University of Aberdeen.

Addendum.

Marine Licence Application – Scientific Instrument deployments, section 8 (Scotland’s Marine National Plan).

Details of considerations made with regard to Scotland’s National Marine Plan (itemised by section of the plan).

GEN 6. Historic environment (4.20 – 4.25).

The proposed scientific mooring deployments are positioned such that they avoid known historic and archaeological sites. Charted wrecks and war graves are also avoided.

GEN 7. Impact on the sea-scape and scenic value (4.26 – 4.31).

The deployments proposed under the licence application represent minimal impact on the visual element of the marine environment. Surface parts of marked moorings consist of only one soft float (maximum diameter 50cm), and one dhan buoy (aerial part 2.5m above water level, with floatation collar of 40cm diameter). As such, the surface markings of these moorings are indistinguishable from many similar markers for fishing equipment currently in use by coastal fishing operators, and are of minimal visual impact while still providing an effective marker for marine vessel traffic.

GEN 9. Natural heritage (4.39 – 4.62).

The works represent little impact on the natural environment, or on fauna / flora therein. Some of the sites noted in this licence application are within the Moray Firth SAC. Historically University of Aberdeen instrumentation at these, and other locations (see previous University of Aberdeen MS licences) have been used in scientific research which has underpinned both the establishment and monitoring of this SAC. Research data from previous licenced deployments have been fed into species protection and biodiversity maintenance policies. Deployments proposed under the current application will continue to add to scientific knowledge about the soundscape in the Moray Firth, and to the understanding of the impact of noise, and other factors, on the marine fauna of the Firth.

GEN 10. Non-native species (4.61 - 4.62).

All the equipment used in the proposed works (including rope work and other hardware) has only ever been used in the Moray Firth, and as such does not pose a risk of alien species introduction.

GEN 11. Marine litter (4.63 – 4.64).

The proposed mooring deployments will be removed in their entirety (including ballast weights and other ground tackle) at the end of the period of deployment. All vessels engaged in mooring deployment / recovery works comply with a zero marine litter policy.

GEN 12. Impact on water quality (4.65 – 4.67).

The proposed deployments have no effect on water quality or water resource management. Furthermore, all deployment vessels are operated with a strict adherence to marine discharge legislation.

GEN 13. Noise (4.68 - 4.69).

The proposed mooring deployments and the scientific equipment thereon do not generate noise as part of their function. Moreover, the supported equipment is specifically deployed to monitor sound in the marine environment (natural and anthropogenic sounds, as well as vocalisations produced by marine fauna), and is used to inform both scientific knowledge and policy decision making.

GEN 14. Air quality (4.70 – 4.71).

The equipment involved in the proposed deployments has no impact on air quality. Deployment vessels represent an input of CO2 into the environment, however, this is minimised by strict maintenance standards of the vessels, and by minimising the number of deployment voyages undertaken. The latter is achieved by maximising the endurance of the equipment / moorings, and by maximising the number of mooring deployment / recovery operations per vessel voyage.

GEN 17. Sound evidence (4.78 – 4.81).

As noted earlier, data collected from these, and previous, deployments have been used in scientific research which has underpinned the establishment of environmentally protected areas, and have been used for monitoring of the natural environment in the Moray Firth. Deployments proposed under the current application will continue to add to scientific knowledge about the natural marine environment in the Moray Firth.