

1.4 Stakeholder Consultation

1.4.1 Introduction

- 1.4.1.1 This chapter details the public stakeholder engagement carried out to support the offshore and onshore consent applications for the modified Transmission Infrastructure (TI) in respect of which this ES have been prepared. Details of stakeholder engagement specific to each receptor are included in each impact assessment chapter (Chapters 3 to 5).
- 1.4.1.2 Since commencing work on the Telford, Stevenson and MacColl offshore wind farms and associated TI (the Project) in 2010, MORL has been committed to delivering high standards of consultation, both with the general public and with the different organisations who hold either a geographic or subject-specific interest in the development, and the proposals for the modified TI follow on from extensive engagement work which has been undertaken to secure the Section 36 consents for the construction and operation of the three consented wind farms.
- 1.4.1.3 Proposals for the modified TI are therefore made against a background of high awareness of the Project as a whole, as many of the wide range of organisations, individuals and communities which have an interest in this work already have an established relationship with MORL.
- 1.4.1.4 A proposal of application notice was submitted to Aberdeenshire Council on 31 March 2014, and pre-application consultation letters containing copies of the notice were sent to the relevant Community Councils at this time. This informed the councils of the forthcoming public consultation for the modified Transmission Infrastructure and provided the relevant supporting information including a description of modified onshore transmission infrastructure (OnTI). The application for the Marine Licence for the modified offshore transmission infrastructure (OfTI) is not included within the scope of the proposal of application notice given that such a notice is a legal requirement in respect of the modified OnTI only. MORL has carried out additional stakeholder engagement with key consultees in relation to the marine environment (including Marine Scotland Science, Historic Scotland, relevant Oil and Gas stakeholders and commercial fisheries stakeholders and representatives).
- 1.4.1.5 Communications have been tailored to suit the geography of the modified TI, and activities in 2014 have included meetings with relevant stakeholder groups, local public exhibitions, and use of the local authority and community council frameworks to disseminate appropriately targeted literature to stakeholders, and to gather opinion on these proposals.
- 1.4.1.6 A Pre-Application Consultation Report has been submitted to Aberdeenshire Council as part of the applications for the OnTI as required by Section 35C of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 and the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013.

1.4.2 The Pre-Application Consultation

Consultation Procedure

- 1.4.2.1 The consultation procedure and related regulations were described at length in the MORL ES (MORL, 2012). This outlined the most significant elements of the consenting and licensing regime, which can be split into onshore and offshore activities. Marine Scotland is responsible for matters relating to the licensing of the modified OfTI, and the local planning authority, Aberdeenshire Council, takes responsibility for matters relating to the consenting of the modified OnTI.

Offshore Works

- 1.4.2.2 In terms of the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010, from 6 April 2011 the Scottish Ministers became responsible for the marine licensing system for activities carried out in the Scottish inshore waters from 0 – 12 nautical miles (nm). Under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, the Scottish Ministers also became the licensing and enforcement authority for the Scottish offshore region (from 12 to 200 nm) other than in respect of reserved matters. These functions are carried out by Marine Scotland, part of the Scottish Government.
- 1.4.2.3 The Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 makes certain provisions (in Sections 22 to 24) for pre-application consultation for various classes of marine licensable activity. The Marine Licensing (Pre-application Consultation) (Scotland) Regulations 2013 came into force on 6 April 2014. These Regulations were not in force at the time that the Marine Licence application for the modified OFTI was submitted to Marine Scotland and therefore there are no pre-application consultation requirements in respect of the current Marine Licence application for the modified OFTI.
- 1.4.2.4 Under the Marine Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2007 there are regulations requiring the appropriate authority either to publicise the receipt of the application and ES, and to send copies to relevant consultees, or to issue a direction to the applicant requiring the applicant to do so (see regulations 16 and 17).
- 1.4.2.5 At the time of the Marine Licence application for the modified OFTI, the requirements were that unless an applicant is specifically required by the Scottish Ministers to notify and consult in terms of Section 23(6) of the 2010 Act, public engagement activity is driven by the EIA regulations. These regulations provided a minimum requirement for offshore development in terms of the EIA process, including publication of and consultation on the EIA Scoping Report, and publication of the Environmental Statement associated with the application. MORL published and consulted on the Scoping Report for the modified TI during April and May 2014 and this ES is the Environmental Statement associated with the Marine Licence Application for the modified OFTI.

Onshore Works

- 1.4.2.6 The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013 require that certain prescribed public consultation activities require to be undertaken to the satisfaction of local planning authorities for national development and major development. Note that these regulations relate only to onshore works. These regulations require the prospective applicant to consult every community council, any part of whose area is within or adjoins the land where the proposed development is situated, and in doing so is to give a copy of the proposal of application notice to such community council. Applicants must hold at least one public event where members of the public may make comments to the prospective applicant in regards the proposed development. Applicants must also publish in a local newspaper the locality details of the application, the public consultation event and details of where representations about the proposed development may be sent. A pre-application consultation report must also be published for major or national development, in which applicants must report how they have responded to comments made and whether proposals have changed as a result of consultation.
- 1.4.2.7 MORL recognised that these regulations provided a minimum standard and that PAN3/2010 provided details of key principles of engagement as have been used in Scotland for onshore developments for many years. MORL developed an engagement strategy which aimed to set high standards of engagement and consultation using best practice from MORL's experience with the three consented wind farms and TI, MORL's parent company's (EDP Renewables) onshore

experience, staff experience from the Beatrice Demonstrator Project and from guidance contained in PAN3/2010. This strategy aimed to tie engagement closely to the EIA process in order to ensure that public and stakeholder engagement was always linked to project development.

Principles of Engagement

- 1.4.2.8 The engagement work to deliver the modified TI follows on directly from the engagement work which commenced in 2010 to deliver the consents for the Project, and utilises the relationships which have been established with various organisations, individuals and communities with an interest in the project.
- 1.4.2.9 MORL established its basic principles of engagement at an early stage in development of the Project through the publication of a Stakeholder Engagement Strategy in January 2010. These principles are being applied to the modified TI consenting process. From the outset of the MORL development process in 2010, it was determined that MORL's engagement process should progress through working with the organisations, individuals and communities who have an interest in the Project, whether as a result of their activities or their location. The aim was to enable the development of offshore wind farms and their associated TI in the Moray Firth to benefit from the considerable experience of the communities who live and work there, and to allow the Project to develop with the involvement of the individuals and organisations affected by and interested in the development. A commitment was made that development should be something that is undertaken with, rather than imposed upon, the communities which the Project affects.
- 1.4.2.10 When MORL originally developed the strategy it recognised that the Project was significantly different from conventional onshore projects, and that the then current community engagement advice (PAN81) pre-dated offshore wind development and the new challenges this brings. Although, in Scotland, there is no statutory requirement for broader stakeholder engagement for projects of this nature, the principles contained within PAN81 were adopted by MORL. PAN81 was superseded by PAN3/2010, and the strategy and activities were reviewed in consideration of the new advice. The principles of openness, accountability and transparency form the basis of MORL's stakeholder engagement strategy; however the geography and nature of the Project demanded that new deployment tactics be developed to deliver these principles against a stakeholder geography, that is much wider than is usually associated with conventional infrastructure projects.
- 1.4.2.11 In order to ensure that stakeholder engagement is meaningful to the development of the Project, and that stakeholders were kept fully informed of the development process, the Engagement Strategy was closely linked to the EIA process. This allowed for both input from and feedback to stakeholders through the establishment and maintenance of relationships with stakeholders on an individual, organisational and community level, requiring different approaches to maximise involvement opportunities. This relationship continued through wind farm consent determination and remains through the determination of the modified TI.
- 1.4.2.12 The modified TI presents a different focus to the requirements of an engagement strategy, owing to the smaller geographic focus of the proposed infrastructure. The principles established in the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy remain, however the application of those principles require to be much more closely focussed with regard to the onshore elements of the modified TI, and the appropriate vehicle for delivering that engagement is the Pre-Application Consultation required by the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013.

1.4.3 Public Engagement – Pre-Application Consultation

- 1.4.3.1 The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013 establish a framework for pre-application consultation with local communities potentially affected by a development, and provide an opportunity for the developer to establish a relationship with the communities which will host and neighbour the development.
- 1.4.3.2 A Pre-Application Consultation Plan was drafted in advance of the planning application being made, and the plan was agreed in consultation with the local planning authority. MORL's pre-application consultation plan was agreed with Aberdeenshire Council and is set out fully in the Pre-Application Consultation Report which accompanies the application for Planning Permission in Principle for the OnTI. The steps carried out by MORL were:
1. On 31 March 2014, a proposal of application was submitted to Aberdeenshire Council and eight community councils local to the proposed development. This commenced a statutory 12 week consultation period.
 2. The notification included details of three public exhibitions:
 - The Village Hall, New Deer, Tues 10 June
 - The Fife Lodge Hotel, Banff, Wed 11 June
 - Portsoy – Station Hotel, Thurs 12 June
 3. The public exhibitions were advertised for the two weeks preceding the events in the following newspapers:
 - Banffshire Journal
 - Buchan Advertiser
 - Buchan Observer
 - Turriff Advertiser

In addition, the events were advertised on village notice boards, in shop windows, village halls, etc.

4. One week prior to the public exhibitions, the eight community councils local to the proposed development were sent a reminder notification of the public events.
5. Public exhibitions were held as per the dates above, each had the following elements:
 - Open from 12.00 pm until 8.00 pm. This is intended to provide accessibility for those who can attend during a lunch-hour, as well as provision for those who are only able to attend after the end of the working day;
 - A story-board display, providing location and information on the modified Project.
 - Staffed by members of the project team, from consenting and engineering divisions. Use of project staff rather than PR consultancy staff enables direct communication between stakeholders and the project, as well as providing the most up-to-date information about the proposed infrastructure and its relationship with other aspects of the project;
 - Feedback on the proposals collected through opinion survey leaflets, thus allowing consultation rather than simple provision of information.

1.4.3.3 In total, 135 members of the public attended the exhibitions, which were staffed by members of the MORL project team. Full details may be found in the Pre Application Consultation Report which accompanies the planning application for the modified OnTI.

Scoping Consultation

1.4.3.4 The publication of the EIA Scoping Report in April 2014 represented the first opportunity to formally place details of the modified TI and its likely effects in the public domain. The Scoping Report was a key document in establishing the nature of the modified TI and its potential effect on different receptors. The Scoping process provided the basis for identification of issues across the range of stakeholder groups and involved engagement with both statutory and non-statutory organisations. This engagement was followed through the development of relationships between MORL and the range of external stakeholders. The stakeholders who were sent the modified TI Scoping Document are detailed in Table 1.4-1.

1.4.3.5 In addition, the modified TI Scoping Report was made available on the MORL website.

Table 1.4-1 Stakeholder Recipients of the Scoping Document for the modified TI

| Stakeholder | Stakeholder |
|------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Scottish Natural Heritage | Royal Yachting Association |
| Joint Nature Conservation Committee | Royal Society for the Protection of Birds |
| Scottish Environmental Protection Agency | Scallop Association |
| Aberdeenshire Council | Scottish Canoe Association |
| Moray Council | Scottish Fisheries Federation |
| Association of Salmon Fishery Board | Scottish Wildlife Trust |
| BOWL | Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission |
| British Telecom | Surfers Against Sewage |
| Civil Aviation Authority | Whale and Dolphin Conservation |
| IGAS Energy | Ports and Harbours |
| Chamber of Shipping | Historic Scotland |
| The Crown Estate | Transport Scotland |
| Cruising Association | Ithaca Energy |
| Defence Infrastructure Organisation | Bond Offshore Helicopters |
| Faroese Telecom | CHC Helicopters |
| Highlands and Islands Airports Limited | Bristow's Helicopters |
| Joint Radio Company | University of Aberdeen |
| Maritime and Coastguard Agency | Cromarty Firth Port Authority |

| Stakeholder | Stakeholder |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Marine Safety Forum | PA Resources |
| Marine Scotland | Moray Firth Sea Trout Project |
| Moray Firth Partnership | Buckie Library |
| NATS Safeguarding | Turriff Library |
| Northern Lighthouse Board | Scottish Government Library |

1.4.4 Post-Application Engagement

A programme of post-application engagement is planned in order to provide broad public awareness of the modified TI and its consent applications. This will include relevant details and specifically tailored communications for works which will be undertaken in the community.

All communications are co-ordinated by MORL Communication Manager, Craig Milroy.