



Defence
Infrastructure
Organisation

██████████
Assistant Safeguarding Manager
Ministry of Defence
Safeguarding
Defence Infrastructure Organisation
St George's House
DMS Whittington
Lichfield, Staffordshire
WS14 9PY
United Kingdom

Application Ref: EN020028

Our Reference: DIO10056890

E-mail: DIO-Safeguarding-Statutory@mod.gov.uk

Mr John Wheadon
Department of Energy Security and Net Zero
3-8 Whitehall Place
LONDON
SW1A 2AW

13 April 2026

Dear Mr Wheadon

Planning Act 2008 and The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010

Application by Morgan Offshore Wind Limited and Morecambe Offshore Windfarm Limited (“the Applicants”) for an Order granting Development Consent for the proposed Morgan and Morecambe Offshore Wind Farms Transmission Assets (“the Proposed Development”)

Thank you for your letter dated 12 March 2026 within which you have requested information in relation to the above project.

The Secretary of State requires a response from the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) regarding birdstrike concerns and discussions in connection with questions 4, 7 and 9. These responses are detailed below; for ease the relevant question is replicated as a heading.

4. BAE Systems (BAE) and Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) are requested to confirm whether their bird strike risk concerns relate solely to the Newton-with-Scales site (Work No. 49A/49B) or all mitigation sites proposed by the Applicants.

The MOD can confirm that the objection and concern responses provided relate primarily to the potential for the Newton-with-Scales site (Work nos. 49A/49B) to degrade aviation safety by increasing birdstrike risk. This is due to the proximity and location of the Newton-with-Scales site relative to the aerodrome, in particular the runway, its extended centreline and therefore the airspace in which aircraft are approaching or departing that runway, and to existing environments which support or routinely contain those large and/or flocking bird species hazardous to aviation safety. The introduction of an enhanced attractant environment at Newton-with-Scales is likely to both draw birds across the extended centreline of the runway and to provide an enhanced attractant/potential focal point close to airspace where aircraft are at critical stages of flight increasing the potential for birdstrike.

It should be noted that the MOD is concerned that the creation/enhancement of any substantial environment(s) attractive to those large and/or flocking bird species hazardous to aviation on any site close to BAE Warton would be likely to result in degradation of aviation safety by providing an attractant for large and/or hazardous bird species to cross the aerodrome, the runway, and approach/take off climb airspace. Elements of the Morgan and Morecambe Offshore Wind Farms Transmission Assets that were of particular concern are the temporary construction mitigation areas proposed at Lea Marsh (Works nos. 35A/35B and Works nos. 44A/44B) and Lytham Moss (Works nos. 35A/35B). The risks posed by these temporary construction mitigation areas would be mitigated through the discharge of requirements found at Schedule 2A, Requirement 27 and Schedule 2B, Requirement 27 in the draft Development Consent Order (Document reference: C1/F09, Rev: F09 22, dated October 2025).

7. The Applicants, BAE and DIO are requested to provide updates on their progress in seeking to resolve the outstanding disagreement regarding bird strike risk. BAE and DIO are requested to provide any comments on the Applicants' final outline Wildlife Hazard Management Plan ("oWHMP") [REP7-034, REP7-035] submitted at Deadline (D)7.

and

9. The Secretary of State notes that DIO's post-Examination submission dated 6 November 2025 also states "*For a management plan to be effective in mitigating the potential increase in birdstrike risk it would need to ensure that no hazardous birds are utilising the Newton-with-Scales site above the levels that are currently present there*". DIO and the Applicants are requested to comment on whether the DIO's concerns could be resolved by the oWHMP defining bird population levels and committing to triggers/thresholds for active management. The Applicants are requested to provide further information on triggers/thresholds for active measures within the oWHMP and whether it could commit to such thresholds at this point. The Secretary of State encourages the Applicants to consult with Natural England on the triggers/thresholds for active management to ensure they are set at a level which still allows the mitigation areas to be effective from an HRA perspective.

There is some complexity in responding separately to the requests for comments on the submitted oWHMP (question 7) and the principle of whether the impact of the proposed ecological mitigation can be managed through the oWHMP setting bird population levels as well as triggers/thresholds for active management (question 9). As such the MOD provide the combined response below to questions 7 and 9

The MOD acknowledge that an updated oWHMP (Document reference: S_D3_8/F04 dated 29 October 2025) has been submitted for review.

Whilst the submitted oWHMP is, in principle and subject to the acceptability of any Wildlife Hazard Plan submitted in accordance with requirements found at Schedule 2A, Requirement 27 and Schedule 2B, Requirement 27 in the draft Development Consent Order (Document reference: C1/F09, Rev: F09 22, dated October 2025), acceptable to address the potential harm caused by the temporary construction mitigation areas proposed at Lea Marsh (Works nos. 35A/35B and Works nos. 44A/44B) and Lytham Moss (Works nos. 35A/35B), it would not be considered acceptable to mitigate the potential harm caused by implementation of the permanent mitigation area south of Newton-with-Scales (Work nos. 49A/49B).

The MOD understand that the works proposed at the site south of Newton-with-Scales are intended specifically to enhance features of the site for the birds currently present, and to provide space for birds displaced at the substation sites. The result of these works is likely to be intensification of bird populations. Whilst at present these populations may be distributed across the wider area, the enhancement works proposed would be considered likely to provide a greater attractant to hazardous bird populations, effectively increasing the density of hazardous birds in this location.

The MOD would suggest that developing the Newton-with-Scales site to provide bird mitigation is problematic. In Table 1.4 of a previous draft oWHMP (Doc. Ref. S_D3/8/F03 dated 22 October 2026) the applicant has stated that with regard to the Newton-with-Scales site and the works designed for ducks and waders 'The intention of this mitigation is not to increase overall bird numbers in the area, but simply to enhance the area for the birds currently present and provide a safe space for birds displaced at the substation sites.' It is noted that the area referred to is not quantified. The more recent draft oWHMP (Document reference: S_D3_8/F04 dated 29 October 2025) omits this language and instead, at B2.2, refers to the potential for the Newton-with-Scales site to provide habitat for golden plover, to mitigate temporary impacts on teal and black-tailed godwit, and 'to benefit a far greater suite of terrestrial waders and wildfowl'. The MOD cannot accept any increase in the number of birds close to BAE Warton as such increases are highly likely to degrade aviation safety. By virtue of the location of Work nos. 49A/49B relative to BAE Warton, in particular the runway (closer to the extended centreline than either of the substation sites) and the approach and take off/climb airspace, and to those existing environments that provide habitats/attractive environments for those large and/or flocking bird species hazardous to aviation safety, those Works are likely to result in the movement of hazardous bird species through/across air space where aircraft are at critical stages of flight to the detriment of aviation safety.

The applicant has suggested that a management plan might provide a means to mitigate the harm created by the enhancement of the Newton-with-Scales site. The MOD do not consider it appropriate to seek to mitigate the intended effect of enhancing a habitat specifically to attract and support bird species by controlling the number of those bird species. The MOD does not think that a management plan is appropriate to mitigate the increased hazard to aviation safety introduced by the Newton-with-Scales proposals.

As set out in the Secretary of State's question, the MOD consider that, if the Secretary of State considers a management plan to be appropriate, a requirement must be set out that no number of hazardous birds above the levels currently present can be tolerated. The MOD suggest that this approach would directly contradict the purpose of habitat creation on the Newton-with-Scales site.

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

Yours sincerely

██████████

██████████

Assistant Safeguarding Manager