the offshore DMLs at Schedules 14 and 15. This is noted in the Schedule of Changes to the draft DCO submitted at Deadline 1 (REP1-066).	No change: We note that the Applicant has updated the wording in Schedules 14 and 15 to include 'environmental micro-siting requirements'; however, there is still no condition to micro-site around features of conservation importance secured within the dMLs.		The Applicants note this comment. The purpose of including reference to 'environmental micro-siting' under Condition 18(1)(a)(iii) in Schedule 14 and 15 of the draft DCO (REP2-004) is to provide a 'catch-all' for environmental receptors, which would include features of conservation importance, such as reef of Annex I quality.  On the basis that the licensed activities (or any stage thereof) under each of the offshore DMLs may not commence until a design plan which includes 'any archaeological exclusion zones or environmental micro-siting requirements' is approved in writing by the MMO in consultation with Trinity House and the MCA (see (Condition 18(1)(a)(iii) of Schedules 14 and 15 of the draft DCO (REP2-004)), and that the licensed activities must be carried out in accordance with the approved plans under Condition 18 (see Condition 19(3) of the offshore DMLs at Schedules 14 and 15 of the draft DCO (REP2-004), the Applicants consider that there is indeed a condition to ensure appropriate consideration is given to micro-siting around features of conservation importance, such as reef of Annex I quality, within the offshore DMLs. The Applicants have however provided some additional drafting to provide further clarity and alignment to the Morgan Generation and Morecambe Generation DMLs in this regard.
RI_A8	a) Natural England requests that a condition to secure an updated Offshore Operations and Maintenance Plan (OOMP) be included, we note this is a standard condition of most OWFs. b) Additionally, it should be stipulated within the OOMP that cable protection may only be		The Applicants refer Natural England to Section 1601.A.9 of their response to Natural England – Appendix A (PDA-015). This response makes clear that an operations and maintenance plan, substantially in accordance with the outline offshore operations and maintenance plan (OOMP) (APP-224) is already secured by	No change: We note that condition 11 in Schedules 14 and 15 the dMLs require that an OOMP is submitted, with SNCB consulted prior to approval and must provide for review and resubmission every three years during the operational phase. However, the condition does not secure that no cable protection should be deployed later than 10 years post-construction outside of		The Applicants position remains as set out at Deadline 2 (REP2-034). However, the Applicants will discuss this matter with Natural England at a meeting confirmed for the 22 July 2025 to allow the parties to provide updates at Deadline 4.

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 2	NE comment at Deadline 2 (Consultation, actions, progression)	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants' comment at Deadline 3
	deployed under this consent for a period of ten years post-construction outside of Fylde MCZ, and no deployment of cable protection during O&M within Fylde MCZ. Any additional cable protection within Fylde MCZ will require a new Marine Licence.		Condition 11 of the DMLs at Schedules 14 and 15 of the draft DCO (REP1-066). It also sets out the Applicants' explanation as to why there are sufficient controls for cable protection within the existing parameters in the DCO (see Requirement 2 of Schedules 2A and 2B and Condition 10 of the DMLs at Schedules 14 and 15 of the draft DCO (REP1-008). This is also controlled through the construction method statement to be prepared under Condition 18(1)(e) of Schedules 14 and 15 of the draft DCO (REP1-008), which must include details of cable specification, installation and monitoring, in accordance with the outline offshore cable specification and installation plan (J15/F02), technical specification, a detailed cable laying plan, and proposals for monitoring cables and cable protection management details.	Fylde MCZ, and no deployment of cable protection during O&M within Fylde MCZ.		
RI_A9	Schedule 14 and 15 Part 2 Condition 20 relates to the detonation of UXOs, however there is no mention within this condition of securing the use of Noise Abatement Systems (NAS). Amend the condition to include the need to consider the use of NAS.		The Applicants refer Natural England to section RR-1601.A.11 of their response to Natural England – Appendix A (PDA-015) which confirms that high order clearance has been removed from the DMLs at Schedules 14 and 15 of the draft DCO submitted at Deadline 1 (REP1-008). The response notes that as set out in the outline marine mammal mitigation protocol (J18/F02) the use of Noise Abatement Systems (NAS) is a secondary mitigation measure for high order detonation, and with the removal of high order unexploded ordnance clearance from the DMLs at Schedules 14 and 15 of the draft DCO (REP1-008), it is unnecessary to update Condition 20 to secure the use of NAS.  The Applicants also confirm that on the basis of the removal of high order unexploded ordnance clearance from the DMLs, it has also removed Condition 21 (Marine Noise Registry) of each of the DMLs at Schedules 14 and 15 of the draft DCO (REP1-008).	Resolved: The Applicant has updated the draft DCO to limit UXO clearance authorised under the DCO and dMLs to low order clearance only. Therefore the requirement for securing the use of NAS is redundant.		The Applicants welcome the decision to resolve this issue at Deadline 2.
RI_A10	Schedule 14 and 15 Part 2 Conditions 24, 25 and 26 do not include any of the detailed ecological monitoring required, except for monitoring during construction piling. We would expect benthic surveys to be conducted to identify any features		The Applicants refer Natural England to section 1601.A.12 of their response to Natural England – Appendix A (PDA-015). This makes clear that submission of the relevant monitoring plans in accordance with the offshore in principle monitoring plan (OIPMP) (APP-225) is secured in	No change.		The Applicants refer Natural England to this point in their Response to Natural England's Risk and Issues Log (REP2-034) at Deadline 2. The Applicants' position remains that all appropriate monitoring has been secured through Condition 18(1)(d) of the DMLs at Schedules 14 and 15 of the draft DCO (REP2-004), which requires submission and approval of a monitoring plan (which accords with the outline in-principle monitoring plan (OIPMP) (APP-225)). The OIPMP includes commitments requiring

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 2	NE comment at Deadline 2 (Consultation, actions, progression)	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants' comment at Deadline 3
	of conservation importance. We would also expect post-construction monitoring to be secured for any features of conservation importance identified in the pre-construction surveys that are predicted to be impacted by construction, in order to monitor their recovery. The Applicant should update the monitoring conditions to secure these.		Conditions 24, 25 and 26 of the DMLs at Schedules 14 and 15 of the draft DCO submitted at Deadline 1 (REP1-008). Condition 18(1)(d) also requires a monitoring plan, which accords with the OIPMP (APP-225) to be prepared (in accordance with Conditions 24, 25 and 26 of the DMLs at Schedules 14 and 15 of the draft DCO (REP1-008). The Applicants confirm that the OIPMP includes commitments requiring monitoring of the recovery of sediments and benthic communities within the Fylde MCZ (APP-225). The Applicants also note for clarification that no piling is proposed offshore as part of this Application.			monitoring of the recovery of sediments and benthic communities within the Fylde MCZ (APP-225) as best practice measures. Given the ES has not identified any effects which are significant in terms of EIA regulations on benthic subtidal and intertidal ecology receptors, no further measures are considered necessary or appropriate.  However, the Applicants will discuss this matter with Natural England at a meeting confirmed for the 22 July 2025 to allow the parties to provide updates at Deadline 4.
RI_A11	The recent SoS decision for Sheringham and Dudgeon Extensions Project (SADEP) approved Condition 20 in Schedules 10 and 11 of SADEP DCO based on a recommendation from Natural England and the MMO for particular impacts requiring remediation or further mitigation works. Natural England advises that a similar condition should be included within all offshore wind dMLs.		The Applicants refer Natural England to section RR-1601.A.13 of their response to Natural England – Appendix A (PDA-015). This response distinguishes between the circumstances under the Sheringham and Dudgeon Extensions Project DCO 2024 (SADEP) and this Application, whereby the Environmental Statement for this Application (which has been undertaken in line with the Rochdale Envelope approach) has not identified any likely significant environmental effects that would require ecological post-construction monitoring or need for potential adaptive management. The recommendation on SADEP was therefore specific to that application, as it related to specific concerns raised about the impact of that particular project on sensitive habitats and species, which have not been identified in the Environmental Statement for the Transmission Assets, so are not relevant to this Application.	No change.		The Applicants refer to their Response to Natural England's Risk and Issues Log (REP2-034) at Deadline 2. The Applicants' position remains that it does not consider it necessary or reasonable for blanket adaptive management provisions to be included in the offshore DMLs at Schedules 14 and 15 of the draft DCO (REP2-004). The EIA for this Application has not identified any likely significant environmental effects that would require ecological post-construction monitoring or the need for potential adaptive management.  However, the Applicants will discuss this matter with Natural England on the 22 July 2025 to allow the parties to provide updates at Deadline 4.
RI_A12	Offshore emergency works have not been clearly defined by the Applicant within the outline OOMP or the DCO. We advise that the Applicant should define 'offshore emergency works' in the DCO/dML and this definition should be updated within the outline OOMP. The MMO's guidance on emergency works offshore should be followed and referred to within the Application.		The Applicants refer Natural England to section 1601.A.15 of their response to Natural England – Appendix A (PDA-015). This confirms that Condition 22 of the offshore DMLs at Schedules 14 and 15 of the draft DCO (C1/F04) provide that the MMO's guidance on emergency works offshore (MGN654 "Offshore Renewable Energy 319 Installations (OREIs) – Guidance on UK Navigational Practice, Safety and Emergency Response Issues" (or any equivalent guidance that replaces	No change: Natural England notes the Applicants response [AS-004], but NE maintains that activities which are standard operation and maintenance and those which would be considered an emergency should be clearly defined to avoid ambiguity, and measures should be put in place to ensure that even in emergencies impacts to designated sites are minimised as much as possible.		The Applicants position remains as set out at Deadline 2 (REP2-034).  The Applicants will discuss this matter with Natural England on the 22 July 2025 to allow the parties to provide updates at Deadline 4

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			<p>or supersedes it and its annexes) must be followed, and that no part of the authorised scheme under the respective DMLs can commence until the MMO (in consultation with the MCA) are satisfied that the Applicants have done so.</p> <p>A spillage and emergency response plan relating to the offshore works (which must be in accordance with the outline spillage and emergency response plan (AS-046) must also be approved by the MMO prior to commencement of any stage of the intertidal or offshore works. This is secured by Requirement 8 at Schedules 2A and 2B of the draft DCO (C1/F04).</p> <p>On that basis, the Applicants maintain no further amendments are required.</p>			
R1_A13				<p>After reviewing [REP1-009] submitted at D1 Natural England identified an additional issue in the draft DCO not previously raised at RR/WR. Natural England notes that the provision in Schedule 12 para 5 (1) would restrict our onshore consultation time to a maximum of 10 days with no ability to request extension unless we request further information. Our standard turn-around time for statutory consultations is 21 days. The documents being consulted on are often of a highly technical nature requiring input from several members of staff and this shortened timeframe would create a significant challenge in responding. Further, we note that the overall time period for approval of these documents is 8 weeks. Therefore, we request that this provision be amended to allow 21 days to respond and note this should not increase the overall time to approve these documents.</p>		<p>The Applicants have updated paragraph 5(1) of Schedule 12 to the draft DCO (REP2-004), to refer to '21 days' instead of '10 days'. This is included in the draft DCO (C1/05) submitted at Deadline 3.</p>



## 2.4 Risk and Issues Log – Physical Processes

**Table 2.4: Responses to questions regarding Physical Processes**

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 2	NE comment at Deadline 2 (Consultation, actions, progression)	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants comment at Deadline X
<b>Risk and Issues Log Deadline 1 – Physical Processes</b> <b>Taken from Natural England's Relevant and Written Representations Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets</b> <b>Appendix B - Physical Processes</b>						
RI_B1	<p>a) There is uncertainty regarding the likely success of the Direct Pipe Trenchless Technique. Further details on the Direct Pipe Trenchless Technique, associated infrastructure, and the sediment geology, is required to be able to fully assess the potential impacts on coastal processes at the landfall.</p> <p>b) An outline contingency plan should be developed, and the worst-case should be assessed and included within the relevant Application documents i.e. cable installation failure when using the Direct Pipe Trenchless Technique.</p>		The Applicants have responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within the response RR-1601.B 1601.B.8 (PDA-016).	No change.		The Applicants responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within the response RR-1601.B 1601.B.8 (PDA-016).
RI_B2	There is currently no commitment to the removal of cable/scour protection at end of project life (decommissioning). Natural England advises that a commitment to remove all on and above seabed infrastructure associated with the development within benthic designated sites (excluding cable crossings) at the time of decommissioning should be secured in the DCO, to prevent permanent impacts to marine physical processes. Without a commitment in the DCO, the worst-case scenario should assess the impacts of leaving assets permanently in situ. It is also noted that leaving cable protection on the seabed even outside of designated sites is not aligned with OSPAR		The Applicants have provided detailed responses to the points raised by Natural England, with regards to cable protection, in RR-101 1601.42 and RR-1601 1601.43 (PDA-014) and RR-1601.C 1601.C.28 (PDA-017). The Applicants would also draw attention to the updated outline Cable Specification and Installation Plan submitted at Deadline 2 (J15/F02), which removed 'rock dump' from the list of cable protection types to be used within the Fylde MCZ.	No change.		<p>The Applicants provided detailed responses to the points raised by Natural England, with regards to cable protection, in RR-101 1601.42 and RR-1601 1601.43 (PDA-014) and RR-1601.C 1601.C.28 (PDA-017) and RI_B2 within the Annex 3.3 to Applicants' Response to WRs: Response to Natural England's Risk and Issues Log – Rev F01 (REP2-034)).</p> <p>The Applicants would also draw attention to the updated outline Cable Specification and Installation Plan submitted at Deadline 2 (REP2-022), which removed 'rock dump' from the list of cable protection types to be used within the Fylde MCZ.</p>
RI_B3	a) There is currently insufficient information on the anticipated location, extent and design of cable protection measures placed along the Export Cable Corridor (ECC). Further information should be provided on location, extent and design of cable		<p>The Applicants have responded previously to points raised by Natural England regarding cable protection location and design in RR-1601 1601.43 (PDA-014).</p> <p>Further responses regarding seabed mobility, nearshore sediment transport and mitigation were provided in RR-1601.B</p>	No change.		<p>The Applicants responded previously to points raised by Natural England regarding cable protection location and design in RR-1601 1601.43 (PDA-014).</p> <p>Further responses regarding seabed mobility, nearshore sediment transport and mitigation were provided in RR-1601.B 1601.B.16, 1601.B.18 and 1601.B.17 (PDA-016) respectively.</p>

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	<p>protection measures for us to advise on the potential impacts of cable protection on sediment transport pathways, particularly within Fylde MCZ .</p> <p>b) Further consideration within the assessments should be given to changes to sediment transport processes and seabed morphology due to the placement of cable protection measures at these locations. This should be updated within the relevant Application documents.</p> <p>c) Further options to minimise/mitigate impacts from cable protection on physical processes should be explored.</p>		1601.B.16, 1601.B.18 and 1601.B.17 (PDA-016) respectively.			
RI_B4	<p>a) We note that limited mitigation in relation to physical processes or benthic receptors during sandwave and boulder clearance has been proposed and further consideration should be demonstrated.</p> <p>b) Natural England advises that impacts to priority habitats under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006 are avoided and due consideration is demonstrated. We advise that relevant Application documents should be updated accordingly and this is secured within the DCO/DMLs.</p>		<p>The Applicants have responded previously to points raised by Natural England regarding sandwave clearance and boulder clearance in RR-1601.B 1601.B.4 and 1601.B.15 (PDA-016) respectively.</p> <p>The Applicants have responded previously to points relating to NERC priority habitats in RR-1601 1601.44 (PDA-014).</p>	No change.		<p>The Applicants responded previously to points raised by Natural England regarding sandwave clearance and boulder clearance in RR-1601.B 1601.B.4 and 1601.B.15 (PDA-016) respectively.</p> <p>The Applicants have responded previously to points relating to NERC priority habitats in RR-1601 1601.44 (PDA-014).</p>
RI_B5	We advise that the Applicant adequately considers the potential for a four-year gap between the completion of the first project (i.e. Morgan) and the commencement of the second (i.e. Morecambe) for 'Construction Scenario 3b'. We advise the MDS is updated within the Project Description and relevant Chapters to account for this, taking into consideration the potential for the recovery of seabed species and habitats resulting in outdated baseline data. We also advise that the relevant impact assessments are updated and outcomes taken account of in named plans.		The Applicants previous response RR-1601.B 1601.B. 5 (PDA-016) reiterated that the MDS for physical processes is concurrent construction and recovery between phases is beneficial for coastal processes. The MDS has been defined as appropriate to each potential impact and for benthic construction scenarios, please see response RR-1601.C 1601.C.7 (PDA-017).	No change.		The Applicants previous response RR-1601.B 1601.B. 5 (PDA-016) reiterated that the MDS for physical processes is concurrent construction and recovery between phases is beneficial for coastal processes. The MDS has been defined as appropriate to each potential impact and for benthic construction scenarios, please see response RR-1601.C 1601.C.7 (PDA-017).



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RI_B6	It is not clear that the 9% and 10% total cable corridor values for sandwave clearance and cable protection respectively refer to the MDS requirements for each of the individual 6 cables (noting that each will have its own trench) or collectively. Similarly, clarity on the MDS specifications within and outside the Fylde MCZ should be provided. We advise that the MDS for construction and cable protection footprints are reviewed and updated where necessary across all ES chapters and named plans. And specific areas and volumes included for cable protection within and outside Fylde MCZ on the DCO/dML		The Applicants have responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within the response RR-1601.B 1601.B.6 (PDA-016).	No change.		The Applicants responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within the response RR-1601.B 1601.B.6 (PDA-016).
RI_B7	Natural England requires a plan showing the location of the proposed exit pits and Transmission Joint Bays (TJB) within the Application documents to be able to fully advise on the potential impacts of cabling under Lytham St Annes Dunes SSSI and St Annes Old Links Golf Course BHS.		The Applicants have responded previously to this matter within the response RR-1601.B 1601.B.7 (PDA-016). In addition, Annex 5.3 to the Applicants response to Hearing Action Points: ISH1 13, 14, 16, 17 (REP1-040) sets out additional information regarding the works proposed at the Lytham St. Annes Beach to facilitate the landfall of the offshore export cables, including indicative locations of exit pits, under Section 3 of the document.	No change.		The Applicants responded previously to this matter within the response RR-1601.B 1601.B.7 (PDA-016). In addition, Annex 5.3 to the Applicants response to Hearing Action Points: ISH1 13, 14, 16, 17 (REP1-040) sets out additional information regarding the works proposed at the Lytham St. Annes Beach to facilitate the landfall of the offshore export cables, including indicative locations of exit pits, under Section 3 of the document.
RI_B8	Natural England notes that the MDS for Pre-Lay Grapple Run (PLGR), Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) clearance and boulder clearance have not been fully assessed within the ES Chapters. It is stated in the documents that "this is to prevent double counting of the seabed footprint parameters". However, there is no certainty that these activities will be undertaken at the same time or within the same footprint as the other site preparation activities especially the relocation of boulders. We advise the MDS figures for each of these activities should be presented in the Project Description and all other relevant chapters in line with Natural England's Best Practice Guidance Phase III.		The Applicants have responded previously to this matter within the response RR-1601.B 1601.B.9 (PDA-016).	No change.		The Applicants responded previously to this matter within the response RR-1601.B 1601.B.9 (PDA-016).
RI_B9	We note that the MDS for sandwave clearance and seabed preparation is 1,426,900m3. However, this has not been broken down any further into		The Applicants have provided a detailed response with regards to sandwave clearance volumes in RR-1601 1601.B.6 (PDA-016), whilst further information on	No change.		The Applicants provided a detailed response with regards to sandwave clearance volumes in RR-1601 1601.B.6 (PDA-016), whilst further information on

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 2	NE comment at Deadline 2 (Consultation, actions, progression)	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants comment at Deadline X
	individual activities, location, nor has a sandwave clearance impact width and length been provided and assessed. Natural England advises that the Applicant provides all the parameters associated with sandwave clearance and seabed preparation and the tools to be used for sandwave levelling to ensure the MDS and WCS have been assessed. This information should be included and updated within the ES Chapter and/or relevant named plan.		seabed levelling was provided in RR-1601 1601.C.31 (PDA-017).  The Applicants confirm that the volume of material arising from sandwave clearance, as presented in Table 3.5 of Volume 1, Chapter 3: Project description (AS-024) is correct with a volume of 1,426,800 m3 and not 1,426,900 m3 as indicated by Natural England in their comment.			seabed levelling was provided in RR-1601 1601.C.31 (PDA-017).  The Applicants confirm that the volume of material arising from sandwave clearance, as presented in Table 3.5 of Volume 1, Chapter 3: Project description (AS-024) is correct with a volume of 1,426,800 m3 and not 1,426,900 m3 as indicated by Natural England in their comment (See Annex 3.3 to Applicants' Response to WRs: Response to Natural England's Risk and Issues Log – Rev F01 (REP2-034)).
RI_B10	Natural England advises that further assessment of the feasibility of the following cable installation tools: ploughing, jetting, mechanical cutting in shallow waters is required to support the worst-case scenario assessment for nearshore cable installation.		The Applicants have responded previously to this matter within the response RR-1601.B 1601.B.11 (PDA-016).	No change.		The Applicants responded previously to this matter within the response RR-1601.B 1601.B.11 (PDA-016).
RI_B11	a) Natural England advises that the worst case impacts from UXO clearance in relation to marine processes, including recovery is further assessed. b) Whilst the Applicant has stated UXO clearance activities may take place within Fylde MCZ; we advise that UXOs should be moved outside of the MCZ prior to detonation. The Applicant should demonstrate why they have not committed to this mitigation. This information should be included and updated within the ES Chapter and/or relevant named plans.		The Applicants have responded with overarching comments regarding UXO clearance in RR-1601.B 1601.B.9 (PDA-016). Whilst a further detailed response was provided in RR-1601.B 1601.B.14 (PDA-016).  Additionally, further information relevant to benthic habitats was provided in the response RR-1601.C 1601.C.22 (PDA-017).  The Applicants' response to NE10 above confirms the removal of high order UXO clearance from the draft DCO (REP1-008).	No change.		The Applicants responded with overarching comments regarding UXO clearance in RR-1601.B 1601.B.9 (PDA-016). Whilst a further detailed response was provided in RR-1601.B 1601.B.14 (PDA-016).  Additionally, further information relevant to benthic habitats was provided in the response RR-1601.C 1601.C.22 (PDA-017).  In addition, the Applicants' responses to NE10 and RI_B11 within the Annex 3.3 to Applicants' Response to WRs: Response to Natural England's Risk and Issues Log – Rev F01 (REP2-034) confirms the removal of high order UXO clearance from the draft DCO (REP1-008) at Deadline 1.
RI_B12	We advise that further information is provided by the Applicant on how seabed mobility has been considered with regards to cable protection requirements and locations in relation to this specific Application. This should be updated and included within the ES chapters (including those relating to landfall) and in the Outline CSIP.		The Applicants have responded previously to this matter within the response RR-1601.B 1601.B.16 (PDA-016).	No change.		The Applicants responded previously to this matter within the response RR-1601.B 1601.B.16 (PDA-016).
RI_B13	It is unclear what the potential impacts may be for intertidal Direct Pipe installation, trenching, and temporary infrastructure (e.g. cofferdams) on seabed and coastal morphology, and how recovery of the landfall location		The Applicants have previously responded with regards to trenchless techniques at landfall in RR-1601 1601.52 (PDA-014), whilst further details on coastal processes	No change.		The Applicants previously responded with regards to trenchless techniques at landfall in RR-1601 1601.52 (PDA-014), whilst further details on coastal processes were provided in RR-1601.B 1601.B.20 (PDA-016).

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 2	NE comment at Deadline 2 (Consultation, actions, progression)	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants comment at Deadline X
	will be secured. Natural England advise that (a) the Applicant should consider and assess all potential impacts to seabed morphology that may arise due to trenchless landfall works during the lifetime of the Projects. Including size and duration of installation of cofferdams and potential disruption to coastal processes. And (b) produce an Outline Landfall Method Statement and secure this in the DCO/dMLs. Natural England also advises further information is needed about the location of the export cables across the beach.		were provided in RR-1601.B 1601.B.20 (PDA-016). Responses RR-1601.B 1601.B.19 (PDA-016) and RR-1601.C 1601.C.11 (PDA-017) provide information regarding excavated material to be used as backfill for cofferdams. The location of exits pits and cable installation were detailed in RR-1601.B 1601.B.7 and 1601.B.20 (PDA-016) respectively.			Responses RR-1601.B 1601.B.19 (PDA-016) and RR-1601.C 1601.C.11 (PDA-017) provide information regarding excavated material to be used as backfill for cofferdams. The location of exits pits and cable installation were detailed in RR-1601.B 1601.B.7 and 1601.B.20 (PDA-016) respectively.  Additionally, annex 5.3 to the Applicants response to Hearing Action Points: ISH1 13, 14, 16, 17 (REP1-040) sets out additional information regarding the works proposed at the Lytham St. Annes Beach to facilitate the landfall of the offshore export cables, including indicative locations of exit pits, under Section 3 of the document.
RI_B14	It is unclear in [APP-042] 1.10.4.1 what is meant by 'foreign material'. Natural England advises that the Applicant secures a commitment that no foreign material will be placed above the surface (winter beach levels), which could potentially interfere with sediment transport pathways. We advise that this is also secured in the DCO/dMLs.		The Applicants have responded previously to this matter within the response RR-1601.B 1601.B.20 (PDA-016).	No change.		The Applicants responded previously to this matter within the response RR-1601.B 1601.B.20 (PDA-016).
RI_B15	Whilst we recognise that several cable protection types have been presented, no commitment to using a specific cable protection has been made. Natural England advises the selection of cable protection should favour those engineering options which reduce potential impacts to marine processes and have the greatest likelihood of successful removal at decommissioning.		The Applicants have provided detailed responses to the points raised by Natural England, with regards to cable protection, in RR-1601 1601.42 and 1601.43 (PDA-014), and RR-1601.C 1601.C.28 (PDA-017). Please also see response to RI_B2 above.	No change.		The Applicants provided detailed responses to the points raised by Natural England, with regards to cable protection, in RR-1601 1601.42 and 1601.43 (PDA-014), and RR-1601.C 1601.C.28 (PDA-017). Please also see response to RI_B2 above.  The Applicants would also highlight the updates made to the Outline CSIP submitted at Deadline 2 (REP2-022), which has removed 'rock dump' from the list of cable protection types to be used within the Fylde MCZ in acknowledgment that this is the least recoverable type of protection.
RI_B16	Natural England advises that an outline Construction Method Statement and outline CSIP are provided/updated as part of the consenting stage to demonstrate that the WCS has been assessed, and any predicted impacts can be sufficiently mitigated.		The Applicants have responded previously to this point raised by Natural England within the responses RR-1601.B 1601.B.16 to 1601.B.18 (PDA-016) regarding cable protection.	No change.		The Applicants responded previously to this point raised by Natural England within the responses RR-1601.B 1601.B.16 to 1601.B.18 (PDA-016) regarding cable protection.  The Applicants would also highlight the updates made to the Outline CSIP submitted at Deadline 2 (REP2-022), which has removed 'rock dump' from the list of cable protection types to be used within the Fylde MCZ in acknowledgment that this is the least recoverable type of protection.

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 2	NE comment at Deadline 2 (Consultation, actions, progression)	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants comment at Deadline X
RI_B17	Natural England advises that surveys of the recoverability of the seabed, with a focus on sandwave reformation are undertaken to confirm predictions of recovery rates, and monitoring of the impacts of construction activities outside of Fylde MCZ on geomorphological receptors should be included for consideration in the Offshore In Principle Monitoring Plan (OIPMP).		The Applicants have responded previously to this matter within the response RR-1601.B 1601.B.24 (PDA-016).	No change.		The Applicants responded previously to this matter within the response RR-1601.B 1601.B.24 (PDA-016).
RI_B18	Natural England do not agree with the Applicants conclusion of no likelihood of hindering the conservation objectives of Fylde MCZ which has been designated for subtidal sand and subtidal mud. Natural England consider that any placement of scour prevention/cable protection has the potential to disrupt sediment process which could disrupt marine processes and have a lasting impact on interest features over the lifetime of the project and beyond which is potentially irreversible.		The Applicants have responded previously regarding cable protection and decommissioning with respect to the Fylde MCZ in response RR-1601 1601.42 (PDA-014).	No change.		The Applicants responded previously regarding cable protection and decommissioning with respect to the Fylde MCZ in response RR-1601 1601.42 (PDA-014). Note: the "RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1" column has been corrected from Red to Orange for this point in this document, to correctly align with the NE Risk and Issue Log. This was raised by the MMO as an error in their WR submission at Deadline 2 (REP2-061; 3.4.3 and 3.5.5).
RI_B19	Natural England advises that the Project is likely to cause lasting impacts on benthic features within Fylde MCZ. Natural England have provided further advice on Fylde MCZ in Appendix I.		The Applicants have responded previously regarding the Fylde MCZ in response RR-1601 1601.45 (PDA-014) and a Without Prejudice MEEB was submitted at part of the Stage 2 MCZ Assessment at Deadline 1 (REP1-059).	Resolved: The Applicant has undertaken a Stage 2 MCZ Assessment and without prejudice MEEB and submitted these into Examination at Deadline 1. Therefore this issue has been resolved at Deadline 2. Please note other comments relating to the MCZ assessment are not resolved. This comment has specifically been resolved as the Applicant has provided the documents requested.  NE have provided further comments on the Applicants' In-principle MEEB proposal in 'Tab J Benthic Compensation' of this R&I Log and Appendix J of our Deadline 2 submission.		The Applicants' welcome the decision to resolve this issue at Deadline 2.  Response to further comments on the Applicants' In-principle MEEB proposal from 'Tab J Benthic Compensation' of the Risk and Issue Log and Appendix J of NE's Deadline 2 submission are provided in Table 2.12 below, and Appendix A.



## 2.5 Risk and Issues Log – Benthic Subtidal and Intertidal Ecology

**Table 2.5: Responses to questions regarding Benthic Subtidal and Intertidal Ecology**

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 2	NE comment at Deadline 2 (Consultation, actions, progression)	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants comment at Deadline 3
<b>Risk and Issues Log Deadline 1 – Benthic Subtidal and Intertidal Ecology</b> <b>Taken from Natural England's Relevant and Written Representations Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets</b> <b>Appendix C - Benthic Subtidal and Intertidal Ecology</b>						
RI_C1	Natural England advises that there are a number of potential impacts both on intertidal and subtidal benthic habitats which have not been adequately considered or assessed within the Environmental Statement (ES). The specifics of which are included in the points within this worksheet.		The Applicants have responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.C.1 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).	No change.		The Applicants responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.C.1 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).
RI_C2	Natural England is concerned that MDS parameters are for cable protection to be installed at any point through the lifetime of the Project (including Operation and Maintenance), rather than the amount that will be required for the construction phase alone. Natural England advises that additional detail is needed on how the potential for the addition of further cable/scour protection during the O&M phase has been considered, and what proportion of the Maximum Design calculations for cable/scour protection the O&M requirements account for both within and outside of the MCZ.		The Applicants have responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.C.2 and RR-1601.C.10 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).	No change.		The Applicants responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.C.2 and RR-1601.C.10 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).
RI_C3	<p>a) Natural England advises that the Project is likely to cause lasting impacts on benthic features within Fylde MCZ and that the sites 'maintain' conservation objectives will be hindered.</p> <p>b) Every effort should be made to reduce the impacts through the adoption of robust mitigation measures, including commitments to remove infrastructure at the decommissioning phase.</p> <p>c) We advise that the MCZ assessment should proceed to a stage 2 assessment and a without prejudice MEEB case provided.</p>		The Applicants have responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.45 of their response to Natural England (PDA-014). The Applicants provided a Stage 2 MCZ Assessment, including a without prejudice, in-principle Measures of Equivalent Environmental Benefit (MEEB) Plan, at Deadline 1 (REP1-059).	"Resolved: The Applicant has undertaken a Stage 2 MCZ Assessment and without prejudice MEEB and submitted these into Examination at Deadline 1. Therefore this issue has been resolved at Deadline 2. Please note other comments relating to the MCZ assessment are not resolved. This comment has specifically been resolved as the Applicant has provided the documents requested.		<p>The Applicants' welcome the decision to resolve this issue at Deadline 2.</p> <p>Response to further comments on the MCZ assessment are addressed in Table 2.11: Responses to questions regarding the Fylde MCZ below.</p>

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 2	NE comment at Deadline 2 (Consultation, actions, progression)	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants comment at Deadline 3
RI_C4	Natural England advises that impacts to priority habitats under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006 are avoided and where that is not possible due consideration is demonstrated. Particular consideration should be given to those which are most sensitive and/or listed as threatened/in decline under OSPAR.		The Applicants have responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.44 of their response to Natural England (PDA-014) and RR-1601.C.4 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).	No change.		The Applicants responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.44 of their response to Natural England (PDA-014) and RR-1601.C.4 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).
RI_C5	Natural England strongly advises that a commitment to remove all infrastructure associated with the development at decommissioning is secured in the DCO. This should be provided in an Outline Decommissioning Plan should also be provided as part of the consent phase to detail the approach to decommissioning.		The Applicants have responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.42 of their response to Natural England (PDA-014).	No change.		The Applicants responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.42 of their response to Natural England (PDA-014).
RI_C6	Natural England notes that the Applicants current EIA assessment fails to consider or assess the potential pressures and impacts on the supporting benthic habitats for Special Protection Area (SPA) features, including Liverpool Bay SPA. Full consideration is required to inform a robust assessment of the likely impacts upon designated ornithological features.		The Applicants have responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.C.26 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).	No change.		The Applicants responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.C.26 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).
RI_C7	We advise that the Applicant adequately considers the potential for a four-year gap between the completion of the first project (i.e. Morgan) and the commencement of the second (i.e. Morecambe) for 'Construction Scenario 3b'. We advise the MDS is updated within the Project Description and relevant Chapters to account for this, taking into consideration the potential for the recovery of seabed species and habitats resulting in outdated baseline data. We also advise that the relevant impact assessments are updated and outcomes taken account of in named plans.		The Applicants have responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.C.7 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017) and also within the Rule 9 – ES Assessment of Construction Scenarios (AS-070).	No change.		The Applicants responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.C.7 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017) and also within the Rule 9 – ES Assessment of Construction Scenarios (AS-070) and Clarification Note: Construction Scenarios - Rev F01(REP1-060).
RI_C8	It is not clear that the 9% and 10% total cable corridor values for sandwave clearance and cable protection respectively refer to the MDS requirements for each of the individual 6 cables (noting that each will have its own trench) or collectively. Similarly, clarity on the MDS specifications within and outside the Fylde MCZ should be provided. We advise that the MDS for construction and cable protection footprints are reviewed and updated where necessary across all ES		The Applicants have responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.43 of their response to Natural England (PDA-014) and RR-1601.C.8 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).	No change.		The Applicants responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.43 of their response to Natural England (PDA-014) and RR-1601.C.8 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 2	NE comment at Deadline 2 (Consultation, actions, progression)	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants comment at Deadline 3
	chapters and named plans. And specific areas and volumes included for cable protection within and outside Fylde MCZ on the DCO/dML					
RI_C9	Natural England notes that the cable protection types listed within the design envelope (Table 3.7) appear to be contradictory to the commitment for all cable protection to be removable from an environmental perspective. Due consideration should be given to the nature of the cable protection used and should favour those engineering options with the greatest likelihood of successful removal, from an environmental perspective, at the Projects' end of life.		The Applicants have responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.C.9 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017). The Applicants would also draw attention to the updated outline Cable Specification and Installation Plan submitted at Deadline 2 (J15/F02), which removed 'rock dump' from the list of cable protection types to be used within the Fylde MCZ.	No change.		The Applicants responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.C.9 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017) and RI_C9 within the Annex 3.3 to Applicants' Response to WRs: Response to Natural England's Risk and Issues Log – Rev F01 (REP2-034). The Applicants would also draw attention to the updated outline Cable Specification and Installation Plan submitted at Deadline 2 (REP2-022), which removed 'rock dump' from the list of cable protection types to be used within the Fylde MCZ.
RI_C10	a) Natural England advises that clarity is provided within the Application documents on the likely impacts from using Direct Pipe cable installation techniques. We advise that the following is provided and updated within the Application documents: - Scour protection requirements at the direct pipe exit and/or entry locations; - Cable/scour protection requirements in the intertidal and subsequent mitigation; and - MDS for the sum of both projects for 'maximum cofferdam area dimensions' to be included in Tables 3.6 and 3.13.  b) We also advise that a landfall management plan should be provided in outline at the time of consent. All landfall impacts, including subtidal impacts, should be considered collectively to determine management/mitigation measures to ensure that significant impacts (both direct and indirect) are avoided to designated site features.		The Applicants have responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.C.11 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).	No change.		The Applicants responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.C.11 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).
RI_C11	Natural England advises that a further assessment of the feasibility of the cable installation tools in shallow waters is required to support the worst-case scenario assessment.		The Applicants have responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.B.11 of their response to Natural England – Appendix B (PDA-016).	No change.		The Applicants responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.B.11 of their response to Natural England – Appendix B (PDA-016).
RI_C12	Natural England advises that storage options for material from the landfall exit pits and open cut trenching are explored to minimise impacts and allow for sufficient back filling.		The Applicants have responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.B.20 of their response to Natural England – Appendix B (PDA-016) and RR-1601.C.13 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).	No change.		The Applicants responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.B.20 of their response to Natural England – Appendix B (PDA-016) and RR-1601.C.13 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 2	NE comment at Deadline 2 (Consultation, actions, progression)	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants comment at Deadline 3
RI_C13	Natural England notes that the MDS for Pre-Lay Grapnel Run (PLGR), Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) clearance and boulder clearance have not been fully assessed within the ES Chapters. There is no certainty that these activities will be undertaken at the same time or within the same footprint as the other site preparation activities especially in relation to boulder relocation. We advise that the MDS for PLGR, UXO clearance and boulder clearance are presented within the Project Description and all other relevant chapters in line with Natural England's Best Practice Guidance Phase III.		The Applicants have previously responded to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.B.6 of their response to Natural England – Appendix B (PDA-016) and RR-1601.C.14 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).	No change.		The Applicants previously responded to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.B.6 of their response to Natural England – Appendix B (PDA-016) and RR-1601.C.14 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).
RI_C14	Natural England advises that it is not clear how the MDS for sandwave clearance and seabed preparation has been derived. Natural England advises that the Applicant provides all the parameters associated with sandwave clearance and seabed preparation that were used to calculate the total MDS figure for 'sandwave clearance: offshore export cable (m3)' inside and outside of designated sites. These should be included and updated in the Project Description and the relevant Chapters in the ES to ensure that the impacts have been fully assessed.		The Applicants have previously responded to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.B.6 and RR-1601.B.10 of their response to Natural England – Appendix B (PDA-016) and RR-1601.C.15 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).	No change.		The Applicants previously responded to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.B.6 and RR-1601.B.10 of their response to Natural England – Appendix B (PDA-016) and RR-1601.C.15 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).
RI_C15	Natural England notes that the MDS sandwave clearance requirements stated are inconsistent between the Project Description [APP-024] and Benthic ES Chapter [APP-045] and named plans. No MDS figures for construction footprints have been presented within the Project Description. Natural England advises the maximum temporary construction footprints are reviewed and updated where necessary across the Application documents.		The Applicants have previously responded to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.B.6 and RR-1601.B.8 of their response to Natural England – Appendix B (PDA-016) and RR-1601.C.16 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).	In progress: We note the updated MDS parameters for sandwave clearance in Table 1.1 [REP1-064] which lists the errata for sandwave clearance in [APP-045]. Once the changes are made to the applicable application documents and submitted into Examination this matter will be resolved.		The Applicants previously responded to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.B.6 and RR-1601.B.8 of their response to Natural England – Appendix B (PDA-016) and RR-1601.C.16 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).  The Applicants note the response from Natural England regarding this matter at Deadline 2. Volume 2, Chapter 2: Benthic Subtidal and Intertidal Ecology (APP-045) will be updated in line with Table 1.1 of REP1-064 at Deadline 6.
RI_C16	Natural England notes that within the CSIP it is stated that the distance between the cable crossings means that there will be separation in cable protection (rock armouring/mattress) making one linear line of protection. Natural England is concerned about the potential physical processes and benthic impacts from this which have not		The Applicants have previously responded to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.C.17 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).	No change.		The Applicants previously responded to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.C.17 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).



ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 2	NE comment at Deadline 2 (Consultation, actions, progression)	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants comment at Deadline 3
	been assessed. We also assume that because this protection would be considered as cable crossing it would be considered permanent. Natural England advises that cable crossing requirements and impacts are reassessed to ensure that the MDS/WCS has been assessed.					
RI_C17	Natural England is not clear how 14 cable repairs of a length of 56km has been determined. Currently as written, the cable repairs could be of any length. There is therefore a lack in consistency in WCS for cable repairs presented across the project description and named plans within and outside of designated sites. Natural England advises that clarification is provided by the Applicant on the maximum number of repairs per cable and in total, maximum length of each cable repair. Assessments and named plans should be updated accordingly.		The Applicants have previously responded to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.C.18 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).	No change.		The Applicants previously responded to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.C.18 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).
RI_C18	Natural England does not agree with the statement that there was a “relatively low abundance of burrows overall” that “were not consistent with a confident classification as the ‘sea pen and burrowing megafauna communities’”. We note that this statement is contradictory to the findings of the Technical Report [APP-046] which found burrows to be ‘common’ in some locations, and therefore more numerous than the ‘frequent’ threshold required to meet the OSPAR definition for ‘sea pen and burrowing megafauna communities’. Natural England advises that (a) the ES is updated to accurately reflect the findings and conclusions of the technical report. And (b) where possible, impacts to these Features of Conservation Interest (FOCI) are minimised. To inform the updates Natural England also advises that the EIA should be updated, and appropriate sensitivity attributed to the benthic communities assessed as determined using MarESA.		The Applicants have previously responded to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.C.21 and RR-1601.C.27 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).	No change.		The Applicants previously responded to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.C.21 and RR-1601.C.27 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).
RI_C19	It does not appear that that the duration, nature or area of seabed impacts from UXO clearance has been quantified or assessed within the ES chapters. We therefore require evidence that seabed depressions from both UXO detonations and jack-up legs will back-fill with similar sediment type and over what duration. Natural England requires the		The Applicants have previously responded to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.B.14 of their response to Natural England – Appendix B (PDA-016) and RR-1601.C.22 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017). The Applicants also confirmed within RR-1601.37 of their response to Natural England	No change.		The Applicants previously responded to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.B.14 of their response to Natural England – Appendix B (PDA-016) and RR-1601.C.22 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017). The Applicants also confirmed within RR-1601.37 of their response to Natural England (PDA-014) that high order UXO

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 2	NE comment at Deadline 2 (Consultation, actions, progression)	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants comment at Deadline 3
	Applicant to quantify and evaluate the worst-case impacts from UXO clearance and jack-up events.		(PDA-014) that high order UXO detonation has been removed from the draft DCO (REP1-008).			detonation has been removed from the draft DCO (REP2-004) at Deadline 1.
RI_C20	Natural England advises that the ES Benthic Chapter [APP-045] is updated to consider impacts from construction of exit pits and/or cofferdam installation (where necessary) and associated site access and ancillary construction work areas. It has also not been stated whether or not scour protection may be required at the exit pit locations and whether any such requirements would be temporary or permanent.		The Applicants have previously responded to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.B.11, RR-1601.B.19 and RR-1601.B.20 of their response to Natural England – Appendix B (PDA-016) and RR-1601.C.23 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).	No change.		The Applicants previously responded to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.B.11, RR-1601.B.19 and RR-1601.B.20 of their response to Natural England – Appendix B (PDA-016) and RR-1601.C.23 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).
RI_C21	Natural England notes that open cut trenching is likely to be required for each of the 6 cables at landfall. However, it does not appear that the MDS duration, nature or extent of benthic and water quality impacts from open cut trenching has been quantified or assessed. Natural England advises that the EIA and where relevant, MCZ assessments and named plans are updated to consider these impacts including an update with accurate worst-case prediction values for Suspended Sediment Concentrations (SSCs) arising from trenching in the Export Cable Corridor (ECC).		The Applicants have previously responded to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.C.24 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).	No change.		The Applicants previously responded to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.C.24 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).
RI_C22	Natural England notes that for cable landfall works there is a requirement for 2 x jack-up vessel deployments per cable out to KP10. Natural England queries how avoidance of benthic interest features and designated sites have been demonstrated? Natural England advises that as matter of best practice, the use of jack-up vessels should be excluded from benthic MPAs. Otherwise, clear justification as to why this is not possible and evidence of how impacts can be mitigated should be provided with evidence to support successful mitigation. a) We advise more detail and assessment is required regarding cable installation in shallow water depths below 11m in the ES Chapter and named plans. b) We also advise that an Outline Cable Landfall plan is provided and submitted into examination.		The Applicants have previously responded to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.C.25 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).	No change.		The Applicants previously responded to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.C.25 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 2	NE comment at Deadline 2 (Consultation, actions, progression)	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants comment at Deadline 3
RI_C23	Natural England strongly advises that the Applicant's commitments; CoT108 and CoT109 should include removal of all cable protection at the decommissioning phase within Fylde MCZ, rather than only stating it will be designed to be removable. This should be provided in an Outline Decommissioning plan.		The Applicants have previously responded to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.42 of their response to Natural England (PDA-014).	No change.		The Applicants previously responded to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.42 of their response to Natural England (PDA-014).
RI_C24	Natural England notes that dredge disposal activities including sandwave clearance will be conducted throughout the Transmission Assets Order Limits. We highlight that no commitments have been proposed to mitigate impacts either within or outside of benthic designated sites, with the exception of CoT116 which states immediately adjacent to the impact occurring to enable recovery. Natural England advises that mitigation measures should be adopted by the Applicant and the relevant documents updated accordingly. More specifically, disposal options should be explored to ensure that sediment is deposited in areas of similar sediment character, adjacent and upstream of the levelling location, and using a fallpipe so that the risk of permanently altering the sediment character in any given location is minimised.		The Applicants have previously responded to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.C.31 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).	No change.		The Applicants previously responded to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.C.31 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).
RI_C25	Natural England welcomes the commitment to micro-site the cables to further reduce the need for cable protection. However, this is not included within the commitments log or secured so it can't currently be considered mitigation. Natural England advises that proposed mitigation measures are secured within a named plan or on the face of the DCO/dML.		The Applicants have previously responded to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.C.33 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).	No change.		The Applicants previously responded to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.C.33 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).
RI_C26	Natural England does not agree with the 35 year duration which has been stated as the duration for which subtidal habitat loss will occur. Natural England advises that in the current absence of commitments to remove cable/scour protection, then the loss should be assessed as permanent. Natural England advises that the EIA should be updated with more appropriate descriptions of the timescales associated with impacts and assessment adjusted accordingly.		The Applicants have previously responded to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.42 of their response to Natural England (PDA-014) and within RR-1601.C.34 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).	No change.		The Applicants previously responded to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.42 of their response to Natural England (PDA-014) and within RR-1601.C.34 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 2	NE comment at Deadline 2 (Consultation, actions, progression)	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants comment at Deadline 3
RI_C27	Natural England advises that the monitoring proposed within the Offshore In Principal Monitoring Plan (OIPMP) currently appears to focus on physical/sediment recovery and lacks sufficient ecological context. Natural England advises that the rationale within Table 1.3 of the OIPMP needs to be updated to additionally include "temporal and spatial changes in benthic communities and their recoverability...." in order for the OIPMP to meet its objective.		The Applicants have previously responded to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.C.35 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).	No change.		The Applicants previously responded to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.C.35 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).
RI_C28	From the information and figures presented ([APP-019] 1.8.2.31), it is not possible to determine whether the subtidal mud habitat type and NERC (2006) Priority habitat 'Burrowing megafauna communities' (as mapped in Figure 1.21 of the Benthic Technical report) overlap with the Fylde MCZ boundary. Site-specific benthic characterisation baseline should be presented together with the MCZ boundary in a single figure so that the habitats present can be checked against those assessed within the MCZ assessment report.		The Applicants have previously responded to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.C.43 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017) and an updated figure was included in the Stage 2 MCZ Assessment submitted at Deadline 1 (REP1-059). This is also included in the Errata document submitted at Deadline 2 (S_D1_14_F02). The Applicants can confirm that the 'seapen and burrowing megafauna communities' important ecological factor (IEF) was not recorded at any stations sampled within the Fylde MCZ. The sample station in closest proximity to the Fylde MCZ where the 'seapen and burrowing megafauna communities' IEF was recorded was ENV124 which was located 86 m to the west of the Fylde MCZ boundary.	No change.		The Applicants previously responded to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.C.43 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017) and an updated figure was included in the Stage 2 MCZ Assessment submitted at Deadline 1 (REP1-059). This is also included in the Errata document submitted at Deadline 2 (REP2-028). This errata has no impact on the conclusions of the MCZ assessment.  The Applicants can confirm that the 'seapen and burrowing megafauna communities' important ecological factor (IEF) was not recorded at any stations sampled within the Fylde MCZ. The sample station in closest proximity to the Fylde MCZ where the 'seapen and burrowing megafauna communities' IEF was recorded was ENV124 which was located 86 m to the west of the Fylde MCZ boundary (please also see response RI_C28 of the Annex 3.3 to Applicants' Response to WRs: Response to Natural England's Risk and Issues Log – Rev F01 (REP2-034)).
RI_C29	Please see comments C28 – C33 regarding mitigation which are equally applicable to this section and Fylde MCZ.		The Applicants have previously responded to the points raised by Natural England in relation to mitigation and the Fylde MCZ within RR-1601.42, RR-1601.43 and RR-1601.43 of their response to Natural England (PDA-014) and within RR-1601.C.28 to RR-1601.C.33 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).	No change.		The Applicants previously responded to the points raised by Natural England in relation to mitigation and the Fylde MCZ within RR-1601.42, RR-1601.43 and RR-1601.43 of their response to Natural England (PDA-014) and within RR-1601.C.28 to RR-1601.C.33 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).
RI_C30	Natural England advises that the adoption of mitigation measures via a Benthic Mitigation Plan, and associated monitoring in the Offshore In-Principle Monitoring Plan are further considered in order that impacts (particularly permanent loss), on the more sensitive Section 41 Habitats are avoided and/or reduced wherever feasible through mitigation measures such as micro-siting.		The Applicants have previously responded to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.C.31, RR-1601.C.32 and RR-1601.C.35 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).	No change.		The Applicants previously responded to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.C.31, RR-1601.C.32 and RR-1601.C.35 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).



## 2.6 Risk and Issues Log – Fish and Shellfish Ecology

Table 2.6: Responses to questions regarding Fish and Shellfish Ecology

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 2	NE comment at Deadline 2 (Consultation, actions, progression)	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants comment at Deadline X
<b>Risk and Issues Log Deadline 1 – Fish and Shellfish Ecology</b> <b>Taken from Natural England's Relevant and Written Representations Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets</b> <b>Appendix D - Fish and Shellfish Ecology</b>						
RI_D1	Natural England do not agree that smelt should be screened out. There is potential for EMF to cause barrier effects that hinder smelt movements in and out of the estuary. Minimum and maximum target burial depths between 0.5 m and 3 m are detailed for the marine component. The Applicant should provide further detail on proposed cable depth below the riverbed and detail pertaining to EMF from the cable below the Ribble Estuary MCZ and this should be used to appropriately assess EMF impacts.		The Applicants have provided a response on this comment relating to the potential impacts of EMFs on smelt in the Ribble Estuary MCZ (PDA-014, RR-1601, 1601.47). This issue has been agreed with the Environment Agency, which considers the matter closed (REP1-076, 076.4).	No change.		The Applicants provided a response on this comment relating to the potential impacts of EMFs on smelt in the Ribble Estuary MCZ (PDA-014, RR-1601, 1601.47). This issue has been agreed with the Environment Agency, which considers the matter closed (REP1-076, 076.4) (please also see response RI_D1 of the Annex 3.3 to Applicants' Response to WRs: Response to Natural England's Risk and Issues Log – Rev F01 (REP2-034)).
RI_D2	Natural England recommend that an assessment of the long-term loss of seabed habitat that potentially supports prey species for the ornithological features of Liverpool Bay SPA is included. This should be based on an assessment of the area of suitable spawning and other supporting habitat for prey species (sandeel) that could be lost due to the construction of the cable corridor. The MDS states that cable protection will be designed to be removable, however there is no commitment to remove upon decommissioning. Sandeel exhibit high site fidelity and leaving cable covering in situ during decommissioning phase would be considered permanent habitat loss. Natural England also advises that the Applicant commit to removing all cable protection within Fylde MCZ at the time of decommissioning or assess permanent habitat loss of supporting prey species for Liverpool Bay SPA.		The Applicants have previously provided a response to this point and has assessed the potential impacts of long-term loss of seabed habitat and impacts on prey species (see PDA-014, RR-1601, 1601.46).	No change.		The Applicants previously provided a response to this point and has assessed the potential impacts of long-term loss of seabed habitat and impacts on prey species (see PDA-014, RR-1601, 1601.46).
RI_D3	There is potential for permanent habitat loss for sandeel and herring resulting from UXO and jack up barges altering sediment compositions. It is not clear whether this has been assessed. UXO clearance and jack up barges need assessing for effects from permanent habitat loss on sandeel and herring.		The Applicants have assessment the potential impacts of UXO and jack-up barges as temporary habitat loss/disturbance (Volume 2, Chapter 3: Fish and shellfish ecology, APP-048, section 3.11.2), with recovery of sediments explained within this section. The Applicant's response to Natural England's Relevant Representation (PDA-018, RR-	No change.		The Applicants have assessment the potential impacts of UXO and jack-up barges as temporary habitat loss/disturbance (Volume 2, Chapter 3: Fish and shellfish ecology, APP-048, section 3.11.2), with recovery of sediments explained within this section. The Applicant's response to Natural England's Relevant Representation (PDA-

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 2	NE comment at Deadline 2 (Consultation, actions, progression)	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants comment at Deadline X
			1601.D, 1601.D.3) provides clarity on this point.			018, RR-1601.D, 1601.D.3) provides clarity on this point.
RI_D4	Natural England defers to CEFAS on survey data acquisition, data sources, assessment methodology and its conclusions in relation to herring and sandeel. Natural England advises the Applicant refer to CEFAS comments as advisors to the MMO on this matter.		The Applicants note this comment and have provided a response to the MMO on all fish and shellfish ecology issues (PDA-013).			
RI_D5	It is unclear whether all relevant pathways have been assessed and/or quantified. Where relevant, the calculations for temporary and/ or permanent habitat loss impacts need to be considered with regards to suitable habitat for sandeel and herring. Natural England advise that full consideration of the likely nature, extent, duration, and significance of impacts upon SPA supporting habitats is required to inform a robust assessment of the likely impacts upon designated ornithological features and in turn prey species.		The Applicants have assessed temporary and long term habitat loss in Volume 2, Chapter 3: Fish and shellfish ecology (APP-048), and has provided additional information on supporting habitats and prey species in response to Natural England's Relevant Representation (PDA-014, RR-1601, 1601.46).	No change.		The Applicants assessed temporary and long term habitat loss in Volume 2, Chapter 3: Fish and shellfish ecology (APP-048), and provided additional information on supporting habitats and prey species in response to Natural England's Relevant Representation (PDA-014, RR-1601, 1601.46).
RI_D6	Natural England largely agree with justification for in-combination assessment impacts for UXO and EMF but see comments D10 & D11 for further consideration.		The Applicants welcome this agreement. The Applicants' response to Natural England's Relevant Representation (PDA-018, RR-1601.D) provides further clarity on the outstanding points as set out above.	No change.		The Applicants welcome this agreement. The Applicants' response to Natural England's Relevant Representation (PDA-018, RR-1601.D) provides further clarity on the outstanding points as set out above under RI_D3.
RI_D7	Natural England do not agree with the statement that smelt have been shown to habituate to anthropogenic noise sources. There is little evidence to support this. The Applicant should provide more robust evidence to support this conclusion or remove the statement.		The Applicants have provided a response to this comment in response to the Natural England Relevant Representation (PDA-018, RR-1601.D, 1601.D.18).			



## 2.7 Risk and Issues Log – Marine Mammals

Table 2.7: Responses to questions regarding Marine Mammals

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 2	NE comment at Deadline 2 (Consultation, actions, progression)	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants comment at Deadline 3
<b>Risk and Issue Log Deadline 1 – Marine Mammals</b> <b>Taken from Natural England's Relevant and Written Representations Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets</b> <b>Appendix E - Marine Mammals</b>						
RI_E1	<p>Natural England note that UXO clearance is included as a licenced activity in the DCO/marine licence (which includes high order clearance). This is a live issue for some projects in the consenting process (Mona OWF and Morgan OWF) and it is also applicable for the Transmission Assets. We strongly advise that a separate marine licence is sought for UXO clearance due to the lack of information available regarding the size, type and number etc of UXO that will require clearance and the over precaution that must be incorporated into the impact assessment at this stage. Without further information on what size of devices will proceed to clearance stage, the assessment (and associated mitigation protocols) must consider the worst-case scenario presented. Natural England advise that UXO clearance should be authorised under a standalone marine licence post consent and removed from the draft DCO.</p>		<p>The Applicants have provided a detailed response on this subject previously, within RR-1601 1601.E.1 (PDA-019).</p> <p>The Applicants confirm that high order UXO clearance was removed from the draft DCO (including the DMLs) (REP1-008) at Deadline 1. Should high order clearance be required, this would be authorised under a separate marine licence. Removal of high order UXO clearance from this DCO is reflected in the updated drafting of the deemed marine licences in Schedules 14 &amp; 15, Condition 20(1)(b) in the draft DCO. The Commitments Register (see CoT64) (F1.5.3/F03) and Outline MMMP (J18/F02) have also been updated at Deadline 2 to reflect these changes.</p>	<p>In progress: The Applicant has proposed to remove high order unexploded ordinance (UXO) detonations and restrict the project to low order detonations. Natural England maintains its position that UXO detonation should be subject to a separate marine licence post consent, regardless of whether the removal is low or high order. Further, that the maximum number of detonations (low or high order), should be recorded on any consent granted. However, without prejudice to our position, we accept that low order removal is preferred. Whilst we welcome the inclusion of the maximum number of UXO's to be removed by low order, further information on how this number was derived should be provided.</p> <p>We advise that the Applicant should submit an updated version of their MMMP and Marine Mammal Chapter into Examination to reflect that high order has been removed from the DCO. We highlight that the Morgan Generation project made similar updates and submitted these into the Morgan Examination at Deadline 6 [REP6-032].</p>		<p>The Applicants provided a detailed response on this subject previously, within RR-1601 1601.E.1 (PDA-019).</p> <p>The Applicants confirm that high order UXO clearance was removed from the draft DCO (including the DMLs) (REP1-008) at Deadline 1. Removal of high order UXO clearance from this DCO is reflected in the drafting of the deemed marine licences in Schedules 14 &amp; 15, Condition 20(1)(b) in the draft DCO (REP2-004). The Commitments Register (see CoT64) (REP2-010) and Outline MMMP (REP2-026) were also updated at Deadline 2 to reflect these changes. The MMMPs will require implementation of a mitigation hierarchy for UXO clearance, prioritising avoidance of UXOs and the use of low order techniques. However, avoidance may not always be possible, depending on the circumstances surrounding each UXO, in which case the Applicants consider it necessary for low order UXO to be authorised under each of the offshore DMLs at Schedules 14 and 15 of the draft DCO (REP2-004).</p> <p>The updated version of the Marine Mammal Chapter (APP-050) will be submitted into Examination at Deadline 6. Please note, the Applicants maintain that the assessment of potential effects of high order UXO clearance should remain within the Marine Mammal Chapter (APP-050) to support a marine licence application, should the need arise to apply for high order UXO clearance through a separate marine licence.</p>
RI_E2	<p>Natural England have outstanding concerns on the assessment methodology. We see the issues as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dual effect categories in the assessment matrix where in certain cases non-significant and significant effects can result from the same combination of magnitude and sensitivity. It is generally accepted that the assessment should follow the precautionary principle thus further justification is needed when lower effect categories are chosen. Or, ideally, dual categories in the matrix should be avoided.</li> <li>• Terminology used to base the conclusions of the assessment is not defined thus there</li> </ul>		<p>The Applicants have provided a detailed response on this subject previously, within RR-1601 1601.E.2 (PDA-019).</p>	No change.		<p>The Applicants provided a detailed response on this subject previously, within RR-1601 1601.E.2 (PDA-019).</p>

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 2	NE comment at Deadline 2 (Consultation, actions, progression)	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants comment at Deadline 3
	is uncertainty as to what spatial or temporal scale terms such 'short term', 'medium term', 'long term', "temporary", "small scale", "regional", 'highly localised' mean. Natural England advises the assessment methodology be revised and the assessment updated accordingly.					
RI_E3	The effective range of ADDs for harbour porpoises is 7.5 km approximately (JNCC 2022). The Applicant needs to outline how they plan to mitigate the rest of the estimated injury zone up to 15.37 km for high order UXO clearance activities. It is not clear what other measures the Applicant will commit to in order to mitigate for the full injury zone. The Applicant should provide further information on mitigation options for the entire harbour porpoise injury zone from high order UXO clearance for the alone and cumulative effect assessment (CEA).		The Applicants have provided a detailed response on this subject previously, within RR-1601 1601.E.3 (PDA-019).  Please also see the Applicants' response above to RI_E1 on the removal of high order clearance from the draft DCO at Deadline 1 (REP1-008).	In progress: We note the Applicant has removed high order UXO from the DCO [REP1-008].  We advise that the Applicant should submit an updated version of their MMMP and Marine Mammal Chapter into Examination to reflect that high order has been removed from the DCO. We highlight that the Morgan Generation project made similar updates and submitted these into the Morgan Examination at Deadline 6 [REP6-032]. Provided that these updated documents are submitted into examination, we believe this issue will be readily resolved.		An updated version of the Outline MMMP (REP2-026) reflecting removal of high order UXO from the DCO was submitted into Examination at Deadline 2.  The updated version of the Marine Mammal Chapter (APP-050) will be submitted into Examination at Deadline 6. Please note, the Applicants maintain that the assessment of potential effects of high order UXO clearance should remain within the Marine Mammals ES Chapter (APP-050) to support a marine licence application, should the need arise to apply for high order UXO clearance through a separate marine licence.
RI_E4	Natural England does not support use of scare charges for UXO clearance, and we advise that this measure is not considered in the final Marine Mammal Mitigation Protocol (MMMP). Remove the use of scare charges for UXO clearance from the final MMMP.		The Applicants have provided a detailed response on this subject previously, within RR-1601 1601.E.4 (PDA-019). The Applicants confirm that the Outline MMMP (J18/F02) has been updated at Deadline 2 to focus on low order UXO clearance, removing mitigation for high order UXO detonation, including the use of scare charges as a mitigation option for high order detonation. Mitigation for high order UXO detonation has been included as an Addendum to the Outline MMMP to align with the assessment of high order UXO in Volume 2, Chapter 4: Marine Mammals (APP-050) and to support a separate standalone marine licence if high order clearance is required. Should Noise Abatement Systems (NAS) for high order clearance be required, this will be discussed and agreed with the MMO and relevant stakeholders if and when the need for a separate Marine Licence application for high order UXO detonation is identified.  Please see the Applicants response above to RI_E1 for further details on	In progress: NE notes that high order detonations have now been removed from the DCO and they will require a separate marine licence. We also note that the MMMP mentions scare charges may only be needed for high order detonations. For clarity, the MMMP and Marine Mammal Chapter should be updated to remove this reference to scare charges.  Once the relevant documents have been updated we believe that this is readily resolvable.		An updated version of the Outline MMMP (REP2-026) removing mitigation for high order UXO detonation, including the use of scare charges as a mitigation option for high order detonation was submitted into Examination at Deadline 2.  The updated version of the Marine Mammals ES Chapter (APP-050) will be submitted into Examination at Deadline 6. Please note, the Applicants maintain that the assessment of potential effects of high order UXO clearance should remain within the Marine Mammals ES Chapter (APP-050) to support a marine licence application, should the need arise to apply for high order UXO clearance through a separate marine licence.

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 2	NE comment at Deadline 2 (Consultation, actions, progression)	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants comment at Deadline 3
			the removal of high order clearance from the draft DCO at Deadline 1 (REP1-008).			
RI_E5	Standard industry measures (such as Marine Mammal Observers (MMOs), Passive Acoustic Monitoring (PAM) and Acoustic Deterrent Devices (ADDs)) are intended to minimise the risk of injury, thus they cannot be used as a justification to conclude that there will be no significant disturbance of the species. Mitigation measures aimed to reduce disturbance should be considered instead of relying on measures for reducing the risk of injury. This needs to be revised throughout the assessment.		The Applicants have provided a detailed response on this subject previously, within RR-1601 1601.E.5 (PDA-019).	In progress: Our response to RI_E3 above is equally applicable here.		The Applicants provided a detailed response on this subject previously, within RR-1601 1601.E.5 (PDA-019). Additionally, see the Applicants responses to RI_E3 above.
RI_E6	Natural England has outstanding concerns regarding the Cumulative Effects Assessment (CEA). Natural England does not agree with the significance of effect for PTS during UXO clearance in the cumulative effects assessment, particularly for harbour porpoise and does not agree with the justification for the conclusions made. Assess population-level consequences of disturbance during the cumulative effects assessment for all scenarios and produce an appropriate mitigation plan if significant effects are predicted. Given the cumulative number of vessels across all projects as well as large disturbance ranges, Natural England does not agree with the assigned magnitude score 'low' for disturbance from elevated underwater sound due to vessel use and other (non-piling) sound producing activities. The assessment provides very limited consideration of the potential significant increase of number of vessels and vessel movements for each project. Revise the CEA for disturbance from elevated underwater sound due to vessel use and other (non-piling) sound producing activities with an increased level of magnitude and commit to implementing the Vessel Traffic Management Plan.		The Applicants have provided a detailed response on this subject previously, within RR-1601 1601.E.6 (PDA-019).	In progress: Our response to RI_E3 above is equally applicable here.		The Applicants provided a detailed response on this subject previously, within RR-1601 1601.E.6 (PDA-019). Additionally, see the Applicants responses to RI_E3 above.
RI_E7	The Maximum Design Scenario (MDS) for Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) clearance differs between the documents. Natural England advise that details relating to UXO clearance MDS should be updated for consistency across all chapters to ensure the		The Applicants have provided a detailed response on this subject previously, within RR-1601 1601.E.7 (PDA-019).			

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 2	NE comment at Deadline 2 (Consultation, actions, progression)	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants comment at Deadline 3
	Worst Case Scenario (WCS) is appropriately discussed and assessed.					
RI_E8	The MDS for Injury and disturbance to marine mammals from elevated underwater sound due to vessel use and other sound-producing activities in the Marine Mammals chapter [APP-050] differs from the MDS outlined in Chapter 7 Shipping and Navigation [APP-056]. Natural England advise that the MDS should be correctly reported and assessed in all relevant chapters and where chapters make reference to each other ensure all details, e.g. MDS, are consistent.		The Applicants have provided a detailed response on this subject previously, within RR-1601 1601.E.8 (PDA-019).			
RI_E9	Table 4.7 [APP-050] includes all correct protected areas and features. However, the referenced figure 4.1 'SACs and MNRs, designated for the protection of marine mammals within the regional study area' has not been included in Volume 2, Figures [APP-064]. The figure labelled 4.1 in [APP-064] is the marine mammal study area and relevant species MUs not the designated sites. Some figures in accompanying volumes do not have a reference number on the figure but are referenced in the ES. Ensure all figures are appropriately included, labelled, referenced and identifiable from the reference in ES.		The Applicants have provided a detailed response on this subject previously, within RR-1601 1601.E.11 (PDA-019).  Further the Applicants confirm that the referenced figure 'SACs and MNRs, designated for the protection of marine mammals within the regional study area' has now been included as Figure 4.6 in ES Volume 2, Figures, Part 3 of 5 (F2.10/F02), submitted at Deadline 2. The Applicants also confirm that any figures referenced in Volume 2, chapter 4: marine mammals (APP-050) that did not have a Figure reference number were updated and submitted in AS-037 (Response to s51 advice - F2.10 ES Volume 2: Figures Part 3 of 5) (namely Figure 4.2 and Figure 4.3).			
RI_E10	Natural England notes the inclusion of harbour seals in the assessment without a population estimate for the Isle of Man population. Natural England acknowledges the lack of data currently available in the literature to provide an estimate for the Isle of Man.		The Applicants have provided a detailed response on this subject previously, within RR-1601 1601.E.13 (PDA-019).			
RI_E11	Natural England advises that the reference population for grey seal should consider both the GSRP population estimate and the NW MU estimate. Natural England advise that both should be considered. Revise assessment so that it is undertaken against the NW MU grey seal population alone as the reference population, in addition to the assessment completed against the GSRP population.		The Applicants have provided a detailed response on this subject previously, within RR-1601 1601.E.14 (PDA-019).			



ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 2	NE comment at Deadline 2 (Consultation, actions, progression)	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants comment at Deadline 3
RI_E12	Natural England does not agree with the approach of using a 100km buffer region for grey seal in order to determine connectivity with the Transmission Assets based upon average foraging ranges for the species. maximum foraging distances from Carter et al., 2022 should be used to determine the connectivity from an identified haul out site and the project area. Natural England previously raised this issue during the PEIR stage and it has not been addressed. We do not now anticipate any material changes would be made to the baseline.		The Applicants have provided a detailed response on this subject previously, within RR-1601 1601.E.15 (PDA-019).			
RI_E13	Natural England acknowledges the inclusion in the ES of survey data and other data/ up to date references as requested, e.g. SCANS IV and two years of survey data at Morecambe Offshore Windfarm: Generation Assets and the inclusion of other key references Marine Mammal Welsh Atlas (2023), IAMMWG (2022) and SCOS 2022.		The Applicants have provided a detailed response on this subject previously, within RR-1601 1601.E.16 (PDA-019).			
RI_E14	The significance of auditory injury to harbour porpoise from UXO detonation should be amended to major, in line with the most significant option in the dual matrix category. Update the conclusions for auditory injury for harbour porpoise in the ES.		The Applicants have provided a detailed response on this subject previously, within RR-1601 1601.E.19 (PDA-019).	In progress: Our response to RI_E3 above is equally applicable here.		The Applicants provided a detailed response on this subject previously, within RR-1601 1601.E.19 (PDA-019). Additionally, see the Applicants responses to RI_E3 above.
RI_E15	Inconsistency in the approach when assigning the sensitivity score for effects on marine mammals due to changes in prey availability. Minke whale has been assigned a sensitivity of medium, however harbour seal and harbour porpoise have both been assigned a sensitivity of low. Due to the vulnerability of harbour porpoise and harbour seal to changes in prey availability, their assigned sensitivity score should be medium in the assessment.		The Applicants have provided a detailed response on this subject previously, within RR-1601 1601.E.20 (PDA-019).			
RI_E16	Natural England disagrees that a period of several months can be considered "short term". However, in paragraph 4.11.6.30 the same description of works is described as 'medium term'. Define the terms to describe both temporal and spatial impacts and apply them consistently across the assessment.		The Applicants have provided a detailed response on this subject previously, within RR-1601 1601.E.22 and RR-1601 1601.E.21 (PDA-019)			
RI_E17	Natural England notes that the predicted disturbance ranges for sub-bottom profilers (SBPs) and vibro-coring are 17.3km and 10.6km respectively. However, no mitigation measures have been discussed for these large disturbance ranges.		The Applicants have provided a detailed response on this subject previously, within RR-1601 1601.E.22 and RR-1601 1601.E.27 (PDA-019).			

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 2	NE comment at Deadline 2 (Consultation, actions, progression)	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants comment at Deadline 3
	Natural England acknowledges that there are currently no other mitigation options available for SBP surveys beside those outlines in the JNCC guidelines for minimising the risk of injury to marine mammals from geophysical surveys (JNCC, 2017). Thus, there is a need for monitoring to fill the knowledge gap on the impact of SBP surveys on harbour porpoises. We therefore advise that monitoring should be considered with the aim to collect data before, during and after SBP surveys to examine changes in the baseline. Inclusion of this monitoring in the IPMP would resolve this issue.					
RI_E18	The maximum disturbance ranges predicted for SBP is up to 17.3 km and is described as 'mild disturbance', however in 4.11.6.29 it states that for 'impulsive sound sources there is an understanding of the difference between strong and mild disturbance, whereas for non-impulsive (continuous) sound sources (MBES, SSS, SBES, SBP (chirp/pinger) and vibro-coring), there is only a single available threshold (120 dB re 1 µPa (SPLrms)), which is classed as the distance beyond which no animals would be disturbed.' This statement contradicts the conclusion of mild disturbance from SBP sound source. Define the terms correctly for impulsive and non-impulsive sound sources and apply them consistently across the assessment.		The Applicants have provided a detailed response on this subject previously, within RR-1601 1601.E.23 (PDA-019).			
RI_E19	Given the cumulative number of vessels across all projects as well as large disturbance ranges, Natural England does not agree with the assigned magnitude score of 'low' for disturbance from elevated underwater sound due to vessel use and other (non-piling) sound producing activities. Revise the CEA for disturbance from elevated underwater sound due to vessel use and other (non-piling) sound producing activities. Ensure the Applicant commits to implementing their Vessel Traffic Management Plan.		The Applicants have provided a detailed response on this subject previously, within RR-1601 1601.E.26 (PDA-019).			
RI_E20	Natural England acknowledge the MMOs advice to the Applicant to commit to using Noise Abatement Systems (NAS) as mitigation during construction. Natural England notes CoT64 where the Applicants has committed to developing and implementing a detailed MMMP which will include the use of low order techniques as		The Applicants have provided a detailed response on this subject previously, within RR-1601 1601.E.29 (PDA-019). Please also see the Applicants response above to RI_E1 on the removal of high order			



ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 2	NE comment at Deadline 2 (Consultation, actions, progression)	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants comment at Deadline 3
	the primary mitigation where possible. The detailed MMMP should consider guidelines for minimising the risk of injury to marine mammals from UXO (JNCC, 2025). Natural England advises the Applicant should continue to prioritise other measures, such as avoidance, relocation and low-order clearance methods such as deflagration over high order clearance and to consider and apply new guidelines for minimising the risk of injury to marine mammals from UXO. These other measures should all be included in the final MMMP.		clearance from the draft DCO at Deadline 1 (REP1-008). Further the Applicants confirm that the Outline MMMP (updated at Deadline 2 (J18/F02) has been updated to include reference to recently published mitigation guidelines.			
RI_E21	Natural England defers to CEFAS as the underwater sound specialists to comment on the Underwater Sound Technical Report.		The Applicants note this comment.			
RI_E22	Please note that it is Natural England's remit to provide advice on the assessment in so much as it relates to SACs in English waters. We defer to the relevant SNCBs on the appropriate approach for assessing SACs outside English waters.		The Applicants note this comment.			
RI_E23	Natural England notes that the Applicant is more likely to carry out sequential UXO clearance, however the assessment states that 'A spatial MDS would occur where UXO clearance activities coincide at all three projects simultaneously'. There remains potential for UXO clearance activities to coincide at all 3 projects simultaneously, therefore there could be a significant impact on marine mammals that could manifest to population level effects based on the PTS figures for high order UXO clearance. Natural England advise the Applicant to produce an appropriate mitigation plan should this scenario occur.		The Applicants have provided a detailed response on this subject previously, within RR-1601 1601.E.35 (PDA-019). Please also see the Applicants response above to RI_E1 on the removal of high order clearance from the draft DCO at Deadline 1 (REP1-008).	In progress: Our response to RI_E3 above is equally applicable here.		The Applicants provided a detailed response on this subject previously, within RR-1601 1601.E.35 (PDA-019). Please also see the Applicants response above to RI_E1 on the removal of high order UXO clearance from the draft DCO at Deadline 1 (REP1-008) and updated Outline MMMP submitted at Deadline 2 (REP2-026).
RI_E24	We note that the mitigation measures to minimise disturbance to marine mammals included within the Offshore EMP are only relevant to the transiting vessels. Consider appropriate measure for all other (non-piling) sound producing activities, not just transiting vessels.		The Applicants have provided a detailed response on this subject previously, within RR-1601 1601.E.36 (PDA-019).			

## 2.8 Risk and Issues Log – Offshore Ornithology

Table 2.8: Responses to questions regarding Offshore Ornithology

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 2	NE comment at Deadline 2 (Consultation, actions, progression)	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants comment at Deadline 3
<b>Risk and Issues Log Deadline 1 – Offshore Ornithology</b> <b>Taken from Natural England's Relevant and Written Representations Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets</b> <b>Appendix F - Offshore Ornithology</b>						
RI_F1	The Applicant should complete a quantified cumulative assessment of impacts on species sensitive to disturbance and displacement, including mortality figures for each project included in the assessment, and provide clarity on the parameters used to produce those figures. The result should comprise a total abundance of birds that could be affected and a range of final mortality estimates based on a range of possible displacement and mortality rates, as per Natural England best practice guidance.		Please see the Applicants' response to RR-1601F.1 in PDA-020.	No change.		Please see the Applicants' response to RI_F3
RI_F2	Natural England recommend that an assessment of the long-term loss of seabed habitat that potentially supports prey species for the ornithological features of Liverpool Bay SPA is included in the Information to Support Appropriate Assessment. This should be based on an assessment of the area of suitable spawning and other supporting habitat for prey species that could be lost due to the construction of the cable corridor, with consideration of i) diver and in particular scoter densities along those parts of the cable route where rock protection might be needed and ii) the presence of key species/habitats that fall within that area.		Please see the Applicants' response to RR-1601.49 in PDA-014.	No change.		Please see the Applicants' response to RR-1601.49 in PDA-014.
RI_F3	Natural England do not agree with the conclusion that adverse effect on site integrity (AEol) for the red-throated diver and common scoter features of Liverpool Bay SPA can be ruled out due to the displacement and disturbance impacts of the Project alone during the construction phase. Natural England highlights that the conservation advice for these features include targets to maintain the distribution of the feature and the extent, distribution and availability of supporting habitat, preventing deterioration from current levels, not just population abundance. The Project's potential to cause AEol can be avoided by the Applicant committing to a full		Please see response to comment RR-1601.50 in PDA-014. Please also see response to NE12 above.	No change.		Please see the Applicants' response to comment NE12 on "Annex 3.3 to Applicants' Response to WRs: Response to Natural England's Risk and Issues Log – Rev F01 (REP2-034)" where the Applicants have committed to seasonal restrictions within the Liverpool Bay SPA. This includes a timing restriction on all offshore export cable installation activities between November and March (inclusive) within the original boundary of the Liverpool Bay/Bae Lerpwl SPA (as designated in 2010) and including a 2 km buffer, unless otherwise agreed with the MMO, in consultation with Natural England, to remove the potential for AEol.  In addition, the Applicants have committed to a seasonal restriction for UXO clearance, whereby no clearance of UXO will be undertaken within the Liverpool Bay SPA/Bae Lerpwl SPA between November and March (inclusive) (see the 'Measures to minimise disturbance to marine

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 2	NE comment at Deadline 2 (Consultation, actions, progression)	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants comment at Deadline 3
	restriction on all offshore construction and pre-construction (UXO clearance) activity with the potential to cause disturbance within the SPA and a 2km buffer around it during the wintering months of November to March (inclusive).					mammals and rafting birds from vessels' (REP2-025) and Commitment Register (REP2-010) and draft DCO (REP2-004) submitted at Deadline 2.
RI_F4	Natural England are unable to reach a conclusion regarding the Project's impacts during the operations and maintenance (O&M) phase, either alone or in-combination, as the maximum design scenario (MDS) is set out on an annual basis. Alongside the annual MDS, the Applicant should set out the MDS for the key wintering months of November to March (inclusive), particularly for any activities which have the potential to cause disturbance to sensitive ornithological features within Liverpool Bay SPA and consider the need for a seasonal restriction for O&M activities.		Please see response to comment RR-1601.50 in PDA-014.	No change.		Please see the Applicants' response to RI_F3
RI_F5	Natural England note that the Applicant has calculated a bespoke regional population for red-throated diver based on the fact that the BDMPS population from Furness (2015), which is generally used as the standard reference for EIA population scales, is smaller than the most recent population estimate for Liverpool Bay alone (HiDef, 2023). The Applicant should calculate a regional population based only on populations that sit within the original BDMPS region and use this for assessing red-throated diver impacts.		Please see response to comment RR-1601.F.9 in PDA-020.			
RI_F6	We note that the wintering period has been identified as covering November-February inclusive. Natural England considers the key sensitive period for red-throated diver to extend until the end of March. Seasonal restrictions on construction activity to avoid impacts on wintering birds should cover the period from the start of November to the end of March.		Please see response to comment RR-1601.50 in PDA-014. Please also see response to NE12 above.	No change.		Please see the Applicants' response to RI_F3
RI_F7	The Applicant should present a range of cumulative quantitative displacement impacts from other projects on red-throated diver and common scoter at an EIA scale in the Irish sea, both those exerting ongoing pressures during their operations and maintenance phase and those whose construction impacts will overlap with the		Please see response to comment RR1601.F.1 in PDA-020.	No change.		Please see the Applicants' response to RI_F3.

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 2	NE comment at Deadline 2 (Consultation, actions, progression)	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants comment at Deadline 3
	Project, plus the predicted impacts from the Project in its construction stage.					
RI_F8	Due to the sensitivity of key ornithological features of Liverpool Bay SPA during the wintering months of November to March (inclusive). Therefore the Applicant should include descriptions of the maximum design scenario for activities causing airborne sound, underwater sound or presence/movement of vessels and infrastructure within the wintering period for each phase of the Project, in addition to the annual descriptions.		Please see response to comment RR1601.F.5 in PDA-020.			
RI_F9	To fully consider the in-combination impacts on the distribution and the extent, distribution and availability of supporting habitat for the red-throated diver and common scoter features of Liverpool Bay SPA, the Applicant should present an assessment of the area and the proportion of the SPA that is subject to displacement and disturbance impacts due to the Project in-combination with other projects and include West of Duddon Sands OWF as its 10km buffer overlaps with the SPA.		Please see response to comment RR1601.F.17 in PDA-020.	No change.		Please see the Applicants' response to RI_F3
RI_F10	Natural England notes the Hynet North West Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) project has been screened out of the offshore ornithology assessment due to low data confidence. There is a high risk of spatial and temporal overlap of the construction of Hynet North West CCS and the Transmission Assets, therefore Natural England advise this project should be screened into the CEA for offshore ornithology and assessed as part of the Tier 2 projects. Further information should be sought from the Hynet project, specifically information on mitigation measures during construction.		Please see response to comment RR1601.F.21 in PDA-020.	No change.		<p>The Hynet CCS project was identified as a Tier 2 project within the Application and categorised as a project with Low data confidence in relation to offshore ornithological receptors due to an absence of information pertaining to potential impacts from this project.</p> <p>An update to the Cumulative Screening matrix and location plan submitted at Deadline 1 (REP1-020) reclassified the Hynet CCS project as a Tier 1 project, and is considered as such for Offshore Ornithology receptors within the Review of the Cumulative Effects Assessment and In-Combination Assessment submitted at Deadline 2 (REP2-043).</p> <p>The species progressed to the cumulative assessment in Volume 2, Chapter 5: Offshore Ornithology (APP-053) were cormorant, common scoter, eider, red-breasted merganser, red-throated diver and scaup. The qualifying features progressed to the in-combination assessment in Habitats Regulations Assessment Stage 2 Information to Support an Appropriate Assessment Part Three – Special Protection Areas (SPA) and Ramsar Site assessments (APP-017) were qualifying features of the Liverpool Bay/Bae Lerpwl SPA namely red-throated diver, cormorant, common scoter and red-breasted merganser. These species are present within the relevant ornithological study areas in the non-breeding season only. Therefore following the project's commitment to a</p>

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 2	NE comment at Deadline 2 (Consultation, actions, progression)	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants comment at Deadline 3
						seasonal restriction on all offshore export cable installation activities works between November and February March (inclusive) within the Liverpool Bay SPA/ Bae Lerpwl SPA (as designated in 2010), including a 2 km buffer (CoT111 of F1.5.3 Environmental Statement Volume 1, Annex 5.3: Commitments Register (REP2-010)) during the non-breeding season, the Transmission Assets no longer contribute to a cumulative or in-combination impact on the qualifying features of the Liverpool Bay SPA and therefore cumulative and in-combination assessments for these receptors/features is no longer required.



## 2.9 Risk and Issues Log – Onshore Ecology

**Table 2.9: Responses to questions regarding Onshore Ecology**

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 2	RAG Deadline 2	NE comment at Deadline 2 (Consultation, actions, progression)	Applicants comment at Deadline 3
<b>Risk and Issues Log Deadline 1 – Onshore Ecology</b> <b>Taken from Natural England's Relevant and Written Representations Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets</b> <b>Appendix G - Onshore Ecology</b>						
RI_G1	<p>Natural England is unable to rule out significant impacts on sand dune SSSI features associated with Lytham St. Annes Dunes due to uncertainties around changes to the water table (both during construction and operation). We are also concerned about dewatering effects associated with pumping out water from the Transition Joint Bay (TJB) during construction, and the cable acting as a conduit altering water flow through the system.</p> <p>Similar concerns are also flagged for sand dune habitat (S41 priority habitat under the NERC Act 2006) at St. Annes Old Links Golf Course Biological Heritage Site (BHS) and Lytham Foreshore Dunes and Saltmarsh BHS.</p> <p>a) We advise that Impacts on dune slack vegetation (which is referable to the Annex I habitat H1290) needs to be more thoroughly assessed.</p> <p>b) Natural England advises the Applicant to consider the installation of dipwells (automatic dataloggers) to monitor the position of the water table pre- and post-construction and this commitment should be included as a part of the ongoing Monitoring Plan</p> <p>c) In addition, we advise that modelling is necessary to determine the position of the water table and potential fluctuations that may arise as part of the proposals over the lifetime of the project.</p>		<p>As outlined in the Applicants' Cover Letter at Deadline 1 (REP1-001), further information is being produced to supplement the Applicants' response at Procedural Deadline A RR-1601.G 1601.G.1 (PDA-014 and PDA-021). This information will include a Preliminary Hydrogeological Risk Assessment informed by existing hydrogeological information from desk study information, Ground Investigation data, and National Vegetation Classification and Phase 1 habitat survey data presented in the Volume 3 Annex 3.3: Phase 1 Habitat, National Vegetation Classification and Hedgerow of the ES (F 3.3.3/F02). The Applicants intend to submit the Preliminary Hydrogeological Risk Assessment at Deadline 3.</p> <p>The Applicants have arranged a follow-on meeting with Natural England to share and discuss the concerns in relation to the Lytham St. Annes Dunes. This will take place on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2025.</p> <p>The Applicants have made a commitment (CoT128 of Volume 1, Annex 5.3: Commitments Register of the ES (F 1.5.3/F03)) to undertake hydrogeological risk assessment(s) in relation to the crossing of the Lytham St Annes Dunes SSSI. These assessment(s) will be used to inform the detailed site-specific crossing design(s) for the installation of the offshore export cables beneath Lytham St Annes Dunes SSSI. This is secured by Requirement 12 of Schedules 2A and 2B of the draft DCO (REP1-008)).</p>		No change.	<p>The Applicants are engaging with Natural England regarding their concerns about potential impacts on the sand dune features of the Lytham St Anne's Dunes SSSI. A meeting was held on 12 June 2025 to discuss the proposed scope and structure of the Outline Hydrogeological Risk Assessment. The Outline Hydrogeological Risk Assessment is informed by hydrogeological and ecological desk study information and ground investigation data presented in Volume 3, Chapter 1: Geology, hydrogeology and ground conditions (APP-068) and Volume 3 Annex 3.3: Phase 1 Habitat, National Vegetation Classification and Hedgerow (REP2-014).</p> <p>Feedback from the call was used to amend the Outline Hydrogeological Risk Assessment content where appropriate. The Applicants have submitted an Outline Hydrogeological Risk Assessment (S_D3_6) at Deadline 3. The Applicants note that the Outline Hydrogeological Risk Assessment is the initial stage in the hydrogeological risk assessment (HRA) process and will be used to agree the approach for the detailed HRA. This will be secured within DCO Schedules 2A &amp; 2B, Requirement 8 (Code of Construction Practice).</p>
RI_G2	<p>Natural England advises that the limited project specific data collected makes it difficult to assess any potential changes in habitat/ species composition associated, for example, with a modified water table brought about by the dewatering and pumping of water during construction from the TJB.</p>		<p>The Applicants have responded to Natural England's comments regarding dewatering in Row ID RI_G1 above.</p> <p>The Applicants have provided a detailed response regarding St Annes Old Links Golf Course BHS previously within RR-1601 1601.53 (PDA-014).</p>		No change.	<p>The Applicants have provided a detailed response regarding St Annes Old Links Golf Course BHS previously within RR-1601 1601.53 (PDA-014).</p> <p>The Applicants are engaging with Natural England regarding the potential impacts of dewatering during the construction of the TJB. A meeting was held on 12 June to discuss the</p>



ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 2	RAG Deadline 2	NE comment at Deadline 2 (Consultation, actions, progression)	Applicants comment at Deadline 3
	Natural England advises that surveys of St. Annes Old Links Golf Course BHS should be undertaken in June 2025 to fill in the evidence gaps to better assess potential changes to habitats and species from the potential dewatering of the site. Use of fine scale Lidar may help identify low lying areas which may be relict dune slacks.					scope and structure of the Outline Hydrogeological Risk Assessment. The Outline Hydrogeological Risk Assessment considers the baseline site setting including the interaction of the hydrogeology and ecological habitats. The Outline Hydrogeological Risk Assessment will include a description of the habitats at St Anne's Old Links Golf Course BHS.  The Applicants will be undertaking an updated NVC survey in July 2025 (subject to landowner permission). The survey report will be submitted into the examination.
RI_G3	Further details (map and GPS locations) as to a) the location of the Transmission Joint Bays (TJBs) in Blackpool Airport, b) exit pits on the foreshore, c) the location of Compound 2 and d) the cable alignment under the sand dunes and cable depth is needed to help rule out impacts on sand dune SSSI features associated with Lytham St. Annes Dunes.		The Applicants have provided a detailed response regarding St Annes Old Links Golf Course BHS and dewatering in RR-1601 1601.G.3 (PDA-021).  The Applicants have provided a summary of the Landfall Works within Annex 5.3 to the Applicants response to Hearing Action Points: ISH1 13, 14, 16, 17 (REP1-040).		No change.	The Applicants have provided a detailed response regarding St Annes Old Links Golf Course BHS and dewatering in RR-1601 1601.G.3 (PDA-021).  The Applicants have provided a summary of the Landfall Works within Annex 5.3 to the Applicants response to Hearing Action Points: ISH1 13, 14, 16, 17 (REP1-040).
RI_G4	Natural England advises that further details on the Direct Pipe Trenchless Technique and evidence to support its feasibility is required to be able to fully assess the potential impacts to Lytham St. Annes Dunes SSSI. An outline contingency plan should be developed and the Worst Case Scenario (WCS) should be at least assessed in the assessment, i.e. cable installation failure when using Direct Pipe Trenchless Technique.		The Applicants have responded previously to this matter within the response to RR-1601.52 (PDA-014).  The Applicants have provided further evidence to support the use of trenchless installation within RR-1601.B 1601.B.8 (PDA-016).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously to this matter within the response to RR-1601.52 (PDA-014).  The Applicants have provided further evidence to support the use of trenchless installation within RR-1601.B 1601.B.8 (PDA-016).
RI_G5	The condition of Lytham St. Annes Dunes SSSI is currently assessed as Unfavourable Recovering (based on a 2014 Natural England assessment). To achieve Favourable condition of the dunes ongoing management of the Fylde Dunes (including Lytham St. Annes Dunes SSSI and Lytham Foreshore Dunes and Saltmarsh BHS as outlined in Skelcher (2024) has been agreed. Natural England advises that the Applicant should consider in the Outline Ecological Management Plan how the required management actions outlined in Skelcher will continue to take place during the duration of the project.		The Applicant has responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.5 and RR-1601 1601.G.33 (PDA-021).		No change.	The Applicant has responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.5 and RR-1601 1601.G.33 (PDA-021).
RI_G6	From the information provided Natural England does not consider there to be reasonable justification for the lack of		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.6 (PDA-021).		No change: We note the response provided by the Applicant in [REP1-043]. However, Natural England's advice remains that in order to	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.13 (PDA-021) and in within the Applicants' response to Hearing Action

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 2	RAG Deadline 2	NE comment at Deadline 2 (Consultation, actions, progression)	Applicants comment at Deadline 3
	Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) survey effort to date. Natural England advises (a) the Applicant needs to undertake a detailed ALC and soil survey of the agricultural land across the full Study Area to inform the application. And (b) the commitment to restore land needs to be secured in the DCO to not only reinstate the land but to ensure the site will be restored at a minimum to the same ALC grade as before construction, to ensure that land quality will not be negatively affected.		<p>The approach to ALC data was discussed within Issue Specific Hearing 1 Day 2 (REP1-035). The summary is copied below for reference:</p> <p><i>"The Applicants explained that the approach taken to ALC and soil surveys does provide for a robust baseline for producing the outline Soil Management Plan and determining potential impacts on ALC. Along this particular cable route, there is a lot of detailed soil information available, so the Applicants have a strong baseline position. Mapping, scoping and initial surveys were undertaken to identify the nature of the land classifications within the Order Limits.</i></p> <p><i>The Applicants confirmed that a precautionary approach was undertaken, in applying the highest ALC grade to any land where there was uncertainty as to the exact classification"</i></p> <p>The Applicants have provided a note which sets out how the Applicants' soil surveys meet the tests at paragraph 5.11 of NPS EN-1 in their response to hearing action point ISH1_45 (see Applicants' response to Hearing Action Points due at Deadline 1 (REP1-037)).</p>		<p>inform the impacts of the development on Best and Most Versatile Soils that are to be temporarily disturbed/ lost, ALC and soil surveys are required from the whole study area. This is also required to inform any specific mitigation required.</p> <p>Natural England believes this issue can be resolved and welcomes engagement with the Applicant to agree suitable survey methodology.</p>	<p>Points due at Deadline 1 (REP1-037). The Applicants stand by their position and maintain that further survey is not required.</p> <p>The Applicants note that Natural England have stated within their Deadline 2 Cover Letter (REP2-062) that they are reviewing this document and will be providing an update to the Risk and Issue Log at Deadline 3.</p>
RI_G7	Natural England utilises the England Peat Status Greenhouse Gas and Carbon Storage which identifies that part of the cable route is situated on deep peat. At this stage there is not enough information for Natural England to advise if the proposal will have direct or indirect impacts on deep peat. Natural England do not support the principle of developing on restorable peat. Natural England advises that further evidence and survey data is required. Peat surveys should be carried out in line with the IUCN peatland programme field protocol. A Peat Management Plan will be required for any buried deep peat around the cabling route, even if it is remaining in situ.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.7 (PDA-021).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.7 (PDA-021).
RI_G8	Natural England advises as per our advice on other joint DCO applications such as the East Anglia offshore windfarms and most recently for		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.8 (PDA-021).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.8 (PDA-021)

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	Dudgeon and Sheringham Extension Projects that a commitment is made, that whichever project is constructed first installs the onshore cable ducts for both projects to minimise the environmental impacts and the working corridors if construction overlaps. We advise full consideration of all mitigation measures are considered as part of the consenting process.					As outlined in paragraph 8.4.1.1 of Annex 5.2 to the Applicants response to Hearing Action Points: ISH1 6, 8, 9, 19, 26 & 28 (REP1-039), the coordination of other projects was a commercial strategy from the outset with a common point of company control (and therefore decision-making may facilitate different options with regards to funding and facilitation of shared infrastructure (including for example shared haul roads and the potential for one project installing ducts for another project within overlapping cable corridors), none of those projects have been forced to wait for the second project to come forwards and only construct concurrently.
RI_G9	To better understand the potential impacts at dune structure and function, Natural England queries the minimum required distance between the 6 proposed cables in order to minimise the effect of heat transfer. Where the cable crosses under Lytham St. Annes Dunes SSSI and St. Annes Old Links Golf Course BHS the Order Limit has been minimised (which is welcomed), but using the current MDS this would mean the route is constrained at its narrowest point to 260m to the north and 220m to the south. Depending on the required distance between the cables this could result in the cables underlying a significant proportion of the SSSI dunes and relict dunes. Natural England advises that clarity is needed regarding the minimum distance between cables. This ideally would be illustrated showing the cable alignment within the Order Limits and the distance between the cables given in metres.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.9 (PDA-021).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.9 (PDA-021).
RI_G10	Natural England advises that the Applicant clarify what temperatures may extend to the surface and across the dune structure when the cable is operational and assess and provide evidence on any possible impact on sand dune vegetation in terms of affecting water availability and mimicking drought (especially with increased issues of summer drought associated with climate change).		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.10 (PDA-021).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.10 (PDA-021).
RI_G11	Natural England advises that the ES should present the detailed and semi-detailed Agricultural Land Classification		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.13 (PDA-021).		No change: we note the response provided by the Applicant in [REP1-043]. However, Natural England's advice remains that in order to	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.13 (PDA-021) and in within the Applicants' response to Hearing Action

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	(ALC) survey information. This should include a breakdown of the ALC grades (area, %) in relation to the application site boundary and include ALC and soil data for the cable route and areas of permanent infrastructure and habitat enhancement. A breakdown of the proposed site into disturbed and undisturbed land categories should also be included, split by ALC grade, to help illustrate the potential for impact on agricultural land grade.				inform the impacts of the development on Best and Most Versatile Soils that are to be temporarily disturbed/ lost, ALC and soil surveys are required from the whole study area. This is also required to inform any specific mitigation required. Natural England believes this issue can be resolved and welcomes engagement with the Applicant to agree suitable survey methodology.	Points due at Deadline 1 (REP1-037). The Applicants stand by their position and maintain that further survey is not required.  The Applicants note that Natural England have stated within their Deadline 2 Cover Letter (REP2-062) that they are reviewing this document and will be providing an update to the Risk and Issue Log at Deadline 3.
RI_G12	Natural England notes the reference to topsoil removal, back filling of topsoil level and replacement of topsoil, but no proposed timeline of activities included. As part of an Outline Soil management Plan [APP-200] Natural England advises that further information on the timeline of proposed soil handling is provided and mitigation measures to minimise the impacts secured.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.14 (PDA-021).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.14 (PDA-021).
RI_G13	Natural England notes that following installation of ducts and backfilling of trenches the cables will be pulled through the ducts from joint bays. Natural England advises that the depth of the cabling laying be secured in a named plan and on the face of the DCO/dML. This depth is expected to be consistent with the industry standard of 0.9m depth.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.15 (PDA-021).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.15 (PDA-021).
RI_G14	Further information on the timings of survey observations, quadrat locations and how wetness of dune slacks was calculated should be provided to better understand the robustness of the survey data. This should include date of NVC surveys (2016 or 2024), map showing quadrant locations and a quadrant data table		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.19 (PDA-021).  ES Volume 3 Annex 3.3: Phase 1 Habitat, National Vegetation Classification and Hedgerow (F3.3.3 /F02) has been updated to include a figure showing the NVC quadra locations.		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.19 (PDA-021).  ES Volume 3 Annex 3.3: Phase 1 Habitat, National Vegetation Classification and Hedgerow (REP2-014) has been updated to include a figure showing the NVC quadrat locations.
RI_G15	Natural England notes that the maximum design parameter represented in Table 3.23 for the construction cable corridor (temporary) does not align with calculations made elsewhere within the chapter. Natural England advises that the MDS should be consistent across ES chapters and named plans.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.21 (PDA-021).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.21 (PDA-021).



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RI_G16	Natural England notes that the document states that proposed biodiversity benefit and ecological mitigation areas have not been subjected to surveys. Natural England advises that soil testing for basic soil properties (pH, SOM and macro-nutrients) should be completed at the same time as the ALC and soil survey.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.22 (PDA-021).			
RI_G17	Natural England notes that it is stated that the location of representative auger boring surveys were chosen to reflect the main soil types identified within the Onshore Order Limits, according to the desktop information. Natural England advises that this is insufficient. Natural England advises that the ES should present the detailed and semi-detailed Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) survey information across the full Study Area. This should include a breakdown of the ALC grades (area, %) in relation to the application site boundary and include ALC and soil data for the cable route and areas of permanent infrastructure and habitat enhancement.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.23 (PDA-021).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.23 (PDA-021) and in within the Applicants' response to Hearing Action Points due at Deadline 1 (REP1-037). The Applicants stand by their position and maintain that further survey is not required.  The Applicants note that Natural England have stated within their Deadline 2 Cover Letter (REP2-062) that they are reviewing this document and will be providing an update to the Risk and Issue Log at Deadline 3.
RI_G18	It is unclear whether the archaeological trenches would meet the requirements to obtain relevant data (soil properties) to determine ALC grade. Natural England advises that further survey data should be provided to support the ES soils assessment and further monitoring requirements prior to construction agreed.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.24 (PDA-021).		No change: we note the response provided by the Applicant in [REP1-043]. However, Natural England's advice remains that in order to inform the impacts of the development on Best and Most Versatile Soils that are to be temporarily disturbed/ lost, ALC and soil surveys are required from the whole study area. This is also required to inform any specific mitigation required. Natural England believes this issue can be resolved and welcomes engagement with the Applicant to agree suitable survey methodology.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.24 (PDA-021) and in within the Applicants' response to Hearing Action Points due at Deadline 1 (REP1-037). The Applicants stand by their position and maintain that further survey is not required.  The Applicants note that Natural England have stated within their Deadline 2 Cover Letter (REP2-062) that they are reviewing this document and will be providing an update to the Risk and Issue Log at Deadline 3.
RI_G19	Natural England advises that the commitment needs to be secured in the DCO to not only reinstate the land but to ensure the site will be restored at a minimum to the same ALC grade as before construction, to ensure that land quality will not be negatively affected. The commitment to implementing additional measures to further benefit the land quality/productivity should also be included. We also advise that the Outline Soils Management Plan should include restoration criteria to ensure the land is aligned to the ALC survey results.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.26 (PDA-021).		No change: we note the response provided by the Applicant in [REP1-043]. However, Natural England's advice remains that in order to inform the impacts of the development on Best and Most Versatile Soils that are to be temporarily disturbed/ lost, ALC and soil surveys are required from the whole study area. This is also required to inform any specific mitigation required. Natural England believes this issue can be resolved and welcomes engagement with the Applicant to agree suitable survey methodology.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.26 (PDA-021) and in within the Applicants' response to Hearing Action Points due at Deadline 1 (REP1-037). The Applicants stand by their position and maintain that further survey is not required.  The Applicants note that Natural England have stated within their Deadline 2 Cover Letter (REP2-062) that they are reviewing this document and will be providing an update to the Risk and Issue Log at Deadline 3.



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RI_G20	Natural England advises that air quality impacts on ecological features including international and nationally designated sites and their qualifying features should be considered in the chapter.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.27 (PDA-021).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.27 (PDA-021).
RI_G21	Natural England advises that further information is needed regarding the proposed mitigations measures to minimise/mitigate impacts on sand lizards e.g. measures to minimise vibration which could cause sand lizard burrows to collapse. The proposed mitigation (3.11.13.19) has not been previously discussed and agreed and the positioning of the cut-off trenches needs to be considered in terms of potential dewatering effect/damage to the foredunes.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.28 (PDA-021).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.28 (PDA-021).
RI_G22	Natural England advise that a UXO contingency plan should be provided – should UXO be found within Lytham St. Annes Dunes SSSI.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.30 (PDA-021).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.30 (PDA-021).
RI_G23	The Applicant has outlined the onshore survey area as a 150m buffer around the Onshore Order Limits. Natural England typically advise that a buffer of 200m should be used. Provide justification for why a 150m buffer was chosen and how this can be shown to be a sufficient distance to account for all disturbance incidents to Important Ecological Features (IEFs).		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.31 (PDA-021).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.31 (PDA-021).
RI_G24	Natural England notes that for Sand Lizard – timing of works (piling / installation of cofferdams at TJB etc) could be used to minimise risk that vibration cause burrows to collapse when being used by hibernating or breeding Sand Lizard. Natural England advises that further consideration is given to timing restrictions for works near to known Sand Lizard populations.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.32 (PDA-021).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.32 (PDA-021).
RI_G25	Natural England advises that monitoring plans are updated to include pre and post construction monitoring of humid dune slacks. This will help to determine the success of the mitigation measures and confirm the assessment.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.34 (PDA-021).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.34 (PDA-021).
RI_G26	Natural England should be informed of any bentonite breakouts that occur on any SPA, Ramsar or SSSI sites or		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.36 (PDA-021).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.36 (PDA-021).

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	within any sand dune or foreshore habitats. Ground investigation works should be taken to inform consenting and to ensure the technical feasibility of any proposed mitigation associated with landfall installation methodology. Natural England advises that geotechnical data should be used to ensure that mitigation measures are fit for purpose and are relevant to the proposed installation methodology.					
RI_G27	Fairhaven Saltmarsh is identified in the Outline Ecological Management Plan (J6) as a permanent mitigation area. Natural England advises that more details regarding the proposed permanent mitigation area at Fairhaven Saltmarsh – for example the fencing specification and installation measures are required The Applicant should also refer to Skelcher (2024) botanical report which covers this area (survey from 2010 & 2016)– showing the saltmarsh and sand dune communities that are present.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.36 (PDA-021).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.36 (PDA-021).
RI_G28	Natural England disagree with the conclusion of effect of changes in hydrogeology on the SSSI and LNR will be minor adverse - not significant. Natural England advises that further survey evidence should be provided to support the Application conclusions.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.39 (PDA-021).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.39 (PDA-021).
RI_G29	Natural England has focused on coastal habitats and no SAC sites were identified within the Order of Limits. Natural England have not reviewed the HRA reports – but note sand dune habitats which could be classified as an Annex I habitat type have been covered in [APP-018]. Natural England advises that impacts to Ramsar habitats will be required.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.18 and RR-1601 1601.G.40 (PDA-021).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.18 and RR-1601 1601.G.40 (PDA-021).
RI_G30	[APP-018] Table 1.24 does not consider all potential impact pathways or relevant European sites, specifically air quality impacts have not been considered. [APP-121] states the Ribble Estuary SPA/Ramsar includes features sensitive to dust within 20m of the Onshore Order Limits, therefore these features need to be considered in the HRA. Natural England advises that air quality impacts		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.41 (PDA-021).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.41 (PDA-021).

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	on internationally designated sites should be considered.					
RI_G31	Table 3.17 includes a list of all Important Ecological Features (IEFs) taken forward into assessment. Natural England advise the chapter to be updated to include information demonstrating why other IEFs have been scoped out for further assessment.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.42 (PDA-021).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.42 (PDA-021).
RI_G32	Table 3.40 and section 3.11.6.2 give the breakdown of coastal saltmarsh loss temp (0.03ha) and permanent (0ha). Natural England advises the Applicant provide further information on where the 0.03ha of saltmarsh loss will occur.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.43 (PDA-021).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.43 (PDA-021).
RI_G33	Although the Applicant has suggested that they will be using Natural England's District Level Licensing (DLL) Scheme, Natural England has not (as yet) approved the use of the DLL scheme for this project. Natural England has agreed in principle to the project using District level Licensing, however this is dependent on the availability of compensation ponds at the time of enquiry. Until an Impact Assessment and Conservation payment Certificate (IACPC) has been signed by the applicant and counter-signed by Natural England they cannot rely on District Level Licensing as a Licensing approach for this project.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.44 (PDA-021).			
RI_G34	Natural England notes that in Table 3.15 the summary of key findings for species includes a potential outlying badger sett recorded within the Onshore Order Limits that appears disused. However, badgers are not considered further within Chapter 3, and no evidence is presented to confirm the outlying badger sett is not used. Badgers are a Protected Species under the 1992 Protection of Badgers Act, and it is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure they have sufficient evidence to demonstrate the proposal will not impact on protected species. Therefore, Natural England is unable to provide a Letter of No Impediment for Badger at this time.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.45 (PDA-021).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.45 (PDA-021).

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RI_G35	Natural England notes the development is not subject to a mandatory net gain requirement and note the Applicant have outlined how they will deliver biodiversity benefit for areas of permanent habitat loss from permanent above-ground infrastructure using Defra BNG methodology and metric version 4.1 for the calculations. We also note that Lea Marsh BHS will be subject to habitat creation and enhancement measures. Unless there are changes in the design parameters we have no further comment to make during this examination.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.46 (PDA-021).			
RI_G36	Natural England advise that topsoil bunds should not exceed 3m in height. Natural England advises that Application documents are updated to reflect best practice.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.49 (PDA-021).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.49 (PDA-021).
RI_G37	Natural England disagrees that the depth of subsoiling operations will depend on the nature of the soil type affected and extent of any compaction that may have occurred. The depth of decompaction should reflect the depth of compaction. Natural England advises that the Applicant reconsider the information around soil compaction and consider producing an outline decompaction strategy to maximise the effectiveness of decompaction methods.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.50 (PDA-021).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.50 (PDA-021).
RI_G38	a) Natural England would welcome further discussion with the Applicant to determine the scale of impacts on the noctule hibernation bat roost and the judgement which their Ecologist has made regarding the possible abandonment of the noctule roost. b) If a licence is required, Natural England advise that quantitative data would be required on the roost, level of activity and use of the surrounding area.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.52 (PDA-022).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.52 (PDA-022).
RI_G39	Natural England advises that commitments should be made to ensure that updated badger surveys will be undertaken before works commence to confirm that no new setts have been created, and that the outlier sett remains disused.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.53 (PDA-022).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.53 (PDA-022).

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RI_G40	Sand lizard: Given the detail contained within Section 3.11.13, the described works would likely require an A46 derogation licence to cover disturbance, damage and possibly destruction of habitat due to the exit pits for the routing of the cable within and beneath known sand lizard habitat. Natural England advise that further detail including population size estimates, mitigation and compensation should follow in a draft licence submission.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.54 (PDA-022).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.54 (PDA-022).
RI_G41	Natural England advises that further information is required on the status of water vole burrows and the works to be undertaken in the water courses with water vole burrows present.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.55 (PDA-022).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.55 (PDA-022).
RI_G42	a) Natural England advises the Applicant to clarify the location of otter resting places in relation to the watercourses which may be used within the Onshore Order Limits. b) Further information about the cable installation route, associated impacts and proximity to otter resting places would be required to determine the level of impacts posed. c) Natural England would expect works impacting a natal holt to be avoided. d) Natural England welcomes the proposed habitat restoration and CoT76, however there is minimal detail on how this will be monitored to know if this is compensating for the loss and degradation of habitat during construction.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.56 (PDA-022).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.56 (PDA-022).
RI_G43	There are several gaps in information regarding air quality emissions on designated sites during the construction, operational and decommissioning periods of the project. As a result, Natural England is unable to provide full comments on this impact pathway and state whether we agree with the conclusions on impacts on designated sites at present. These sites include: Lytham St Annes Dunes SSSI Newton Marsh SSSI Ribble Estuary SSSI Ribble and Alt Estuary SPA Ribble and Alt Estuary Ramsar		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.57 (PDA-022).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.57 (PDA-022).



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	<p>Red Scar &amp; Tun Brook Woods (Ancient Woodland &amp; SSSI) In particular, Newton Marsh SSSI has been omitted from the air quality assessment and impacts on internationally designated sites (SPA/ SAC/ Ramsar) have not been considered, as highlighted in our previous [RR-1606].</p> <p>a) We advise that additional information is provided on air quality impacts, as advised in this RR and our previous RR ([RR-1601] Appendix G Onshore Ecology and Nature Conservation). b) Natural England advises for the aforementioned designated sites, air pollution impacts as a result of traffic, machinery and dust are considered and justification is provided for where impacts have been scoped out.</p>					
RI_G44	<p>The air quality assessment for designated ecological sites does not appear to consider sources of air pollution other than traffic and dust. Natural England advises that information on the use of machinery and equipment (including NRMM) is provided. This should include locations, duration of operations and minimum standard of NRMM and equipment with the potential to release pollutants which may impact designated sites, for both the construction areas and all temporary construction compounds. Air quality impacts for this pathway should include all statutory designated sites within a 200m screening distance from the machinery/NRMM, but is not limited to:</p> <p>Lytham St Annes Dunes SSSI Newton Marsh SSSI Ribble Estuary SSSI Ribble and Alt Estuary SPA Ribble and Alt Estuary Ramsar Red Scar &amp; Tun Brook Woods (Ancient Woodland &amp; SSSI) If impacts on these sites can be screened out, please provide justification on this.</p>		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.58 (PDA-022).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.58 (PDA-022).
RI_G45	<p>Newton Marsh SSSI is not included within the assessment of air quality impacts on designated sites, despite the SSSI being within 200m of the proposed works.</p>		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.59 (PDA-022).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.59 (PDA-022).

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	We advise that all air quality impacts and sources of pollution (including impacts from traffic, dust and machinery/ equipment) are assessed for the SSSI.					
RI_G46	Natural England requires clarification of the level of NOx emissions at Red Scar & Tun Brook Woods (Ancient Woodland & SSSI). If the annual-mean NOx PC is 1% of CL or more, then we advise further assessment of NOx emissions on the SSSI is required and should be secured in the Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (OLEM).		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.60 (PDA-022).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.60 (PDA-022).
RI_G47	NH3, nitrogen deposition and acid deposition. Natural England notes that Paragraph 3.11.5.11 – 3.11.5.17 of [APP-075] assesses the impacts of exceedance of critical levels for NH3, nitrogen deposition and acid deposition. Despite critical levels being exceeded, the Applicant rules out impacts due to absence of lower plant communities or already exceeded thresholds. Natural England advises that evidence is required on the presence/ absence of lower plant species within the area of exceedance of 1% threshold within the SSSI.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.61 (PDA-022).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.G.61 (PDA-022).

## 2.10 Risk and Issues Log – Onshore and Intertidal Ornithology

Table 2.10: Responses to questions regarding Onshore and Intertidal Ornithology

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 2	RAG Deadline 2	NE comment at Deadline 2 (Consultation, actions, progression)	Applicants comment at Deadline 3
<b>Risk and Issues Log Deadline 1 – Onshore and Intertidal Ornithology</b> <b>Taken from Natural England's Relevant and Written Representations Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets</b> <b>Appendix H - Onshore and Intertidal Ornithology</b>						
RI_H1	Surveys of intertidal and terrestrial wintering birds and terrestrial breeding birds have been completed to a minimal viable level on areas within the onshore order limits, with some areas within the red line boundary only being partially surveyed. Additionally, there is a lack of survey effort of surrounding areas in close proximity to work areas which are likely to be disturbed by construction works. Natural England's expectations are that two years of full survey are undertaken across the whole area plus the buffer to inform decision making. As further survey is unlikely to inform the Examination process due to time constraints, when considering the predictions of the Environmental Statement, the survey data should only be taken as a conservative assessment of the populations present and therefore the level of risk, rather than a precautionary one.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.1 and RR-1601 1601.H.9 (PDA-023).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.1 and RR-1601 1601.H.9 (PDA-023).
RI_H2	The construction works are expected to last 66 months – this is a long term, albeit not permanent, time to be having an impact when measured in avian terms. The WCS could therefore mean that all birds impacted would be displaced from the entire terrestrial work area for the full 66 months. Natural England advise that the Applicant should consider phasing the works so that only a proportion of the terrestrial works corridor are impacted at any one time. This will greatly reduce the risk that the works present.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.2 and RR-1601 1601.H.32 (PDA-023).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.2 and RR-1601 1601.H.32 (PDA-023).
RI_H3	<b>Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA/Ramsar site – inadequate assessment of wintering intertidal features</b> There is not currently enough information within the Application to accurately identify and assess the impacts for wintering and passage features of Ribble and Alt Estuaries		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.3 and RR-1601 1601.H.59 (PDA-023). As outlined in the Applicants' response to Hearing Action Points due at Deadline 1 (REP1-037), the Applicants and Natural England can confirm that the parties met on 28 April to discuss potential ornithological impacts associated with the		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.3 and RR-1601 1601.H.59 (PDA-023). The Applicants anticipate further comments from Natural England on the following documents provided at Deadline 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updated Outline Ecological Management Plan (REP2-018)</li> </ul>

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	SPA/Ramsar site. Natural England advise that the Applicant should update the report to inform a HRA document to reflect the recorded numbers in the affected area, not a questionable area-based measure of habitat availability. A more detailed assessment of the usage of this area by SPA/Ramsar site species and the spatial and temporal patterns of that usage is required to understand the impacts of the proposal and inform mitigation strategies.		<p>Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA/Ramsar site and Liverpool Bay SPA. Following on from the meeting, the Applicants are preparing further information to aid Natural England agreeing that there are no Adverse Effects on Integrity of the Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site and Liverpool Bay SPA. However, both Natural England and the Applicants agree that mitigation can be developed, and that an in-principal derogation case is not required for Liverpool Bay SPA or the Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA/Ramsar Site.</p> <p>The following documents have been provided at Deadline 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updated Outline Ecological Management Plan (J6) which contains further details on Fairhaven Saltmarsh mitigation area including management measures to reduce disturbance to roosting birds, including soft fencing, signage, local education and provision of appropriately trained and experienced wardens who will be employed as Ecological Clerk of Works.</li> <li>Provision of a technical note on the energetics of the birds at landfall and the adequacy of the Fairhaven Saltmarsh as mitigation (S_D2_12).</li> </ul> <p>The Applicants are committed to engaging with Natural England on this matter to help resolve their concerns and anticipate being able to provide a further update at Deadline 3, to demonstrate that progress is being made between the parties.</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Technical note on the energetics of the birds at landfall and the adequacy of the Fairhaven Saltmarsh as mitigation (REP2-045).</li> </ul>
RI_H4	<p><b>Adverse effects on the Ribble and Alt Estuary SPA and Ramsar site due to landfall works</b></p> <p>The landfall site and adjacent areas supports very significant numbers of SPA/Ramsar site birds during the winter and passage periods. However, the Applicant only proposes some limitations to working during these sensitive periods – a limit of 5 weeks working in November-February, with no restrictions to working outside this period. This approach both to the winter period (which we consider to run from November to March inclusive) and the lack of any restriction during passage periods will provide insufficient</p>		<p>Refer to Row ID RI_H3 above.</p> <p>The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.4 and RR-1601 1601.H.21 (PDA-023).</p> <p>The Applicants would also draw attention to the update to CoT129 (F 1.5.3/F03) which strengthens the working restrictions within the intertidal area to a full restriction between Nov – Mar. This will remove all impacts for intertidal birds over the sensitive winter period (Nov – Mar). The Applicants have provided the additional information on impacts energetics of the passage features via a technical note (S_D2_12) submitted at Deadline 2.</p>		No change.	<p>The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.4 and RR-1601 1601.H.21 (PDA-023).</p> <p>The Applicants anticipate further comments from Natural England on the following documents provided at Deadline 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CoT129 of Volume 1, Annex 5.3: Commitments Register (REP2-010)</li> <li>Technical note on the energetics of the birds at landfall and the adequacy of the Fairhaven Saltmarsh as mitigation (REP2-045).</li> </ul>

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	mitigation. In the absence of a full seasonal restriction for the appropriate periods, or a compelling case that a lower level of restriction is acceptable, Natural England advises that an AEOI cannot be ruled out. A comprehensive seasonal restriction for the sensitive winter and passage periods should be carefully considered in, with the relevant months should be identified with respect to site-specific data and SPA conservation advice.					
RI_H5	Unless an effective seasonal restriction can be committed to, we advise that an in-principle derogations case for the Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA/Ramsar site will need to be developed under the Habitats Regulations, demonstrating that there are no alternative solutions and Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest, including that a greater level of seasonal restriction is not achievable. In this light, the proposed roosting refuge would constitute compensatory measures under the Habitats Regulations. Accordingly, a far more detailed submission regarding the installation and management of the compensatory measures is needed addressing Natural England's concerns, and a compensation schedule in the DCO added. To ensure the compensatory measures are targeted and effective, it is critical that the significance of the affected area for SPA and Ramsar site species and their specific requirements from it are adequately described. Additionally, the Applicant should provide evidence that the use of the proposed area is currently compromised by disturbance (noting it falls within the SPA), and that the energy saving for the compensation proposal will be sufficient to offset impacts.		Refer to Row ID RI_H3 above.  The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.5, RR-1601 1601.H.23 and RR-1601 1601.H.60 (PDA-023).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.5, RR-1601 1601.H.23 and RR-1601 1601.H.60 (PDA-023). The Applicants anticipate further comments on the following documents provided at Deadline 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CoT129 of Volume 1, Annex 5.3: Commitments Register (REP2-010)</li> <li>Technical note on the energetics of the birds at landfall and the adequacy of the Fairhaven Saltmarsh as mitigation (REP2-045).</li> </ul>
RI_H6	<b>Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA/Ramsar – inadequate assessment of impacts on terrestrial waterbirds:</b> Natural England do not agree with the Applicant's HRA conclusions. We note that the current conclusions are based on modelled information on likely habitat availability. This is often based		Refer to Row ID RI_H3 above.  The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.6 and RR-1601 1601.H.52 (PDA-023). The Applicants have submitted a technical note on Newton		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.6 and RR-1601 1601.H.52 (PDA-023). The Applicants have submitted a technical note on Newton Marsh SSSI and River Ribble Crossing (REP2-044) at Deadline 2. The Applicants anticipate further comment by Natural England on the information provided at



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	on out-of-date information and models that claim urban/infrastructure areas are available foraging habitat. The focus should be on the populations revealed by the site-specific surveys rather than generic assumptions. Furthermore, there is a lack of information regarding the spatio-temporal implications of the habitat loss. With regards to mitigation, we advise that the Applicant provides further information on how the tunnel end works of the Ribble crossing will be managed to ensure no disruption to SPA/Ramsar site waterbirds moving along the corridor of the estuary. The justification of only using trenchless techniques is inadequate.		Marsh SSSI and River Ribble Crossing (S_D2_11) at Deadline 2.			Deadline 2 in relation to this matter at Deadline 3.
RI_H7	<b>Ribble &amp; Alt Estuaries SPA – mitigation for terrestrial impacts/compensation</b> The proposed mitigation measures are hoping to support the needs of a number of species with different ecological needs, however no information is included showing clear design and management information to ensure that these areas are going to be fit for purpose. The terrestrial mitigation areas need reviewing against the specifics of the species (and the number of those species) that they need to host, which relates to the above comments around the phasing of works and being able to accommodate all displaced birds from the whole onshore order limits. Detailed site assessments that articulate site management and structure in relation to the role they need to fulfil need to be generated.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.6, RR-1601 1601.H.22 and RR-1601 1601.H.61 (PDA-023). The Outline Ecological Management Plan (J6 /F02) has been updated to provide further detail of each mitigation area. This will include detailed plans to be provided showing an indicative layout of the mitigation proposed at Lytham Moss and Newton with Scales		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.6, RR-1601 1601.H.22 and RR-1601 1601.H.61 (PDA-023). The Applicants anticipate further comments on the Updated Outline Ecological Management Plan (REP2-018) at Deadline 3.
RI_H8	The potential impacts on Newton Marsh SSSI have not been adequately assessed. There is minimal information on what works will take place in close proximity to this site and how the work will be managed to not affect the site with respect to visual and noise disturbance. Further justification should be provided on how the Applicant has concluded no risk to the site. Proper consideration of this area is also applicable to the HRA		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.8 and RR-1601 1601.H.15 (PDA-023). The Applicants will provide Natural England with noise modelling information and information regarding the proposed construction accesses to the north of Newton Marsh SSSI. The Applicants have submitted a technical note on Newton Marsh SSSI and River Ribble Crossing (S_D2_11) at Deadline 2.		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.8 and RR-1601 1601.H.15 (PDA-023). The Applicants anticipate further comments on the technical note on Newton Marsh SSSI and River Ribble Crossing (REP2-044) at Deadline 3.

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	as the site is well used by SPA birds, particularly in winter.					
RI_H9	Reliance on the Functionally Linked Land (FLL) description in Bowland Ecology (2021) is flawed for the purposes of this survey. Natural England do not agree with the criteria used for FLL threshold. Natural England requires further information on reasoning for not using standard 1% threshold for measuring significance of FLL. Further, Natural England advises the Applicant to ensure all figures for species are included and consider the possibility of FLL for the species referenced.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.10 and RR-1601 1601.H.11 (PDA-023).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.10 and RR-1601 1601.H.11 (PDA-023).
RI_H10	Natural England requires clarification on the lapwing data and queries why the two years of data are being listed out separately, when the data represents two phases of one survey.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.12 (PDA-023).			
RI_H11	Natural England do not agree with the justification for not following the SNH (2017) guidelines and require further information on mitigation for the impacts. Although construction is temporary, impact risk will largely depend on construction approach (and some permanent infrastructure/potential permanent land use change in mitigation areas), which could last up to 66 months.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.13 (PDA-023).		No change	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.13 (PDA-023).
RI_H12	It is unclear from the report for geese, ducks and swans, waders and gulls and terns if this is referring to birds that are actually breeding or commenting on non-breeding birds gathering in the breeding season. Natural England advise the Applicant that reporting on non-breeding gatherings during the breeding season would be better presented as a separate report/separate section.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.14 (PDA-023).			
RI_H13	Natural England notes the incomplete coverage in the survey (0-9 visits = incomplete coverage.) Natural England advises that all areas should have received some survey visits, and that the gaps in coverage inevitably reduce the confidence in the assessment conclusions as regards number and distribution of birds.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.16 (PDA-023).			

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RI_H14	Natural England note that a number of these species are also non-breeding interest of the Ribble and Alt Estuary SPA and there may be functional linkage. Natural England advises the Applicant to consider the potential for FLL for these species and whether there is potential to impact if so.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.17 (PDA-023).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.17 (PDA-023).
RI_H15	Natural England note the survey limitations are reasonably well characterised, however it is not clear if survey effort was sufficient for 'difficult' species. For example, breeding waterfowl, raptors and crepuscular species. The Applicant should provide clarity on survey effort limitations for species which are considered more difficult to survey.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.18 (PDA-023).			
RI_H16	Whilst Natural England acknowledges the consideration of Chapter 9 Air Quality [APP-121], as these impacts could also relate to onshore and intertidal ornithology, they should be assessed within this chapter.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.19 (PDA-023).			
RI_H17	The Applicant still intends to carry out up to five weeks of work during the high sensitivity period of November - March inclusive. Natural England advises that all potentially disturbing works should be excluded over this period. We also advise consistency when defining the over-wintering period, which should be the same across all documents and commitments.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.21 (PDA-023). The Applicants would also draw attention to the update to CoT129 (Volume 1, Annex 5.3: Commitments Register, F 1.5.3/F03) which strengthens the working restrictions within the intertidal area to a full restriction between Nov – Mar. This will remove all impacts for intertidal birds over the sensitive winter period (Nov – Mar). The Applicants have provided the additional information on impacts energetics of the passage features via a technical note (S_D2_12) submitted at Deadline 2.		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.21 (PDA-023). The Applicants anticipate further comments on the following documents provided at Deadline 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CoT129 of Volume 1, Annex 5.3: Commitments Register (REP2-010)</li> <li>Technical note on the energetics of the birds at landfall and the adequacy of the Fairhaven Saltmarsh as mitigation (REP2-045).</li> </ul>
RI_H18	Natural England requires more information to ascertain why the following statement could be impossible when there is uncertainty regarding the origin of the birds: <i>"the 353 lesser black-backed gull reported in Table 1.67 cannot all belong to the Ribble and Alt SPA, Morecambe Bay and Duddon Estuary SPA and Ramsar, and the Bowland Fells SPA."</i>		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.24 (PDA-023).			
RI_H19	The citation counts and the peak count recorded during the site-specific surveys identifies that many (almost all) species are at >1% of citation value and		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.25 (PDA-023).			

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	> 1% of most recent count (noting that this is only noted for Ribble and Alt Estuary SPA for most species). These surveys indicate the importance of the area and the subsequent importance of mitigating, predominantly all at >1%.					
RI_H20	Natural England advise that Morecambe Bay and Duddon Estuary SPA and Morecambe Bay Ramsar are two separate sites and have different geographical boundaries. Duddon Estuary Ramsar should also be considered and is a separate site.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.26 (PDA-023).			
RI_H21	Natural England advise the inclusion of the most up to date digital aerial survey for the Bowland Fells Lesser Black-backed Gull Colony Count.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.27 (PDA-023).			
RI_H22	Over 2% of golden plover were found on the area of permanent habitat loss. Although the area represents 0.04% of the total foraging range, the number of golden plover using the area implies it is an important area. Natural England advises the Applicant consider why it may be preferentially used by golden plover, and how this will be replicated in the mitigation areas.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.28 (PDA-023).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.28 (PDA-023).
RI_H23	Natural England requires further information from the Applicant to understand if any appraisal has been made to quantify if the proposed mitigation/compensation ground is sufficient to mitigate the loss. Regularity of usage is an important factor to understand if mitigation areas will reliably accommodate the additional displaced birds.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.29 (PDA-023).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.29 (PDA-023).
RI_H24	Langley et al., (2022). appears to have been omitted from the references. Update the document to include the reference as cited.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.30 (PDA-023).			
RI_H25	The figures set out in Table 1.76 [APP-017] appear to only represent the area of physical ground disturbance arising from the proposal not visual or acoustic disturbance which will extend some 100's of meters (varying between species) from the works. Temporary habitat loss will therefore be much greater than suggested in the MDS. Further, recovery time of disturbed ground needs to be considered as there		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.31 (PDA-023).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.31 (PDA-023).

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	is minimal mention of recovery time beyond completion of works.					
RI_H26	Natural England strongly advises the Applicant to provide further information on the onshore works and ensuring work is staggered appropriately. We suggest the Applicant either needs to provide information to ensure that the mitigation areas really can support all disturbed features in the terrestrial area for the whole period or the Applicant need to identify a works approach that reduces the risk at any one point in time (but still ensure that the mitigation land can support the scaled down risk).		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.33 (PDA-023).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.33 (PDA-023).
RI_H27	Natural England notes that there is a definite impact for 24 months at this fixed point (400kV grid connection cable). We further note that there does not appear to be any identified mitigation for the risk of light and noise affecting the river corridor. Natural England advise the Applicant to review work approaches and clarify how risk from sound/light disturbance is to be mitigated for a period of up to 24 months.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.34 (PDA-023).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.34 (PDA-023).
RI_H28	Natural England note that while it is correct that pink-footed geese do not forage in the intertidal they do roost on the intertidal, which will not have been captured in the 'overlap analysis' and should be included.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.35 (PDA-023).			
RI_H29	Natural England do not agree with the whole meta-population approach based on a radius around different roosts. This is not appropriate methodology for SPA site-based assessment. The applicant's survey data identifies the risk they should be considering through their determination of the size of the population that will be impacted. Apportioning by site would be appropriate for the assessment.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.36 (PDA-023).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.36 (PDA-023).
RI_H30	"Eleven Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA ornithological features were present within the intertidal environment at the landfall, 9 of which are at >1% SPA. The Applicant should ensure all >1% SPA features are taken through to LSE and AA as significant risks are present to all these features.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.37 (PDA-023).			



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RI_H31	Natural England requires the Applicant to provide clarification on the beach/landfall Direct Pipe Trenchless installation. Natural England note the commitment to minimise time spent in the intertidal period, however we require clarification on whether the stated two-week period of beach works per cable include delivery and set up/removal of equipment and what will be the risk to the foreshore associated with cable pull.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.38 (PDA-023).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.38 (PDA-023).
RI_H32	Natural England notes that Still et al. (2015) is repeatedly cited but is not included in the reference list. The study is heavily used as to discuss various species; however, the study is 10 years old and considers bird distribution in a dynamic environment, therefore it may not be that it can be relied upon.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.39 (PDA-023).			
RI_H33	The ES predicts the proposal will affect over 2% of 9 species; of which 3 have more than 10% of population potentially affected. Natural England notes these figures do not account for disturbance, which could potentially affect a greater area, resulting in larger areas of temporary habitat loss. Natural England do not support the assertion that the percentage of features affected is not significant because the SPA is big. For wintering intertidal features; Natural England do not agree with the conclusion of a negligible impact from a temporary loss of supporting habitat and/or resource availability – the Applicant need to identify the actual disturbance footprint and confirm that the figures of birds at risk reflect this and not just the direct area being worked over.		<p>The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.40 (PDA-023).</p> <p>The Applicants would also draw attention to the update to CoT129 (Volume 1, Annex 5.3: Commitments Register, F 1.5.3/F03) which strengthens the working restrictions within the intertidal area to a full restriction between Nov – Mar. This will remove all impacts for intertidal birds over the sensitive winter period (Nov – Mar). The Applicants have provided the additional information on impacts energetics of the passage features via a technical note (S_D2_12) submitted at Deadline 2.</p> <p>The Applicants are clear within the application documents that disturbance has been assessed as effective habitat loss with the appropriate species buffers used (as taken from Goodship &amp; Furness, 2022)</p>		No change.	<p>The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.40 (PDA-023).</p> <p>The Applicants anticipate further comments on the following documents provided at Deadline 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CoT129 of Volume 1, Annex 5.3: Commitments Register (REP2-010)</li> <li>Technical note on the energetics of the birds at landfall and the adequacy of the Fairhaven Saltmarsh as mitigation (REP2-045).</li> </ul>
RI_H34	For passage intertidal features Natural England do not agree with the conclusion that impacts can be ruled out. Reliance on alternate feeding would require knowledge of why this area is so important and consideration in the first instance of seasonal restrictions to works for important passage periods for the species of concern. This also applies to the		<p>The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.41 (PDA-023).</p> <p>Refer to Row ID RI_H33 above.</p>		No change.	<p>The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.40 (PDA-023).</p> <p>The Applicants anticipate further comments on the following documents provided at Deadline 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CoT129 of Volume 1, Annex 5.3: Commitments Register (REP2-010)</li> <li>Technical note on the energetics of the birds at landfall and the adequacy of the Fairhaven Saltmarsh as mitigation (REP2-045).</li> </ul>

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	passage features of the SPA and Ramsar site.					
RI_H35	Natural England do not agree with the logic and discussion on foraging ranges as tracking data from the Ribble doesn't consider spatial displacement by Bowland (which currently supports many of the Ribble birds). Natural England agree that on this occasion there is no LSE.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.42 (PDA-023).			
RI_H36	Natural England note that Preston Docks birds are assumed to be the displaced SPA colony, therefore it would be helpful to assess risk in the context of observed birds and this population.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.43 (PDA-023).			
RI_H37	Natural England do not agree with the conclusions and advise the Applicant to consider the recommendations made above regarding conclusions made for wintering and passage birds and temporary habitat loss/disturbance at landfall (H41/H42).		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.44 (PDA-023).  Refer to Row ID RI_H33 above.		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.44 (PDA-023).  The Applicants anticipate further comments on the following documents provided at Deadline 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CoT129 of Volume 1, Annex 5.3: Commitments Register (REP2-010)</li> <li>Technical note on the energetics of the birds at landfall and the adequacy of the Fairhaven Saltmarsh as mitigation (REP2-045).</li> </ul>
RI_H38	Further evidence is required to support the statement that trenchless techniques will avoid habitat loss at the Ribble crossing. Additional information on habitat loss from trenchless techniques, i.e. installation of equipment, onshore infrastructure at trench entry and exit pits needs to be considered and appropriately screened.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.45 (PDA-023).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.45 (PDA-023).
RI_H39	Shelduck numbers are clearly high in the area. More information on the habitats being used may shed light on the required mitigation requirements. Natural England advise the Applicant to include shelduck into the calculations for the mitigation areas currently for pink footed goose and whooper swan and consider in more detail what function the habitats being made unavailable provided for the species. However, the Applicant should also consider the density of birds potentially using the mitigation areas and what risks there may be e.g. disease.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.46 (PDA-023).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.46 (PDA-023).

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 2	RAG Deadline 2	NE comment at Deadline 2 (Consultation, actions, progression)	Applicants comment at Deadline 3
RI_H40	Natural England agree that in the long term the conclusions are appropriate for wigeon, but this conclusion does not account for effects in the short-term. Natural England advises the Applicant to consider measures to reduce impacts to wigeon in the short-term, noting that spatial scheduling of the works may reduce the requirements for this and other species. Please see advice above regarding shelduck.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.47 (PDA-023).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.47 (PDA-023).
RI_H41	Natural England advises the Applicant to consider measures to reduce impacts to teal in the short-term. Please see advice above regarding shelduck and wigeon above.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.48 (PDA-023).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.48 (PDA-023).
RI_H42	Natural England note the commitment to improving nearby areas of habitat for waders such as golden plover. The Applicant should provide more information on the proposed habitat improvements to ensure the measures are appropriate.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.49 (PDA-023).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.49 (PDA-023).
RI_H43	Natural England note that Jourdan et al. (2022) report/paper is repeatedly referenced, but not included in the reference list.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.50 (PDA-023).			
RI_H44	Natural England do not agree with the conclusion for black-tailed godwit. The Applicant should reassess their assessment framework and consider the proportions of the passage and winter populations that could be affected. If adverse effects could arise, mitigation habitat should be provided that will cater for the requirements of the species.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.51 (PDA-023).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.51 (PDA-023).
RI_H45	Natural England do not agree with the conclusion of no AEOL for temporary loss of supporting habitats and/or resource availability for the features that utilise terrestrial habitats for the Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA. The Appropriate Assessment should focus on the populations revealed by the surveys, rather than modelled information. Natural England advises the following additional evidence is also required: •Details of the locations of the alternative supporting habitat qualifying species can use, including their		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.52 (PDA-023).		No change.	The Applicants are clear that impacts on the Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA and Ramsar terrestrial features are sufficiently mitigated and have updated the Outline Ecological Management Plan with added detail on these mitigation measures (REP2-018) The Applicants are awaiting Natural England's response to this.

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 2	RAG Deadline 2	NE comment at Deadline 2 (Consultation, actions, progression)	Applicants comment at Deadline 3
	distance from the proposal boundary and size. •Further details of how the applicant will ensure the recovery of the temporary habitat loss. This should include details of mechanisms that will be put in place to ensure the supporting habitat recovers, and predicted timescales.					
RI_H46	The SPA non-breeding waterbird assemblage is a feature in its own right, therefore all the other species that contribute to it also have to be considered, in particular in this case in terms of numbers, as diversity and quality are more likely to be robust at a site scale. Natural England advise the Applicant to revisit the framing of [APP-017] and re-consider impacts/risks and compensation and mitigations options and planning for managing the risks.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.53 and RR-1601 1601.H.55 (PDA-023).		No change.	The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.53 and RR-1601 1601.H.55 (PDA-023).
RI_H47	Natural England note the following statement : “...all features have been assessed independently there is not predicted to be any additional impact ..” and do not agree with this conclusion and methodology in relation to the breeding waterbird assemblage, but note the conclusion of no AEOI is likely to be correct in this instance.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.54 (PDA-023).			
RI_H48	Natural England disagrees with the conclusions for Dunlin as a Ramsar site feature for the same reasons as identified for other intertidal waders.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.56 (PDA-023).		No change.	The Applicants have submitted further information regarding the energetics of the passage features at the Landfall (Technical note on the energetics of the birds at landfall and the adequacy of the Fairhaven Saltmarsh - Rev F01 (REP2-045)). This was provided at the request of Natural England and the Applicants are awaiting Natural England's response to this.
RI_H49	Natural England disagrees with the conclusions for Black-tailed godwit as a Ramsar feature for the same reasons as identified for other terrestrial waders.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.57 (PDA-023).		No change.	The Applicants are clear that impacts for the Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA and Ramsar terrestrial features are being mitigated for and have updated the outline Ecological Management Plan with added detail on these mitigations (REP2-018). The Applicants are awaiting Natural England's response to this.
RI_H50	The assessment of habitat loss during the operational phase is based on habitat loss in a different site (Liverpool Bay SPA). Natural England advises the Applicant to update the report and include the habitat loss during Operation & Maintenance in Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.58 (PDA-023).			

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 2	RAG Deadline 2	NE comment at Deadline 2 (Consultation, actions, progression)	Applicants comment at Deadline 3
RI_H51	Fairhaven Saltmarsh is identified as a mitigation area, however questions remain over its suitability. Natural England strongly advise the Applicant to produce some supplemental information clarifying why this proposal is considered likely to be effective, clarifying the management required to support delivery, and justifying its energetic value to the species impacted.		<p>The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.60 (PDA-023).</p> <p>The Applicants have provided a technical note on the energetics of the birds at landfall and at Fairhaven Saltmarsh at Deadline 2 (S_D2_12)</p>		No change.	<p>The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.60 (PDA-023).</p> <p>The Applicants anticipate further comments on the technical note on the energetics of the birds at landfall and the adequacy of the Fairhaven Saltmarsh as mitigation (REP2-045) provided at Deadline 2.</p>
RI_H52	The level of detail presented in the mitigation area summaries for intertidal mitigation and terrestrial mitigation is not sufficient to fulfil the expectations of the HRA with regards to certainty of outcome. Produce some supplemental information clarifying why this proposal is considered likely to be effective, clarifying management to support delivery, and justifying its energetic value to the species impacted.		<p>The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.61 (PDA-023).</p> <p>The Applicants have provided a technical note on the energetics of the birds at landfall and at Fairhaven Saltmarsh at Deadline 2 (S_D2_12)</p>		No change.	<p>The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.61 (PDA-023).</p> <p>The Applicants anticipate further comments on the technical note on the energetics of the birds at landfall and the adequacy of the Fairhaven Saltmarsh as mitigation (REP2-045) provided at Deadline 2.</p>
RI_H53	Please note that comments relating to SSSI sites are included in the sections above.		The Applicants have responded previously in RR-1601 1601.H.62 (PDA-023).			



## 2.11 Risk and Issues Log – Fylde MCZ

**Table 2.11: Responses to questions regarding the Fylde MCZ**

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 2	NE comment at Deadline 2 (Consultation, actions, progression)	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants comment at Deadline 3
<b>Risk and Issues Log Deadline 1 – Fylde MCZ</b> <b>Taken from Natural England's Relevant and Written Representations Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets</b> <b>Appendix I - Fylde MCZ</b>						
RI_I1	Up to 3% of the offshore export cables, including cable crossings within Fylde MCZ may require cable protection and this equates to a total of 0.0304km <sup>2</sup> (30,400m <sup>2</sup> /3.04ha) of lasting habitat change/loss within the site. Natural England does not agree with the Applicants conclusion of no likelihood of hindering the conservation objectives of Fylde MCZ. Unless it can be demonstrated otherwise, the nature, scale and duration of impacts from lasting habitats change/loss from the placement of cable protection is likely to hinder the 'maintain' habitat feature conservation objectives of the site. We advise that the MCZ assessment should proceed to a stage 2 assessment and a without prejudice Measures of Equivalent Environmental Benefit (MEEB) proposal should be produced.		The Applicants have responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.45 of their response to Natural England (PDA-014). The Applicants' provided a Stage 2 MCZ Assessment, including a without prejudice, in-principle Measures of Equivalent Environmental Benefit (MEEB) Plan, at Deadline 1 (REP1-059).	Resolved: The Applicant has undertaken a Stage 2 MCZ Assessment and without prejudice MEEB and submitted these into Examination at Deadline 1. Therefore this issue has been resolved at Deadline 2. Please note, other comments relating to the MCZ assessment are not resolved. This comment has specifically been resolved as the Applicant has provided the documents requested.  NE has provided further comments on the Applicants 'Without prejudice MEEB proposal in 'Tab J Benthic Compensation' of this R&I Log and Appendix J of our Deadline 2 submission.		The Applicants' welcome the decision to resolve this issue at Deadline 2.  Response to further comments on the Applicants' In-principle MEEB proposal from 'Tab J Benthic Compensation' of the Risk and Issue Log and Appendix J of NE's Deadline 2 submission are provided in Table 2.12 below, and Appendix A.
RI_I2	Natural England agrees with the MMO in considering that in order to fully discharge regulatory duties under section 69 (1) of the MCAA, in combination and cumulative effects must be considered. Natural England considers the O&M phase activities for Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets combined with the projects listed in Table 1.21 and on-going Oil and Gas impacts will result in lasting habitat change / physical disturbance which will further hinder the conservation objectives of the Fylde MCZ. We strongly advise that Applicant's potentially affecting the MCZ will need to intensify their use of the mitigation hierarchy.		The Applicants have responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.45 of their response to Natural England (PDA-014).	No change.		The Applicants responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.45 of their response to Natural England (PDA-014).
RI_I3	The most recent condition assessment for Fylde MCZ concluded that subtidal sand and subtidal mud were in a favourable condition. Natural England advises that whilst the cable protection is in situ, the extent and distribution attribute of the site features can neither be maintained or restored. Nor can the impacts be considered temporary even if removal is secured at the end of the 35-year		The Applicants have responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.45 of their response to Natural England (PDA-014). The Applicants' provided a Stage 2 MCZ Assessment, including a without prejudice, in-principle Measures of Equivalent Environmental Benefit (MEEB) Plan, at Deadline 1 (REP1-059).	No change.		The Applicants responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.45 of their response to Natural England (PDA-014). The Applicants also provided a Stage 2 MCZ Assessment, including a without prejudice, in-principle Measures of Equivalent Environmental Benefit (MEEB) Plan, at Deadline 1 (REP1-059).  Response to further comments on the Applicants' In-principle MEEB proposal from 'Tab J Benthic

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 2	NE comment at Deadline 2 (Consultation, actions, progression)	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants comment at Deadline 3
	<p>project lifespan. Therefore, we advise that the impacts will result in 'lasting' habitat change from mud and sand to hard substrata which may result in habitat loss as removal and/or recovery post removal is not guaranteed.</p> <p>Additionally, we do not agree with the Applicant that in-filling of cable protection with sediment will occur and be sufficient to provide the same structure and function in the impacted area.</p> <p>Unless the Applicant's position changes it is unlikely that there will be agreement between the Applicant and Natural England during examination on this issue. Please see comment I1 on the provision of a without prejudice MEEB case.</p>					Compensation' of the Risk and Issue Log and Appendix J of NE's Deadline 2 submission are provided in Table 2.12 below, and Appendix A.
RI_14	<p>The Applicant has stated that the requirement for, and potential locations of any cable protection due to ground conditions within the Fylde MCZ are not yet known. Therefore, the MDS figures have assumed that the cable protection material for the cable crossing could occur wholly within either the subtidal sand or subtidal mud features. Therefore, the MDS for long term habitat loss of each of the features have been provided as:</p> <p>Subtidal sand – 0.0304km<sup>2</sup> (0.014% of the area of this feature in the MCZ)</p> <p>Subtidal mud – 0.0304km<sup>2</sup> (0.069% of the area of this feature in the MCZ)</p> <p>Natural England does not agree with this approach. We advise that an accurate MDS and realistic Worst-Case Scenario (WCS) for each feature is presented and assessed for lasting habitat change/loss and updated with the Application documents. We highlight the importance in providing specific figures to inform the compensation requirements for a without prejudice MEEB.</p>		<p>The Applicants have responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.43 of their response to Natural England (PDA-014) and within RR-1601.I.4 of their response to Natural England – Appendix I (PDA-024).</p> <p>The Applicants' provided a Stage 2 MCZ Assessment, including a without prejudice, in-principle Measures of Equivalent Environmental Benefit (MEEB) Plan, at Deadline 1 (REP1-059) which updates the MDS for long term habitat loss of each of the features to account for the cable crossing occurring only within the subtidal mud feature.</p>	No change: Please see Tab J of this R&I Log and Appendix J of our Deadline 2 submission.		<p>The Applicants responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.43 of their response to Natural England (PDA-014) and within RR-1601.I.4 of their response to Natural England – Appendix I (PDA-024).</p> <p>The Applicants also provided a Stage 2 MCZ Assessment, including a without prejudice, in-principle Measures of Equivalent Environmental Benefit (MEEB) Plan, at Deadline 1 (REP1-059) which updates the MDS for long term habitat loss of each of the features to account for the cable crossing occurring only within the subtidal mud feature.</p> <p>Response to further comments on the Applicants' In-principle MEEB proposal from 'Tab J Benthic Compensation' of the Risk and Issue Log and Appendix J of NE's Deadline 2 submission are provided in Table 2.12 below, and Appendix A.</p>
RI_15	<p>Natural England disagrees with the Applicant on the scale and significance of the impacts on the interest feature of the Fylde MCZ. Natural England also advises that impacts considered as a percentage of the whole MCZ is misleading given the size of the site. The lasting habitat change/loss impacts from the Transmission Assets combined are still 0.0304 km<sup>2</sup>/3.04ha from cable protection. We do not consider this amount of lasting habitat change/loss to be small scale.</p>		<p>The Applicants have responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.45 of their response to Natural England (PDA-014). The Applicants' provided a Stage 2 MCZ Assessment, including a without prejudice, in-principle Measures of Equivalent Environmental Benefit (MEEB) Plan, at Deadline 1 (REP1-059).</p>	No change.		<p>The Applicants responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.45 of their response to Natural England (PDA-014). The Applicants' provided a Stage 2 MCZ Assessment, including a without prejudice, in-principle Measures of Equivalent Environmental Benefit (MEEB) Plan, at Deadline 1 (REP1-059).</p> <p>Response to further comments on the Applicants' In-principle MEEB proposal from 'Tab J Benthic Compensation' of the Risk and Issue Log and</p>

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 2	NE comment at Deadline 2 (Consultation, actions, progression)	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants comment at Deadline 3
	Natural England does not believe that the respective positions are likely to change in relation to scale and significance of the impact to the Fylde MCZ and therefore we provide no further comment unless design parameters change through the examination.					Appendix J of NE's Deadline 2 submission are provided in Table 2.12 below, and Appendix A.
RI_I6	Natural England note the commitments; CoT108 and CoT109 from the Applicant that any external cable protection used within the Fylde MCZ will be designed to be removable at decommissioning stage. However, we note that this commitment does not include the action to remove cable protection at the decommissioning phase, only that the protection will be 'removable'. Although some of the cable protection options included within the project description may be removable they are not considered as such from a nature conservation perspective due to further impacts to the designated site features e.g. rock armouring. We advise a commitment to remove all seabed infrastructure at the time of commissioning both inside and outside of Fylde MCZ should be secured in the DCO.		The Applicants have responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.42 of their response to Natural England (PDA-014). The Applicants have updated the outline Cable Specification and Installation Plan submitted at Deadline 2 (J15/F02), which removed 'rock dump' from the list of cable protection types to be used within the Fylde MCZ.	No change.		The Applicants responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.42 of their response to Natural England (PDA-014). The Applicants also updated the outline Cable Specification and Installation Plan and submitted at Deadline 2 (REP2-022), which removed 'rock dump' from the list of cable protection types to be used within the Fylde MCZ.
RI_I7	Natural England reiterates concerns around the varying construction scenarios proposed by the Applicant. The most impactful to Fylde MCZ would be option 3b (i.e. sequential construction with a gap of up to a maximum of four years between completion of construction of the transmission assets for the first project and commencement of construction for the second project). This is mainly due to the four-year gap which may allow for some recovery of seabed habitats and species from the first works. The Applicant has not considered the potential for recovery and the impact from repeated interventions or the four-year gap, therefore we do not agree that the WCS has fully been assessed.		The Applicants have responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.7 of their response to Natural England – Appendix I (PDA-024).	No change.		The Applicants responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.1.7 of their response to Natural England – Appendix I (PDA-024).
RI_I8	Whilst we welcome the refinement work the Applicant has undertaken, we advise there are further mitigation options which should be explored by the Applicant to minimise impacts on Fylde MCZ and included for consideration in the Application, namely: • Commitments should be made and secured to avoid the most sensitive Priority habitats designated under Section 41 of the NERC Act (2206). This is applicable both within and outside of Fylde MCZ;		The Applicants have responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.8 of their response to Natural England – Appendix I (PDA-024).	No change.		The Applicants responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.8 of their response to Natural England – Appendix I (PDA-024).

ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 2	NE comment at Deadline 2 (Consultation, actions, progression)	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants comment at Deadline 3
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exclusion of the use of jack up vessels within the MCZ;</li> <li>• UXO clearance to be moved outside of the MCZ prior to detonation to avoid impacts to the seabed where possible;</li> <li>• Boulder clearance using a grab not a plough;</li> <li>• Remove all cable and scour protection at the time of decommissioning, both within and outside of Fylde MCZ</li> <li>• Further mitigation measures to be adopted with regards to sediment disposal (I10)</li> <li>• Refining long term habitat loss for subtidal mud and subtidal sand within Fylde MCZ to provide more realistic MDS parameters for habitat loss.</li> </ul>					
RI_I9	Natural England would welcome further information on dredge and disposal activities with regards to Fylde MCZ. The Application states that disposal activities including sandwave clearance will be conducted throughout the Transmission Assets Order Limits but that no commitments have been proposed to mitigate impacts either within or outside of benthic designated sites. Mitigation options should be adopted and disposal options should be explored to ensure that sediment is deposited in areas of similar sediment character so that the risk of permanently altering the sediment character in any given location is minimised.		The Applicants have previously responded to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.44 of their response to Natural England – Appendix A (PDA-014) on the application of the mitigation hierarchy to reduce impacts to the Fylde MCZ. The Applicants have previously responded to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.C.31 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017) on commitments relating to disposal activities and priority habitats.	No change.		The Applicants previously responded to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.44 of their response to Natural England – Appendix A (PDA-014) on the application of the mitigation hierarchy to reduce impacts to the Fylde MCZ. The Applicants previously responded to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.C.31 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017) on commitments relating to disposal activities and priority habitats.
RI_I10	Natural England notes that secondary scouring needs further consideration in the Stage I MCZ Assessment in relation to impacts to sediment transportation.		The Applicants have responded previously to this matter raised by Natural England. Information on the cable protection location and design was provided in RR-1601.43 (PDA-014) whilst a detailed response regarding secondary scour was given in R-1601.I.10 (PDA-024).	No change.		The Applicants responded previously to this matter raised by Natural England. Information on the cable protection location and design was provided in RR-1601.43 (PDA-014) whilst a detailed response regarding secondary scour was given in R-1601.I.10 (PDA-024). Please also refer to the updated Outline Cable Specification and Installation Plan (REP2-022) and Volume 1, Chapter 3: Project description (REP2-008), submitted at Deadline 2.
RI_I11	Natural England notes that UXO clearance activities are likely to be undertaken within the Fylde MCZ. Natural England continues to advise that UXOs should be detonated outside of Fylde MCZ to avoid the creation of a crater. As a minimum, we advise that further information is required in relation to the depth of any crater and the impacts this may have on the subtidal mud and sand features including any recovery times.		The Applicants have responded previously to this matter in RR-1601.B.14 of their response to Natural England – Appendix B (PDA-016) which outlines the MDS for UXO clearance within the Fylde MCZ and the commitments adopted by the Applicants with respect to UXO clearance. The Applicants also confirmed within RR-1601.37 of their response to Natural England (PDA-014) that high order UXO detonation has been removed	No change.		The Applicants responded previously to this matter in RR-1601.B.14 of their response to Natural England – Appendix B (PDA-016) which outlines the MDS for UXO clearance within the Fylde MCZ and the commitments adopted by the Applicants with respect to UXO clearance. The Applicants also confirmed within RR-1601.37 of their response to Natural England (PDA-014) that high order UXO detonation has been removed from the draft DCO (including the DMLs) (REP1-008) at Deadline 1.



ID	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Status Rel and WR Rep and D1	Applicants' comment at Deadline 2	NE comment at Deadline 2 (Consultation, actions, progression)	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants comment at Deadline 3
			from the draft DCO (including the DMLs) (REP1-008).			
RI_112	We welcome the inclusion of in principal monitoring proposed for benthic subtidal and intertidal ecology in the Offshore In Principal Monitoring Plan (OIPMP). However, the focus seems to be on physical/sediment recovery and lacks sufficient ecological context. Additionally, there is no reference to pre- and post-construction monitoring which is essential to understand and assess recovery. We advise that the rationale within Table 1.3 of the OIPMP needs to be updated to additionally include "temporal and spatial changes in benthic communities and their recoverability....". We also advise that the Applicant provides clarity that monitoring surveys will be undertaken pre- and post-construction and that temporal monitoring over an agreed time period should take place in order to confirm recovery.		The Applicants have responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.C.35 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).	No change.		The Applicants responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.C.35 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).
RI_113	Natural England notes that within the Outline O&M plan there is the intention to use the cable protection allowance over the lifetime of the project. However, this is not aligned with Natural England position on cable protection. We advise that post construction and an agreed snagging time a new marine licence would be required for the placement of further cable protection within Fylde MCZ. Natural England advises that the Applicant refines the O&M requirements to be align with the SNCB and regulatory position on this.		The Applicants have responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.A.9 of their response to Natural England (PDA-014) and RR-1601.C. 2 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).	No change.		The Applicants responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.A.9 of their response to Natural England (PDA-014) and RR-1601.C. 2 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017).



## 2.12 Risk and Issue Log – Benthic Compensation

Table 2.12: Responses to questions regarding Benthic Compensation

ID / Appendix J reference	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants' response at Deadline 3
<b>Risk and Issues Log Deadline 1 – Benthic Compensation</b> <b>Taken from Natural England's Relevant and Written Representations Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets</b> <b>Appendix J - Benthic Compensation</b>			
<b>Compensation measure: Strategic Compensation - New site designation or Extension for Subtidal Sand and Subtidal Mud</b>			
RI_J1 / J3	NE does not agree with the approach taken to determine the total WCS for lasting habitat loss. The approach taken assumes that cable protection requirements could occur wholly within either the subtidal sand or subtidal mud feature. In order for us to agree the impact, the habitat loss for each feature should be calculated then summed to provide the total area of habitat loss.		<p>The Applicants responded previously to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.43 of their response to Natural England (PDA-014) and within RR-1601.1.4 of their response to Natural England – Appendix I (PDA-024).</p> <p>The Applicants' provided a Stage 2 MCZ Assessment, including a without prejudice, in-principle Measures of Equivalent Environmental Benefit (MEEB) Plan, at Deadline 1 (REP1-059) which updated the maximum design scenario (MDS) for long term habitat loss of each of the features to account for the cable crossing occurring only within the subtidal mud feature. As set out in the Outline Offshore Cable Specification and Installation Plan (CSIP) (REP2-022) as part of the detailed design process pre-construction survey data will be used to inform the final routing of the cables, any micro-siting requirements and areas where there is a higher risk of remedial works such as external cable protection. At this stage in the consenting process, however, the Applicants are unable to refine the assumptions further with respect to where cable protection for ground conditions will be required in the Fylde MCZ (if any is required at all).</p>
RI_J2 / J4	Due to potential uncertainties with the delivery mechanisms and timeframes for successful delivery of the measure, further discussions are required in relation to individual project contributions and compensatory ratios which may be required.		<p>The Applicants welcome this response and have engaged in post-application/pre-examination consultation with Natural England regarding the MEEB for the Fylde MCZ and would welcome further discussions with Natural England and Defra, as the future Marine Recovery Fund (MRF) operator, in relation to individual project contributions and compensatory ratios which may be required for the Transmission Assets.</p> <p>Natural England's guidance regarding the delivery of MEEB, as outlined in their comments on the Applicants' response to Natural England's Relevant/Written Representations REP2-062), were taken in to account by the Applicants in the development of the Stage 2 MCZ Assessment (REP1-059). As outlined in the Stage 2 MCZ Assessment (REP1-059), the Applicants and Natural England are in agreement that strategic compensation measures, in the form of a payment into the Marine Recovery Fund (MRF) to access Defra's programme of MPA designations/extensions, are likely to be the preferred and best method for the delivery of MEEB for the Fylde MCZ (should MEEB be required). Regarding individual project contribution and compensatory ratios, as outlined in Section A.1.7.3 of the Stage 2 MCZ Assessment (REP1-059), the Applicants understand the ratio of MEEB to impact will be determined by Defra in consultation with SNCBs and will be used to determine the size of the monetary contribution made by the Applicants.</p> <p>The Applicants have submitted the document Without Prejudice Benthic Compensation DCO Schedule (S_D3_9) that could be included in the DCO should it be concluded that benthic compensation was required. The drafting would secure the relevant measures set out in the Stage 2 MCZ Assessment (REP1-059). The Applicants had regard to the wording provided by Natural England when drafting the without prejudice schedule.</p>
RI_J3 / J5	Natural England recognises that there are likely to be time lags between impact occurring and compensation achieving the desired outcomes. We would wish to see the project contribution to the measure to be such that it ensures an overall environmental net positive outcome for the impacted feature over the lifetime of the project.		<p>The Applicants acknowledge that Natural England have provided this comment as a note for the Examiners and/or the competent authority and would note the response provided by the Applicants to RI_J2 &amp; J4 with regards to the project contributions that may be required to secure MEEB (should MEEB be required). The Applicants understand the ratio of MEEB to impact will be determined by Defra in consultation with SNCBs and will be used to determine the size of the monetary contribution made by the Applicants.</p> <p>As outlined in Section A.1.7.2 of the Stage 2 MCZ Assessment (REP1-059), the creation of the MRF is under the scope of Part 13 of the Energy Act 2023, however it has yet to be set up for England or Wales although it is anticipated to be introduced in late 2025 (UK Parliament, 2025). UK Parliament 2020 also states that although Defra has already begun work on this, the timelines of some projects</p>

ID / Appendix J reference	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants' response at Deadline 3
			mean that they will still be delayed if they are required to wait for MPA designations and associated management to be functioning. Where this is the case, the Department for Energy Security & Net Zero (DESNZ) Secretary of State and the MMO may consider circumstances where the adverse effect can occur before compensation is in place. Where this is permitted, the Applicants understand that a greater amount of environmental compensation is likely to be needed to make up for the time delay and developers will be required to pay into the MRF before any adverse effect can occur. Natural England have however confirmed that for the Transmission Assets, in-principle it should be possible for the impacts from the Transmission Assets to occur before strategic compensation is in place provided the Applicants state they are committed to strategic compensation.
RI_J4 / J6	The location of the measure is still under consideration by DEFRA, NE and JNCC and as yet nothing has been agreed and/or secured. There is likely to be consultation on potential locations during the examination.		The Applicants acknowledge that Natural England have provided this comment as a note for the Examiners and/or the competent authority. The Applicants would however highlight that, as outlined Section A.1.7.2 of the Stage 2 MCZ Assessment (REP1-059), the location of the MPA extension/designation will be determined by Defra as the MRF operator. Ultimately the evidence base and decision-making process for choosing the MEEB location(s) will be outlined by Defra. As outlined in the Applicants' response to RI_J2 & J4 above, the Applicants would welcome further discussions with Natural England and Defra, as the future MRF operator, on potential locations.
RI_J5 / J7	Long Term implementation is still under consideration by DEFRA, NE and JNCC and as yet nothing has been agreed and/or secured.		The Applicants acknowledge that Natural England have provided this comment as a note for the Examiners and/or the competent authority and understand that long term implementation is still under consideration by Defra, Natural England and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC). The Applicants would welcome any further updates by Natural England during the course of the examination.
RI_J6 / J8	Success criteria/Ability to prove additionality is still under consideration by DEFRA, NE and JNCC and as yet nothing has been agreed and/or secured.		The Applicants acknowledge that Natural England have provided this comment as a note for the Examiners and/or the competent authority and understand that the success criteria/ability to prove additionality is still under consideration by Defra, Natural England and the JNCC. The Applicants would welcome any further updates by Natural England during the course of the examination.
<b>Compensation measure: Biogenic Reef - Native Oyster</b>			
RI_J7 / J10	Natural England advises that reef creation/enhancement is not considered to provide comparable ecological function and is therefore not an appropriate measure for subtidal sand and subtidal mud systems within Fylde MCZ and provide no further comment on this as a potential measure.		<p>The Applicants note this comment and would highlight that, as outlined in the Stage 2 MCZ Assessment (REP1-059), should the Secretary of State determine that MEEB be required for the Transmission Assets, Natural England and the Applicants are in agreement that strategic compensation measures are likely to be the preferred and best method for the delivery of MEEB for the Fylde MCZ. In line with other projects currently going through examination (e.g. Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm and Outer Dowsing Offshore Wind (Generating Station)), the Applicants have, however, also explored a longlist of potential project-led MEEB options.</p> <p>As outlined in Section A.1.7.3 of the Stage 2 MCZ Assessment (REP1-059), whilst the Applicants acknowledge that native oyster bed creation would not provide like-for-like compensation for subtidal sand and subtidal mud, the Applicants have outlined their reasons for why they consider that native oyster beds could provide a comparable ecological function (e.g. as native oyster reefs are known to provide shelter and food for juvenile fish). The Applicants would note that project-led measures have not been fully defined/developed further on the basis of feedback provided by Natural England at the meeting on 12 February 2025 during which Natural England stated that they were not requesting a long list of project-led MEEB measures and neither would they comment on it. The Applicants note that Natural England have confirmed this position in their comments in J6 and J7 above.</p>
<b>Compensation measure: Bivalve Seeding inside MCZ</b>			
RI_J8 / J11	It remains unclear what additionally this measure would provide and therefore NE questions this as being compensation for lasting habitat loss/change to subtidal sand and subtidal mud. In addition, the seeding of bivalves is associated with biogenic reef communities on mixed sediment and not subtidal sand and subtidal mud.		<p>Please see the Applicants response to RI_J7 &amp; J10 for the Applicants' position on strategic compensation measures as the preferred and best method for the delivery of MEEB for the Fylde MCZ.</p> <p>As outlined in Section A.1.7.3 of the Stage 2 MCZ Assessment (REP1-059), whilst the Applicants acknowledge that bivalve seeding within the Fylde MCZ would not provide like-for-like compensation for subtidal sand and subtidal mud, the Applicants have outlined their reasons for why they consider that bivalve seeding could provide a comparable ecological function (e.g. bivalves are key component of the community within the Fylde MCZ and a key food resource for juvenile fish and therefore</p>

ID / Appendix J reference	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants' response at Deadline 3
			improving their population numbers could potentially improve this function within the Fylde MCZ). As outlined in the Applicants' response to RI_J7 & J10, this measure has not been developed further at this stage following the advice from that Natural England that they do not believe there is merit in further progressing project-led compensation measures at this time.
<b>Compensation measure: Bivalve Seeding outside of designated sites</b>			
RI_J9 / J12	Given the legislative changes that would be required, Natural England does not consider this option is viable within the Project's timeframe. If the Applicant wishes to pursue this there will need to be agreement from The Crown Estate for a seabed lease and management measures put into place.		The Applicants note Natural England's comments and would highlight their response to RI_J7 & J10 confirming the Applicants' position on strategic compensation measures as the preferred and best method for the delivery of MEEB for the Fylde MCZ.
RI_J10 / J13	Natural England does not agree with the approach taken to determine the total WCS for lasting habitat loss. The approach taken assumes that cable protection requirements could occur wholly within either the subtidal sand or subtidal mud feature.		Please see the Applicants response to RI_J1 & J3 above.
RI_J11 / J14	The scale/extent of the measure has not been presented in detail and/or agreed with Natural England, JNCC or DEFRA.		The Applicants note Natural England's comments and would highlight their response to RI_J7 & J10 confirming the Applicants' position on strategic compensation measures as the preferred and best method for the delivery of MEEB for the Fylde MCZ. In line with other projects currently going through examination, the Applicants have, however, also explored a longlist of potential project-led MEEB options, as the details of the MRF are not yet finalised. The Applicants acknowledge that in the event that Natural England and the Applicants' position changes, and project-led measures must be pursued, the Applicants would be required to provide further detail on these measures.
RI_J12 / J15	We do not believe that this measure will be available in the project timeframes.		Please see the Applicants' response to RI_J11 & J14 above.
RI_J13 / J16	The location of the measure has not been presented in detail and/or agreed with TCE, Natural England, JNCC or DEFRA.		Please see the Applicants' response to RI_J11 & J14 above.
RI_J14 / J17, J18	There is a requirement for changes in legislation for the delivery of this measure and therefore until that is secured, further long-term implementation and success criteria remains unknown.		Please see the Applicants' response to RI_J11 & J14 above.
RI_J15 / J19	We do not believe that is currently suitable as a sole or part measure at this time.		Please see the Applicants' response to RI_J11 & J14 above.
<b>Compensation measure: Seagrass habitat creation/restoration</b>			
RI_J16 / J20	Natural England advises that seagrass restoration is a lower preference measure compared to those supporting the same ecological function of the habitat being compensated for.'  Natural England also highlights that seagrass is not a feature of subtidal mud and further advice on this measure should be read in this light.		The Applicants acknowledge that Natural England have provided this comment as a note for the Examiners and/or the competent authority but would highlight their response to RI_J7 & J10 that should the Secretary of State determine that MEEB be required, Natural England and the Applicants are in agreement that strategic compensation measures are likely to be the preferred and best method for the delivery of MEEB for the Fylde MCZ.  As outlined in Section A.1.7.3 of the Stage 2 MCZ Assessment (REP1-059), whilst the Applicants acknowledge that seagrass habitat creation/restoration would not provide like-for-like compensation for subtidal sand and subtidal mud, the Applicants have outlined their reasons for why they consider that this measure could provide a comparable ecological function. The Applicants acknowledge that in the event that Natural England and the Applicants' position changes, and project-led measures must be pursued, the Applicants would be required to provide further detail on these measures. As outlined in the Applicants' response to RI_J7 & J10 above, this measure has not been developed further at this stage following the advice from that Natural England that they do not believe there is merit in further progressing project-led compensation measures at this time.
RI_J17 / J21	Natural England has significant concerns about the deliverability of seagrass restoration, even on a small scale as there have been no long term successes with seagrass restoration in the UK. Subtidal seagrass restoration should only be a minor		Please see the Applicants' response to RI_J16 & J20 above.



ID / Appendix J reference	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants' response at Deadline 3
	part of a wider package in terms of the required compensation. It could be retained to supplement other measures, or potentially as an adaptive management response.		
RI_J18 / J22	NE does not agree with the approach taken to determine the total WCS for lasting habitat loss. The approach taken assumes that cable protection requirements could occur wholly within either the subtidal sand or subtidal mud feature. In order for us to agree the impact, the habitat loss for each feature should be calculated then summed to provide the total area of habitat loss.		Please see the Applicants' response to RI_J16 & J20 above.
RI_J19 / J23	The scale/extent of the measure has not been presented in detail and/or agreed with the SNCBs.		The Applicants acknowledge that Natural England have provided this comment as a note for the Examiners and/or the competent authority. Please see the Applicants response to RI_J16 & J20 above.
RI_J20 / J24	It is unclear if this measure can be delivered prior to the impacts occurring.		The Applicants acknowledge that Natural England have provided this comment as a note for the Examiners and/or the competent authority. Please see the Applicants response to RI_J16 & J20 above.
RI_J21 / J25	The location of the measure has not been presented in detail and/or agreed with the SNCBs. More detail is required to address our concerns.		The Applicants acknowledge that Natural England have provided this comment as a note for the Examiners and/or the competent authority. Please see the Applicants response to RI_J16 & J20 above.
RI_J22 / J26, J27	Long term implementation and Success/Ability to prove additionality is yet to be considered in detail and agreed with the SNCBs. More detail is required to address our concerns.		The Applicants acknowledge that Natural England have provided this comment as a note for the Examiners and/or the competent authority. Please see the Applicants response to RI_J16 & J20 above.
RI_J23 / J28	Natural England advises that this measure could only be considered as part of a package providing <10% of the required compensation and/or potential adaptive management for part delivered compensation. There would also be a requirement for the provision of subtidal seagrass, not intertidal.		The Applicants acknowledge that Natural England have provided this comment as a note for the Examiners and/or the competent authority. Please see the Applicants response to RI_J16 & J20 above.
<b>Detailed comments</b>			
<b>Documents used: [REP1-059] Stage 2 MCZ Assessment</b>			
RI_J24 / J29	It is unclear why terrestrial issues have been included in the document. NE advises that there should be MEEB for each designated site.		Onshore aspects of the project, including the onshore export cable corridor and onshore substations, have only been described within Section A.1.1.2.1 of the Stage 2 MCZ Assessment (REP1-059) in order to provide an overview of all project infrastructure for completeness. The Applicants can confirm that there are no onshore elements of the Transmission Assets which are relevant to the MCZ Screening and Stage 1 Assessment Report (APP-018) or the Stage 2 Assessment Report (REP1-059). All potentially impacted designated sites were identified, screened and assessed in the MCZ Screening and Stage 1 Assessment Report (APP-018), and all relevant MCZs (i.e. the Fylde MCZ alone) have been considered with respect to MEEB, in the Stage 2 Assessment Report (REP1-059).
RI_J25 / J30	Natural England doesn't agree with the Applicant in relation to small scale losses not hindering the conservation objectives of the MCZ. We refer the ExA to Appendix C Annex A of our relevant/written representation [RR-1601]. It is unlikely that either Applicant's or Natural England position on this will change during examination.		The Applicants acknowledge that Natural England have provided this comment as a note for the Examiners and/or the competent authority. The Applicants would however highlight the response the Applicants provided to RR-1601.45 (PDA-014) which outlines the steps the Applicants have taken to minimise the impact of the Transmission Assets on the Fylde MCZ. The Applicants provided a Stage 2 MCZ Assessment, including a without prejudice, in-principle Measures of Equivalent Environmental Benefit (MEEB) Plan, at Deadline 1 (REP1-059).
RI_J26 / J32	Natural England advises that lasting habitat change/loss can only be considered if removed at the time of decommissioning. After that timeframe it becomes a permanent impact. We advise that commitments should be made to ensure removal.		The Applicants have responded to this point in full in the Applicants' response to RR-1601.42 (PDA-014). The Outline CSIP (APP220) identifies that cable burial is the preferred option for cable protection where practicable (CoT54) and should cable protection be required within the Fylde MCZ, it will be designed to be removable (CoT108) with the requirement for removal agreed with stakeholders and regulators at the time of decommissioning (CoT109). The Applicants would also highlight the updated Outline CSIP submitted at Deadline 2 (REP2-022), which has removed 'rock dump' from the list of cable protection types to be used within the Fylde MCZ in acknowledgment that this is the least recoverable type of protection.
RI_J27 / J33	Natural England advises that even where the conservation objectives are set to 'maintain', lasting habitats change/loss would not maintain the extent and distribution		See the Applicants response to RI_J25 & J30 and RI_J26 & J32 above.

ID / Appendix J reference	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants' response at Deadline 3
	of the features; thus hindering them. This would lead to a restore conservation objective being set which can't be achieved whilst the cable protection is in situ, therefore we advise that MEEB is required.		
RI_J28 / J34	DESNZ guidance on the MRF agrees with the Applicant that there is likely to be a time lag between impacts occurring and the delivery of the compensation. Therefore, allowances will be included in the MRF process for this.		The Applicants welcome this comment and acknowledge that Natural England have provided this comment as a note for the Examiners and/or the competent authority. The Applicants will incorporate any further information regarding the working processes of the MRF in to the Stage 2 MCZ Assessment (REP1-059) should they become available during the course of the examination.
RI_J29 / J35	The EIA lifespan is 35 years. Therefore Natural England doesn't consider the impacts to be temporary, given that the features extent and distribution will be hindered. Likely leading to changes in other attributes. It is unlikely that either Applicant's or Natural England position on this will change during examination.		The Applicants acknowledge that Natural England have provided this comment as a note for the Examiners and/or the competent authority but would highlight that they have responded to this point in full in the Applicants' response to RR-1601.I.3 (PDA-024). The Applicants would also highlight the updated outline CSIP submitted at Deadline 2 (REP2-022), which has removed 'rock dump' from the list of cable protection types to be used within the Fylde MCZ in acknowledgment that this is the least recoverable type of protection.
RI_J30 / J36	Natural England highlights those consents dating back to 2000 pre-date the MCZ designation and is therefore considered part of the baseline. We advise that the existing cable is not a material consideration in any decision making.		The Applicants acknowledge that Natural England have provided this comment as a note for the Examiners and/or the competent authority but would highlight that the Isle of Man Interconnector 1 was included in the cumulative assessment of the MCZ Screening and Stage 1 Assessment Report (APP-018) as the maintenance licence, which was issued in 2018, included the potential for the installation of concrete mattresses within the Fylde MCZ (designated in 2016). The Isle of Man Interconnector 1 is included in the Stage 2 MCZ Assessment (REP1-059) as part of the baseline however the maintenance licence extends to 2033 which overlaps with the construction and operation and maintenance phases of the Transmission Assets creating the potential for a cumulative impact and is assessed as such in the MCZ Screening and Stage 1 Assessment Report (APP-018).
RI_J31 / J37	As written there is no differentiation between impacts to subtidal sand or subtidal mud except at the cable crossing which is known to be subtidal mud. We advise that unless the lasting habitat loss for the two features can be differentiated then it is likely that compensation will be required for 30,400m2 of subtidal mud, plus 26,400m2 of subtidal sand. We advise that this needs to be clearer.		See the Applicants response to RI_J1 & J3 above.
RI_J32 / J38	CoT 109: Natural England advises that it is not sufficient as mitigation. This mitigation measure should be considered further by the Applicant and removal of cable protection should be agreed now as part of a decommissioning plan.		See the Applicants response to RI_J26 & J32 above.
RI_J33 / J39	Natural England advises that the mitigation measure in CoT 116 is not sufficient in relation to sandwave levelling. Further commitments should be included such as the deposition of any sediment from sandwave levelling within the MCZ is placed adjacent to the levelling, in similar sediment and upstream of the sandwave to facilitate recovery.		Please see the Applicants response to RR-1601.C.31 (PDA-017) which outlines how the Applicants will ensure that any material arising from sandwave clearance within the Transmission Assets Order Limits will be deposited in close proximity to the works including within the Fylde MCZ.  The Outline CSIP (APP-220) indicates that ploughing, jetting or mechanical cutting will be used to install the offshore cables (section 6.2) whereby sediment is disturbed into the water column by the jetting or cutting trencher and then allowed to naturally settle back onto and around the cable in the immediately adjacent area.  The Applicants note that it is not in their interests to move the sediment further than necessary from its original location and, therefore, consider that the Outline CSIP and existing commitment (CoT116) should be sufficient to provide Natural England with the necessary comfort that sediment will be deposited in areas of similar sediment character.
RI_J34 / J40	Natural England advises that the mitigation measure is CoT 117 is considered further by the Applicant. The use of Jack Up Vessels (JUVs) should be avoided in the MCZ due to potential leg depressions.		The Applicants have previously responded to the points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.C.25 of their response to Natural England – Appendix C (PDA-017). The Applicants have sought to limit the requirement for jack-up vessel deployments within the Fylde MCZ where feasible and have refined the MDS as a far as possible. The Applicants will continue to explore the alternatives to the use of jack-up vessels in the Fylde MCZ. The use of and locations of jack-ups will be further evaluated and considered post-consent in the detailed CSIP(s), following further post-consent and pre-construction surveys, secured as part of the detailed Construction Method Statement(s) (CMSs).



ID / Appendix J reference	Risk and Issue Log comment	RAG Deadline 2	Applicants' response at Deadline 3
RI_J35 / J41	Natural England advises that we do not believe that there are further measures within the long list of measures that could be taken forward at the project level that would provide the necessary MEEB.		The Applicants note this response and can confirm that should the Secretary of State determine that MEEB be required for the Transmission Assets, Natural England and the Applicants are in agreement that strategic compensation measures are likely to be the preferred and best method for the delivery of MEEB for the Fylde MCZ.

3

References

UK Parliament (2025) Written Statement UIN HCWS394. Available at <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-statements/detail/2025-01-29/hcws394>, Accessed April 2025.

## Appendix A: Response to Appendix J2 Stage 2 MCZ assessment and without prejudice Measure of Equivalent Environmental Benefit (MEEB) for Fylde Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ)

**Table 3.1: Stage 2 MCZ assessment and without prejudice Measure of Equivalent Environmental Benefit (MEEB) for Fylde Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ)**

Ref. No.	Natural England's Advice	Applicants' response at Deadline 3
J1	<p><b>Natural England's position on the Transmission Assets Impacts to Fylde MCZ</b></p> <p>Natural England submitted our Relevant/Written Representations (RR/WR) to the Planning Inspectorate on 27 January 2025 [RR-1601]. Part of our response included detailed comments and recommendation on impacts to Fylde MCZ. In summary, Natural England does not agree with the conclusion of no likelihood of hindering the conservation objectives of the Fylde MCZ, which has been designated for subtidal sand and subtidal mud. Unless it can be demonstrated otherwise, the nature, scale and duration of impacts from lasting habitats change/loss from the placement of cable protection is likely to hinder the 'maintain' habitat feature conservation objectives of the site. Natural England advised the Applicant that the MCZ assessment should proceed to a Stage 2 assessment and provide a without prejudice MEEB case.</p>	<p>The Applicants have responded previously to these points raised by Natural England within RR-1601.45 of their response to Natural England (PDA-014). The Applicants' MCZ Screening and Stage 1 Assessment Report (APP-019) concluded that cable protection for the Transmission Assets would not affect the conservation objectives of the Fylde MCZ. The Applicants, however, provided a Stage 2 MCZ Assessment, including a without prejudice, in-principle Measures of Equivalent Environmental Benefit (MEEB) Plan, at Deadline 1 (REP1-059). The Applicants would also draw attention to the updated outline CSIP submitted at Deadline 2 (REP2-022), which has removed 'rock dump' from the list of cable protection types to be used within the Fylde MCZ.</p>
J2	<p><b>Natural England's position on MEEB options for Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets</b></p> <p>Natural England highlights that the progression of strategic compensation has come about due to the extreme difficulties in delivering project specific benthic compensation. At this stage, Natural England does not believe that there is merit in the Applicant progressing and/or placing reliance upon project specific benthic compensation measures for this project. In the call with the Applicant on 12 February 2025 the strategic compensation option was discussed in detail and the process required to adopt this approach, namely utilising the Marine Recovery Fund (MRF).</p> <p>Natural England highlights the Ministerial Statement issued on 21 January 2025 which confirmed DEFRA's support for delivery of strategic benthic compensation, making wider compensation measures available and delivery of compensation through the Marine Recovery Fund.</p> <p>Written statements - Written questions, answers and statements - UK Parliament</p> <p>DESNZ also issued interim guidance on the MRF. The guidance will provide developers with a means to access MPA designation as a compensation measure, prior to the launch of the MRF. The interim guidance also provides advice to developers in planning who are developing their own avian compensation packages on how to ensure that their consent documents include the option to switch to sourcing their avian compensation through the Marine Recovery Fund when it is in place.</p> <p>Strategic compensation measures for offshore wind activities: Marine Recovery Fund interim guidance - GOV.UK</p> <p>Additionally Natural England's response to ExA question ME. 1.10 for Five Estuaries provides some additional information EN010115-000899-Natural England - Responses to ExQ1.pdf relating to compensatory measures.</p> <p>On Monday 10<sup>th</sup> February Natural England provided by email to the Applicant a word document outlining the draft standard conditions schedule which should be secured within the DCO/dMLs. This is applicable for standard benthic compensation conditions for strategic compensation. This has also been sent out to other projects e.g. Five Estuaries.</p>	<p>Please see the Applicants response to RI_J7 &amp; J10 confirming that Natural England and the Applicants are in agreement that, should the Secretary of State determine that MEEB be required for the Transmission Assets, strategic compensation measures are likely to be the preferred and best method for the delivery of MEEB for the Fylde MCZ.</p> <p>The Applicants can confirm that the interim DESNZ guidance and the Ministerial Statement issued on 21 January 2025, highlighted by Natural England, were used to inform the Stage 2 MCZ Assessment (REP1-059).</p> <p>Regarding the Natural England point on benthic compensation, the Applicants have submitted the document Without Prejudice Benthic Compensation DCO Schedule (S_D3_9) that could be included in the DCO should it be concluded that benthic compensation was required. The drafting would secure the relevant measures set out in the Stage 2 MCZ Assessment (REP1-059). The Applicants had regard to the wording provided by Natural England when drafting the Without Prejudice Benthic Compensation DCO Schedule (S_D3_9).</p>

Ref. No.	Natural England's Advice	Applicants' response at Deadline 3
J3	<p><b>Maximum Design Scenario/ Impact Parameters</b></p> <p>Natural England previously raised in our RR/WRs ([RR-1601], comment ref: I4) that we do not agree with the approach the Applicant has taken in the ES to determine the MDS for lasting habitats change/loss due to the placement of cable protection. The approach taken assumed that MDS for cable protection requirements could occur wholly within either the subtidal mud or sand feature. We advised that an accurate MDS and realistic Worst-Case Scenario (WCS) for each feature should be presented and highlighted the importance of providing this information to inform compensation requirements for MEEB.</p> <p>We acknowledge and welcome further reduction to the MDS for lasting habitat change/loss of the subtidal sand feature, as presented in Section A1.6.3 [REP1-059] which is due to the removal of a cable crossing within the subtidal sand feature. However we note that the approach taken to determine the MDS within this document still assumes that cable protection requirements could occur wholly within either the subtidal sand or subtidal mud feature. The updated MDS for lasting habitat change/loss of each of the features have been provided as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Total: 30,400m<sup>2</sup> (0.01% of the total 260km<sup>2</sup> MCZ area);</li> <li>Subtidal sand 26,400m<sup>2</sup> (reduced by 4,000m<sup>2</sup> due to the removal of a cable crossing in this feature) (0.01% of the area of this feature in the MCZ); and</li> <li>Subtidal mud: 30,400m<sup>2</sup> (0.07% of the area of this feature in the MCZ).</li> </ul> <p>Without this refinement, there would be an expectation that compensation measures for subtidal sand and subtidal mud features to the maximum extent of 26,400m<sup>2</sup> and 30,400m<sup>2</sup> for each feature respectively would be provided by the Applicant.</p> <p>Natural England continues to advise that an accurate MDS and realistic WCS for each feature should be presented and assessed for lasting habitat change/loss. The site-specific surveys along with information provided within the Cable Burial Risk Assessment (CBRA) and Cable Specification Installation Plan (CSIP) should be sufficient to give a more accurate breakdown of the cable protection requirements and subsequent lasting habitat change/loss for each of the features.</p> <p>We highlight the importance of providing a more realistic MDS for long-term habitat loss for each of the features to inform the compensation requirements for MEEB. Please see table 6 in Part B below for further details on compensation requirements and for each habitat feature in the MCZ. Additionally, we advise that the finalised MDS figures should be updated in all the relevant documents.</p>	<p>The Applicants welcome Natural England's comments regarding the refinement of the MDS as presented in the Stage 2 Assessment Report (REP1-059).</p> <p>As noted in the Applicants' response to comment RI_J1 &amp; J3, the Outline Offshore CSIP (APP-220) as part of the detailed design process preconstruction survey data will be used to inform the final routing of the cable, any micro-siting requirements and areas where there is a higher risk of remedial works such as external cable protection. At this stage in the consenting process, however, the Applicants are unable to refine the assumptions further with respect to where the contingency cable protection for ground conditions will be required in the Fylde MCZ (if any is required at all). Therefore the summary presented by Natural England aligns with the MDS presented in Table A.5 of the Applicants' Stage 2 MCZ Assessment (REP1-059) and is the realistic MDS based on current information. The Applicants would also draw attention to the updated Outline CSIP submitted at Deadline 2 (J15/F02, REP2-022), which removed 'rock dump' from the list of cable protection types to be used within the Fylde MCZ in acknowledgment that this is the least recoverable type of protection.</p> <p>The Applicants have responded to each of the points raised by Natural England in Table 6 in Part B of their response in Table 2.12 above.</p> <p>The Applicants and Natural England will be meeting on the 22 July 2025 to review the PADSS and Risks and Issues log with respect to offshore matters, and will discuss this matter, which will allow the parties to provide updated positions at any issue specific hearings in week commencing 28 July and at Deadline 4.</p>
J4	<p><b>Significance of Impacts to Fylde MCZ</b></p> <p>We advise as with other recently consented projects which propose to have similar 'lasting' impacts to that of Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets that the conservation objectives of the site will be hindered by the project alone. Therefore, our advice provided within our RR/WR [RR-1601] remains unchanged.</p> <p>Section A1.6.5 [REP1-059] outlines the feature sensitivity and the highly localised nature of the impacts. Natural England reiterates its advice from RR/WR that presenting impacts considered as a percentage of the whole MCZ is misleading given the size of the site, the lasting habitat change/loss impacts from the Transmission Assets combined are still 30,400m<sup>2</sup>. Additionally, the most recent condition assessment for Fylde MCZ concluded that subtidal sand and subtidal mud were in a favourable condition. Whilst the cable protection is in situ, the extent and distribution attribute of the site features can neither be maintained or restored, nor can the impacts be considered temporary even if removal is secured at decommissioning.</p>	<p>Please see the Applicants' response to J1 above.</p>
J5	<p><b>Further Advice on Mitigation</b></p> <p>Please see Table 6 in Part B of this document on Natural England's advice on MEEB In- Principle Plan, which also includes further advice on the following Commitments: CoT109, CoT116 and CoT117.</p>	<p>Please see the Applicants' responses to these comments in Table 2.5.</p>

Ref. No.	Natural England's Advice	Applicants' response at Deadline 3
J6	<p><b>Strategic Compensation</b></p> <p>Natural England welcomes the Applicant's consideration of strategic compensation within the Benthic Compensation Strategy. We agree with the Applicant on the next steps included within the compensation strategy and therefore, as agreed in the meeting (12 February 2025) we aim to agree the level of impact which requires compensation in order to apply to the Marine Recovery Fund (MRF). However, we note the application is likely to be in the post-consent phase for this project.</p> <p>It is Natural England's understanding that based on the published Marine Recovery Fund Guidance (Jan 2025), DEFRA and DESNZ have included provision for the Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets project within the strategic compensation MPA designation and extension process. With the commitment within the Written Ministerial Statement to progress strategic benthic compensation, which as previously stated the Statutory Nature Conservation Bodies (SNCB's) believe has the greatest likelihood of maintaining the coherence of the National Site Network; we do not believe there is merit in further progressing project specific compensation measures at this time.</p>	<p>The Applicants welcome Natural England's agreement that strategic compensation measures are likely to be the preferred and best method for the delivery of MEEB for the Fylde MCZ. The Applicants also welcome the confirmation that Natural England are of the understanding that Defra and DESNZ have included provision for the Transmission Assets within the strategic compensation MPA designation and extension process, should the Secretary of State determine that MEEB is required for the Transmission Assets. As outlined in the Applicants' response to RI_J7 &amp; J10, the Applicants have explored a longlist of potential project-led MEEB options but have not developed these further on the basis of Natural England's advice.</p>
J7	<p><b>Project led compensation</b></p> <p>We note that the Applicant agree with Natural England on progressing with the strategic compensation approach but also include a long list of project options. Going forwards Natural England will not provide any additional advice into examination on the project led options, unless a new option is proposed and/or we are asked by the Examining Authority to comment on these options specifically.</p>	<p>The Applicants note Natural England's comment regarding project led compensation.</p>