Marine Management Organisation

Marine Licensing
Lancaster House
Hampshire Court
Newcastle
Upon Tyne
NE4 7YH

T +44 (0)300 123 1032
F +44 (0)191 376 2681
www.gov.uk/mmo

David Sutherland
National Grid Ventures Limited

Our reference: DCO/2024/00005

[redacted]@nationalgrid.com

By email only

Date 04 September 2024

Dear Mr Sutherland,

Planning Act 2008 (as amended) and The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (the "EIA Regulations") – Regulations 10 and 11

MMO scoping consultation response on the application by National Grid Ventures Limited (the "Applicant") for an Order granting Development Consent for the LionLink Multi-Purpose Interconnector (the "Proposed Development).

Thank you for your request for scoping consultation dated 20 May 2024 and for providing the Marine Management Organisation ("MMO") with the opportunity to share our comments with you on the Proposed Development.

The Marine Management Organisation

The MMO was established by the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (the "2009 Act") to contribute to sustainable development in the marine area and to promote clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas. The responsibilities of the MMO include the licensing of construction works, deposits and removals in English inshore and offshore waters and for Welsh and Northern Ireland offshore waters by way of a marine licence[1]. Inshore waters include any area which is submerged at mean high water spring ("MHWS") tide. They also include the waters of every estuary, river or channel where the tide flows at MHWS tide. Waters in areas which are closed permanently or intermittently by a lock or other artificial means against the regular action of the tide are included, where seawater flows into or out from the area.

The MMO's role in Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects

In the case of Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects ("NSIPs"), the Planning Act 2008 (the "2008 Act") enables Development Consent Order's ("DCO") for

[1] Under Part 4 of the 2009 Act

projects which affect the marine environment to include provisions which deem marine licences[2].

As a prescribed consultee under the 2008 Act, the MMO advises developers during pre-application on those aspects of a project that may have an impact on the marine area or those who use it. In addition to considering the impacts of any construction, deposit or removal within the marine area, this also includes assessing any risks to human health, other legitimate uses of the sea and any potential impacts on the marine environment from terrestrial works. Where a marine licence is deemed within a DCO, the MMO is the delivery body responsible for post-consent monitoring, variation, enforcement and revocation of provisions relating to the marine environment. As such, the MMO has a keen interest in ensuring that provisions drafted in a deemed marine licence ("DML") enable the MMO to fulfil these obligations. Further information on licensable activities can be found on the MMO's website. Further information on the interaction between the Planning Inspectorate and the MMO can be found in our joint advice note.

The MMO's comments on the Proposed Development

Please find attached comments of the MMO. In providing these comments, the MMO has sought the views of our technical advisors at the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas) and MMO colleagues based in East Coastal Office.

Due to timing constraints involved in providing these comments, the MMO was unable to provide this scoping opinion to the Planning Inspectorate in time for the deadline of 4 April 2024. However, National Grid Ventures Limited have expressed a wish to receive MMO comments.

The MMO reserves the right to make further comments on the project throughout the pre-application process and may modify its present advice or opinion in view of any additional information that may come to our attention. This representation is also submitted without prejudice to any decision the MMO may make on any associated application for consent, permission, approval or any other type of authorisation submitted to the MMO either for the works in the marine area or for any other authorisation relevant to the proposed development.

Your feedback

We are committed to providing excellent customer service and continually improving our standards and we would be delighted to know what you thought of the service you have received from us. Please help us by taking a few minutes to complete the following short survey (https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MMOMLcustomer).

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me using the details provided below.

Yours Sincerely,

[2] Section 149A of the 2008 Act

Marine Licensing Case Officer
[redacted]@marinemanagement.org.uk

Copied into response:
[redacted]@marinemanagement.org.uk (Marine Licensing Case Manager)
[redacted]@marinemanagement.org.uk (Senior Marine Licensing Case Manager)
[redacted]@ceaenvironmental.co.uk (Principal Consultant CEA)
[redacted]@ceaenvironmental.co.uk (Director CEA)
[redacted]@ceaenvironmental.co.uk (Senio Consultant CEA)

Marine Management Organisation

Scoping consultation response

Title: LionLink Multi-Purpose Interconnector

Applicant: National Grid Ventures Limited

MMO Reference: DCO/2024/00005

Contents

1 Proposal

1.1 Project Background

LionLink Multi-Purpose Interconnector (MPI) Project (the “Proposed Development”) is an electricity link between Great Britain and the Netherlands that will supply up to 1.8 Gigawatts (GW) of electricity. This will connect to offshore wind in Dutch waters via an offshore converter platform.

The Proposed Development comprises the GB components (onshore and offshore) only, as detailed below:

- The Friston Substation in Suffolk;
- Proposed high voltage alternating current (HVAC) Underground Cables between the proposed Converter Station in Suffolk and Friston substation;
- The proposed Converter Station in Suffolk, east of Saxmundham;
- Proposed high voltage direct current (HVDC) Underground Cables between the proposed Converter Station in Suffolk, and a proposed Landfall Site at either Southwold or Walberswick;
- Submarine electricity cables from a proposed Landfall Site (at either Southwold or Walberswick) at the UK coast to the edge of the UK Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).

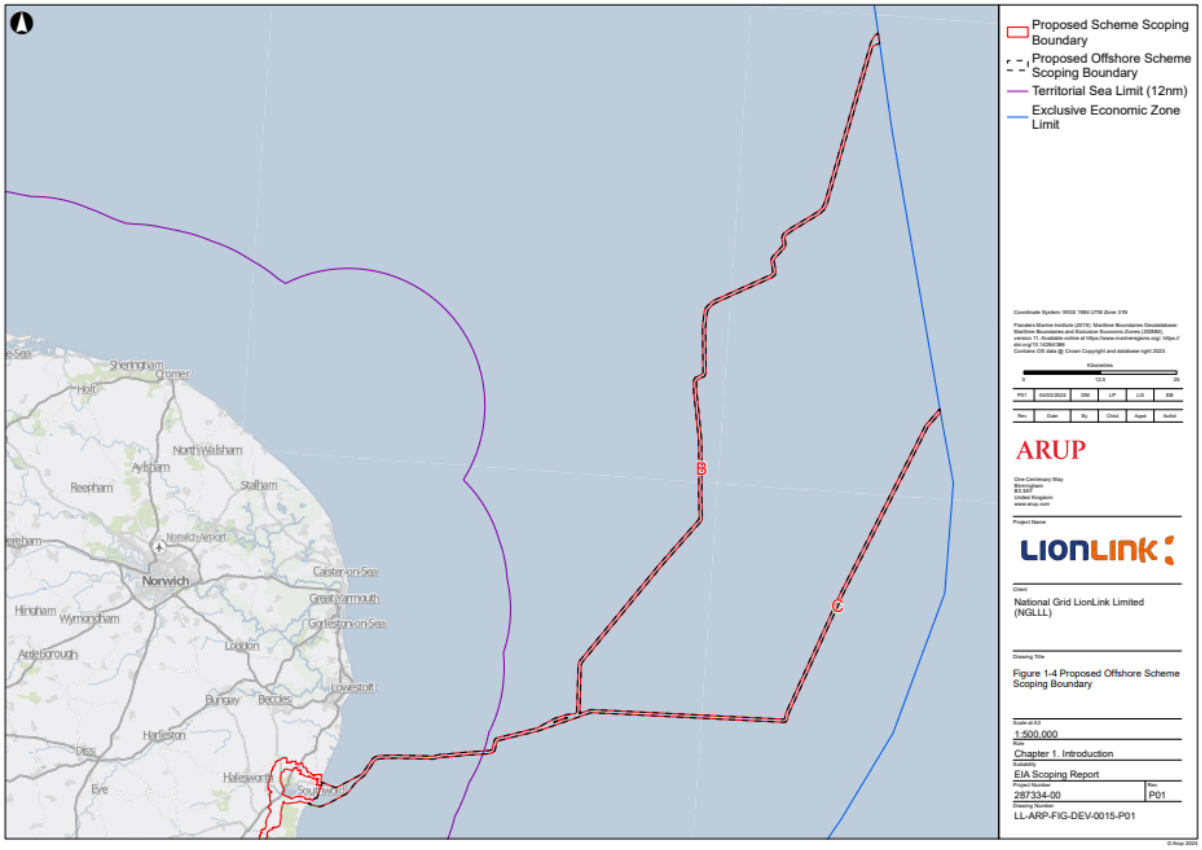
The MMO has an interest in those aspects of the Proposed Development that may have an impact on the marine area or those who use it, namely the submarine electricity cables from a proposed landfall site (at either Southwold or Walberswick) to the UK EEZ boundary. Therefore, the MMO’s scoping consultation response relates to the elements of the project that fall below Mean High Water Springs (MHWS).

The MMO notes there are currently two landfall site options for the Proposed Development and that there remains optionality within the nearshore area. The MMO also notes there are two potential offshore HVDC submarine cable corridors that cross the Southern North Sea Special Area of Conservation (SAC) to the UK/Netherlands EEZ boundary. The MMO understands that only one of the options will be selected as the offshore HVDC submarine cable corridor.

2 Location

The Proposed Development is expected to be located as displayed in **Figure 1** below.

Figure 1: Proposed Development Offshore Scheme Scoping Boundary



3 Scoping Consultation Response

Pursuant of the Regulations, the Applicant has requested a Scoping Opinion from the MMO. In so doing a Scoping Report entitled “LionLink Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Report” was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for review for all stakeholders.

The MMO, were contacted by the Planning Inspectorate on 7 March 2024 to provide comments on the Scoping Report. However, due to time constraints the MMO were unable to carry out consultation with technical advisors at the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas) and provide a full response by the required deadline. National Grid Ventures Limited (“The Applicant”) has stated that they would still like to obtain comments on the Scoping Report from the MMO.

The MMO agrees with the topics outlined in the Scoping Report and in addition, we outline that the following aspects be considered further during the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and should be included in any resulting Environmental Statement (ES).

3.1 Benthic Ecology

3.1.1 While the MMO is generally in agreement with all the impacts that have been scoped out of further assessment in table 19-5 of the Scoping Report, there are issues that require further clarification. See comments 3.1.2 and 3.1.3 below.

3.1.2 The second paragraph regarding the temporary habitat loss/seabed disturbance impact to subtidal Annex I habitats during construction and operation relates to remedial works being scoped out when the assessment has considered this impact to be scoped in.

3.1.3 The MMO regards it as prudent to scope in the temporary increase and deposition of suspended sediment to subtidal habitats and species at this stage of the EIA. The significance of this potential impact will ultimately depend on the exact nature of habitats and species and thus should be assessed following the acquisition and interpretation of the characterisation data.

3.1.4 In statement 19.7.2 of the Scoping Report regarding the broad plan for the characterisation survey, while it is acknowledged that ground truth sample location will depend on the preliminary interpretation of the geophysical data, with which the MMO endorse, it is also stated that they are likely to be located approximately every 5 kilometers (km) along the proposed route. The MMO advises that you should refrain from any *a priori* prediction of numbers of location of sampling stations and consider these to be exclusively dependent on the geophysical data (as these might require a very different sample number and a very non-linear strategic design to that currently proposed).

3.2 Coastal Processes

3.2.1 In Table 18-4 of the Scoping Report, changes to Coastal Morphology is scoped out. The MMO agrees with this. However, impacts of changes in coastal morphology on the cable (the reverse) should be scoped in. This is because both potential landing sites experience significant coastal change. Furthermore, for temporary increase in suspended sediments, whilst for a single, isolated cable the MMO would agree to be scoped out. However, for a potentially realistic scenario of multiple activities (multiple cables, Sizewell, and dredging) increasing suspended sediment concentration (i.e. the cumulative impact) needs assessing. Thus, this should be scoped in.

3.2.2 Section 18.5 states that: *"sediments in areas where pre-sweeping is proposed will be tested to ensure compliance with Cefas Action Levels for disposal in line with MMO sampling plan requirements."* An indication of the anticipated worst-case scenario volumes of material which would be removed during sandwave clearance should be included.

3.3.3 Impacts scoped out include; Temporary increase in suspended sediments and subsequent deposition, from seabed preparation other than pre-sweeping, cable burial, repair and removal. While the MMO agrees with this, as the vast majority of potential sediment disturbance will likely be from the named activities, it should be noted that without knowing the contaminant potential of the sediments, such a scoping decision carries residual risk.

3.3.4 Another impact scoped out is the release of drilling fluids. The MMO consider that this pathway should be scoped in rather than scoped out. The release of drilling fluids cannot be assessed without knowing the properties of the potential fluids to be used.

3.3 Fish Ecology and Commercial Fisheries

3.3.1 The report has identified the relevant marine and diadromous fish receptors found in the study area. Table 20-6 lists the fish species that have spawning and/or nursery grounds that overlap the study area, along with the spawning seasons of those species. The sources of information and data used to inform the assessment are generally appropriate, however, there are some inaccuracies which need to be corrected.

3.3.2 The report has correctly identified herring (*Clupea harengus*) and sandeel (A*mmodytidae spp*.) as key receptors due to their important function in marine food webs. They can also be considered to have a high vulnerability due to their specific habitat requirements which may hinder their ability to flee impacted areas. The report states the project area overlaps with the Downs herring spawning ground; as well as spawning grounds for sandeel, cod (*Gadus morhua*), sole (*Solea solea*) and whiting (*Merlangius merlangus*). There appears to be some confusion regarding the spawning grounds presented by the report. This should be clarified.

3.3.3 The report has presented maps showing spawning and nursery grounds it is stated these are informed by Coull et al., (1998) and Ellis et al., (2012). However, spawning grounds in these figures do not match up with those presented in these studies. For example, no herring spawning grounds are presented, only high and low intensity nursery grounds. In addition, high intensity nursery grounds are shown for cod and whiting across the majority of the study area, whereas Ellis et al., (2012) marks these as only low intensity spawning grounds. The spawning grounds for plaice and sole also show discrepancies between Ellis et al., (2012) and those presented in Figure 20-1. The maps presented should be reviewed and the necessary corrections made.

3.3.4 It should be noted that spawning off the east coast of Suffolk and Norfolk occurs at discrete coastal spawning locations rather than as a widespread activity as with other areas. As herring do not have spawning site fidelity as noted by the report, it is possible that spawning occurs off the coast near Southwold and Walberswick, as the substrate is suitable for herring spawning (as defined by Coull et al., 1998). Spawning could be infrequent, but we are unable to determine exactly where spawning is going to occur in terms of location (due to a lack of data for this region) in this area and spawning may happen anytime within the spawning season (August – December). It should also be noted that International Herring Larvae Surveys (IHLS) do not sample the coastal spawning grounds defined by Coull et al. (1998). For this reason, whilst a MarineSpace (2013) approach has been mentioned as the method by which the Applicant will assess areas of potential spawning habitat for herring, it should be recognised, that the IHLS data (which is used in the MarineSpace method) will not provide any coverage of presence/absence of coastal herring larvae. A precautionary approach should be taken when assessing the potential for herring spawning in these locations due to the lack of recent data on herring larvae in this location.

3.3.5 The potential impacts to fish and fish ecology and the scoping decisions made are generally appropriate, however the MMO do not agree with the decision to scope out the impacts of underwater noise. See Under Water Noise section 3.9 of this report.

3.3.6 Design and control measures which aim to reduce the impacts to fish and commercial fisheries receptors are provided. The mitigation measures for fish receptors presented at this stage are minor and are unlikely to significantly reduce the potential impacts of construction activities. The need for additional mitigation to reduce likelihood of significant impacts occurring should be determined and included in any resulting ES. There is potential for impacts to herring spawning habitation and sandeel habitat to occur as a result of construction and installation of the cables, however the magnitude and significance of any impacts will depend on the exact location of the cable route, the timing and duration of works and whether UXO clearance forms part of the assessment. The mitigation measures relating to commercial fisheries receptors seem appropriate at this stage.

3.4 Marine Archaeology

3.4.1 The MMO defers to Historic England on the suitability of the scope of the assessment with regards to archaeology and cultural heritage impacts.

3.5 Marine Mammals

3.5.1 The MMO has provided comments on impacts on marine mammals from underwater noise below (see section 3.9). The MMO defers to Natural England and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) as the Statutory Nature Conservation Bodies (SNCB's) in relation to all other potential impacts to marine mammals.

3.6 Nature Conservation

3.6.1 The MMO defers to Natural England and JNCC as the SNCB's on the suitability of the scope of the assessment with regards to Marine Protected Areas (MPAs).

3.7 Navigation/ Other Users of the Sea

3.7.1 The MMO defers to the Maritime and Coastguard Agency and Trinity House on the suitability of the scope of the assessment with regards to navigation of vessels and the safety of other users of the sea.

3.8 Shellfish

3.8.1 Seabed preparation (excluding pre-sweeping) and Cable burial is scoped out, however the MMO would expect this to be scoped in as there is the possibility for high sand/fine sediment levels in the areas impacted. Localised smothering in the footprint of the cable burial and seabed preparation should be assessed for potential impact on more sedentary shellfish species.

3.8.2 The use of rock armour or other physical protection should be considered as this could result in a potential barrier to species movement which is scoped in.

3.8.3 Electromagnetic fields (EMF) may introduce a barrier to some species crossing for aggregations or movement to feed, however the MMO recognise that there may not be sufficient biological data within the region to evidence a risk of impact. Feedback should be sought from commercial fishers and the local Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities (IFCA) who may assist with assessment of potential impact.

3.8.4 Whelk (*Buccinum undatum*) is noted as the largest landed fishery within the study area and is a potting or trap fishery that has become an increasingly important fishery for the UK fleet. Due to this potential underrepresentation, other key shellfish data sources should be included, but not limited to: MSAR's, electronic logbook data, buyers and sellers records and any IFCA inshore fishery reports. Other shellfish fishery and biological stock data

sources can be included such as Cefas Crab and Lobster assessments, FMP reports, publications such Eaton et al. (2003) (larval and spawning references for Cancer pagurus).

3.8.5 Local shellfish fisheries stakeholder consultations should form key part in this process of establishing the current baseline and allow feedback during construction and operation.

3.8.6 Spawning and nursery grounds information noted from Ellis (2012) are related to fish species only. Table 20-6 does not include spawning times and nursery ground for Whelk, Edible Crab (Cancer pagurus) and Lobster (Homarus gammarus).I Information in sections 20.3.59 to 66 should be used to include these in the table. Modest data exist relating to the existence of specific spawning grounds or spawning migrations for the majority of commercially exploited shellfish species in UK waters. Some ontogenetic migration occurs in brown crab, with older females moving to deeper water in the North Sea. However, locations of fished stocks may serve as a useful proxy for spawning grounds for the majority of species, particularly the more sedentary ones. Therefore, indicative spawning and nursing maps should be highlighted within fished ICES rectangles.

3.8.7 A reference source is Offshore Windfarm (OWF) fish and shellfish characterisation surveys in 2010 and 2013 which are now dated and did not use survey methods specific to shellfish species such as potting. If fisheries data is considered lacking detail at the fine scale range of the project area, a potting study should be considered.

3.8.8 Species such as crab and lobster have been deemed to be of high vulnerability, medium sensitivity with medium to high recoverability and of regional importance within the North Sea. Crawfish is listed as vulnerable in IUCN. Aspects of whelk biology, growth and recruitment may make this species susceptible to fishing or anthropogenic pressure on fishery sustainability and its vulnerability to impact may be increased. Therefore, mitigation considerations should be considered through consultation with fishing industry and stakeholders.

3.8.9 Timing of works should be considered as a potential mitigation measure to minimise any impacts upon berried/spawning/overwintering shellfish or larval phases where possible.

3.8.10 The MMO would expect cumulative and inter-related impacts to include: seabed disturbances from other current offshore projects such as aggregate extraction zones and OWF construction and cableways cumulatively increasing suspended sediment concentrations, temporary and permanent loss/disruption to the habitat with cumulative increased footprint of seabed impact area, EMF fields from several OWF projects, and potential interference with fishing.

3.8.11 As indicated in Table 29-2, the Scoping Report should note the potential for intra project effect of Fish and Shellfish, Commerical Fisheries and on Other

Marine Users (namely the recreational fisheries/tourism element in inshore and coastal boundaries). To note the touristic attraction of 'crabbing' for small crab and prawn species at the Southwold/Walberswick harbour area.

3.8.12 In light of recent crab and lobster die offs in the North Sea (2018 and 2021), attributed to multiple contributory factors, the sensitivity of the shellfish populations may be elevated. The MMO recommend this is considered when reviewing potential shellfish impacts in these regions, particularly for crustaceans.

3.9 Underwater Noise

3.9.1 The Scoping Report appropriately acknowledges underwater noise changes as a potential impact that could occur during the construction phase and the operational phase specifically, the *"increased presence of vessels and equipment will generate continuous underwater noise which may well result in the temporary behavioural disturbance and displacement of marine mammals."* While behavioural disturbance and displacement may be expected, there are a number of other potential effects of underwater noise that should also be considered where relevant (and depending on the sound source), including masking and auditory injury (i.e., temporary threshold shift (TTS) and permanent threshold shift (PTS)). Nevertheless, Table 22-5 in Chapter 22 subsequently proposed to scope out underwater noise changes due to presence of project vessel and equipment (including cable trenching). Whilst the MMO agree that the risk of significant impact from underwater noise associated with cable laying is likely to be low, sufficient evidence should be provided to demonstrate why the effects of underwater noise will not be significant. The MMO do not believe the current justification provided in Table 22-5 is adequate for scoping out the impacts of underwater noise therefore this should be updated.

3.9.2 Of relevance, a recent OSPAR Commission (2023) report highlights that underwater sound generated from activities related to subsea cables may occur during multiple phases including cable route surveys, route preparation, cable installation as well as during cable repair and recovery. During installation of surface-laid cables, sound generation will be restricted to the noise generated by the installation ship. Furthermore, additional noise is generated by burial tools and other equipment (such as rock placement) at or close to the seafloor. The sound generated by the burial tools is comparable to that of a small dredging operation (OSPAR Commission, 2023). The MMO recommend that this OSPAR report is considered further.

3.9.3 It is important to note that there is little information to date on the potential effects of noise due to the installation (or removal) and operation of subsea cables (OSPAR Commission, 2023). Thus, the MMO do not believe that this aligns with the conclusion that *'there is a clear evidence base that the effects of underwater noise will not be significant'*. The OSPAR report concludes that *"sound emissions related to cable survey and installation activities generally do not exceed the background levels of shipping and other anthropogenically-induced emissions and are limited in time (i.e., restricted to survey and*

installation periods). There are no clear indications that noise impacts related to the installation (or removal) and operation of subsea cables pose a high risk of harming marine fauna" (OSPAR Commission, 2023). Therefore, the MMO recommend this is considered further.

3.9.4 Whilst noise impacts are unlikely to pose a high risk of harming marine fauna, some impacts may still be expected, and these should be adequately considered – especially when considering the potential for cumulative effects, where impacts considered "low risk" in a single impact pathway assessment may become significant. The MMO would expect underwater noise to be scoped in and some form of an assessment to be undertaken. The assessment does not have to include (complex) underwater modelling necessarily, but it should, at the very least, draw upon relevant literature where appropriate to support assessment conclusions.

3.9.5 Table 22-5 in the Scoping Report also states the following: *"It should be noted that geophysical surveys are exempt from requiring a Marine Licence under the Marine and Coastal Access Act (MCAA), provided they meet certain conditions. The EIA will not consider the effects of the pre- and post-installation surveys. If the cable is installed correctly the likelihood of it requiring maintenance and repair is significantly reduced. However, there remains the potential that localised repair works, or remedial external cable protection may be required. In these circumstances the significance of the effect will be of lower magnitude that during installation and has therefore been scoped out of the assessment for the same reasons".* The MMO recommend that any geophysical surveys that are not exempt are also scoped in and considered (in terms of potential underwater noise impacts).

3.9.6 The MMO do not believe that sufficient justification has been provided at this stage to scope out the potential effects of underwater noise on marine mammal receptors. The MMO does not believe that a clear evidence base has been presented to demonstrate why the effects of underwater noise will not be significant. The justification for scoping out underwater noise (as per Table 22-5) is on the basis that sound associated with the installation, removal or operation of submarine cables is less harmful compared to impulsive sound activities such as seismic surveys, military activities or construction work involving pile driving. Whilst the MMO agree with this statement, this does not mean to say that there will not be a risk of impact from continuous sound activities. The report also refers to two underwater noise modelling assessments undertaken for Dogger Bank and Hornsea Project Four: *"Animals would need to remain in close proximity (<100 m) to the source continuously for 24 hours to be exposed to levels sufficient to cause auditory injury".* This statement is vague and must be further justified e.g., what noise source is the statement referring to specifically. More context should be provided to demonstrate why these noise assessments are relevant for / applicable to the Proposed Development.

3.9.7 The MMO note that Underwater noise changes due to the presence of project vessels and equipment have also been scoped out for fish and shellfish species on the basis that the construction of the project will be a one-off event

set against a background of existing shipping noise. A clear evidence base should be presented to demonstrate why the effects of underwater noise will not be significant. The MMO consider the duration of seabed preparation such as boulder removal and sandwave clearance, UXO clearance, cable trenching, burial and the addition of rock protection (where applicable) cannot be considered a “one off” event as this is likely to cover a period of several months. Whilst the MMO would not expect underwater noise from the presence of vessels or cable laying activities to result in significant impacts to fish receptors at a population scale, it would still be expected that that this impact be scoped into the assessment for the construction phase, albeit as a high-level assessment which recognises that impacts to fish may occur, particularly those with a close affiliation to the seabed (e.g., as habitat or demersal spawning ground) or those species with the greatest hearing capabilities.

3.9.8 Underwater noise generated from the clearance of Unexploded Ordinance (UXO) has not been included in the scoping decisions, although this has been included in the scoping decision for the transboundary impact assessment (part of the cumulative assessment). It is stated that the impacts of UXO clearance will be assessed under a separate marine licence (which the MMO supports) but it is unclear why this has been included. It should also be noted that no reason has been provided for this scoping decision in the transboundary assessment with the impacts of UXO scoped out. It should clearly be stated that UXO are to be assessed in a separate marine licence and justifications should be provided for the scoping decisions in the transboundary impact assessment.

3.9.9 It should be noted that when assessing UXO clearance, underwater noise modelling on the predicted range of effects to fish should be provided. See Popper *et al. (2014)* for hearing thresholds in fishes for explosions. It should be noted that due to the potentially larger impact ranges from UXO clearance, the MarineSpace method will likely be required to assess whether herring will be impacted at the Banks and/or Downs herring spawning grounds. Unlike for historic coastal spawning areas, IHLS data for these spawning grounds is available. The most up to date MarineSpace methods should be utilised, see Kyle-Henney *et al.,* (2024) for potential herring spawning habitat and sandeel habitat assessments, respectively.

3.9.10 The MMO would like to highlight that UXO investigation and clearance activities are licensable under the 2009 Act and the MMO currently recommend the “two-licence” approach, where one licence should be obtained for surveying and a second licence for clearance.

3.10 Other Matters

3.10.1 The MMO would not expect contaminate dispersion modelling to be required for any offshore works unless sediment sample analysis indicate non-localised acutely contaminated material to be present throughout the work area. The likelihood of this is usually low for most offshore works, given the usually coarse composition of the sediments and general absence of major pollution

pathways. For the onshore works, such modelling may be recommended if the onshore working area is located within an estuarine or riverine system with notable sensitive receptors or with significant concerns with contamination. The landfall of the cable will be in or around Southwold, Suffolk. This area is not, to the MMO's knowledge, associated with any significant concerns with contamination which would necessitate contaminant dispersal modelling (e.g., very high levels of persistent organic contaminants within sediments). Such modelling would always be useful and strengthen the assessment, however given the current specification of the works and assessment, the MMO cannot advise that it must be undertaken.

4 Conclusion

The topics highlighted in this scoping opinion should be assessed during the EIA process and the outcome of these assessments documented in the ES in support of the marine licence application and any associated planning application(s). This statement, however, should not necessarily be seen as a definitive list of all EIA requirements. Given the scale and programme of these planned works other work may prove necessary.

Gregg Smith
Marine Case Officer

References

Coull, K, Johnstone, R and Rogers, S (1998). Fisheries Sensitivity Maps in British Waters Published and distributed by UKOOA Ltd.

Eaton D.R., et al (2003) Edible crab (Cancer pagurus) larvae surveys off the east coast of England: implications for stock structure Fisheries research Volume 65, Issues 1-3, December 2003

Ellis, J, Milligan, S., Readdy, L, Taylor, N. and Brown, M. (2012) Spawning and nursery grounds of selected fish species in UK waters. [online] Available at https://www.cefas.co.uk/publications/techrep/techrep147.pdf.

Kyle-Henney M., Reach I., Barr N., Warner I., Lowe S., and Lloyd Jones D., 2024. Identifying and Mapping Atlantic Herring Potential Spawning Habitat: An updated Method Statement.

Latto P.L Reach I.S., Alexander D., Armstrong S., Backstrom J., Beagley E, Murphy K, Piper R and Seiderer L.J., (2013). Screening Spatial Interactions between Marine Aggregate Application Areas and Sandel Habitat. A mthod Statement produced by BMAPA

MarineSpace Ltd, ABPmer Ltd, ERM Ltd, Furgo EMU Ltd and Marine Ecological Surveys Ltd (2013a) Environmental Effect Pathways between Marine Aggregate Application Areas and Atlantic Herring Potential Spawning Habitat: Regional Cuulative Impact Assessments. Version 1.0 A report for the British Marine Aggregates Producers Association.

MMO (2023) UK Sea Fisheries Statistics 2022. Available at: https;//www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-sea-fisheries-annualstatistics-report-2022

Popper A.N, Hawkins A.D., Fay R.R., Man, D.a., Barto, S., Carlson T.j., Coom, S., Ellison W.t., Gentry R.L., Halvorsen M.L, Lokkeborg S., Rogers P.H., Southball B.L.,Zeddies D.G., and Tavolga W.N, 2014 Sound Exposure Guidelines for Fishes and Sea Turtles: A Technical Report prepared aby ANSI-Accredited Standards Committee S3/SC1 and registered with ANSI. January 2014