



Ms Esther Villoria
Aberdeen Offshore Wind Farm Limited
The Tun Building
4 Jacksons Entry
8 Holyrood Road
Edinburgh
EH8 8AE

11th October 2017

Dear Ms Villoria

**THE ELECTRICITY WORKS (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) (SCOTLAND)
REGULATIONS 2017 (AS AMENDED)**

THE ELECTRICITY ACT 1989 (AS AMENDED)

DECISION NOTICE RELATIVE TO APPLICATION FOR MULTI-STAGE CONSENT

**FOR THE CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION OF THE EUROPEAN OFFSHORE WIND
DEPLOYMENT CENTRE ELECTRICITY GENERATING STATION, ABERDEEN BAY,
APPROXIMATELY 2KM EAST OF BLACKDOG, ABERDEENSHIRE WITH A MAXIMUM
GENERATION CAPACITY OF 100 MW.**

1.1 Description of the Application

1.1.1 On 26th March 2013 the Scottish Ministers, granted in favour of Aberdeen Offshore Wind Farm Limited (Company Number SC278869) having its registered office at The Tun Building, 4 Jacksons Entry, 8 Holyrood Road, Edinburgh EH8 8AE ("the Company") consent under section 36 ("s.36") of the Electricity Act 1989 (as amended) relative to the above works. Condition 17 of the said s.36 consent, requires the Company to submit a Project Environmental Monitoring Programme, hereinafter referred to as the Offshore Environmental Management Programme ("OEMP"), for approval by the Scottish Ministers prior to commencing the above works.

1.1.2 For the avoidance of doubt, the OEMP includes the requirements for a Project Environmental Management Programme and monitoring programme, both as referenced within condition 15 of the said s.36 consent.

1.1.3 On 20th April 2017 the Company submitted to the Scottish Ministers the OEMP for approval and applied for multi-stage consent in relation thereto in accordance with condition 17 of the said s.36 consent.



1.2 Summary of Consultation Responses

1.2.1 The Scottish Ministers consulted with Scottish Natural Heritage (“SNH”), Whale and Dolphin Conservation (“WDC”), The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (“RSPB”) and Fisheries Management Scotland (“FMS”) in respect of the OEMP.

1.2.2 SNH confirmed the OEMP provided an appropriate level of detail on project management structures, staff roles, responsibilities and project communications and further confirmed they were satisfied with the reporting templates. SNH recommended that the Scottish wildlife watching code be referred to for good practice on vessel activity and mitigation of potential disturbance to marine mammals and bird interests. SNH highlighted the possibility of bird interests being present in the area, particularly in coastal waters and noted that seaduck and diver interests were of most concern in respect of possible disturbance. In addition, SNH highlighted the sensitivity of the moult period for eider duck and common scoter when the birds are vulnerable and cannot fly. SNH advised that particular care should be taken in respect of vessel movements during this time and any rafts of birds should be avoided. SNH noted that as it stood, installation of the export cable would take place outwith this sensitive period. SNH advised that out of the range of vessels involved in the overall construction activity the crew transfer vessels (being the fastest moving) may be liable to give rise to greatest risk of disturbance and supported the measures indicated in the Vessel Management Plan (which is cross referenced within the OEMP) to minimise the impacts, limiting the number of transits and using established shipping lanes where possible. SNH recognised that Aberdeen was a busy port and there was already a large amount of vessel activity in the bay such that the additional number of vessels associated with the wind farm was unlikely to be significant. Altogether, SNH confirmed that adoption of the VMP (as cross referenced in the OEMP) measures and recommended good practice would avoid any significant effects on bird interests (including Special Protected Area species) from the construction of the above works. SNH commented that the same was true for marine mammal species and confirmed that there was no requirement for a separate marine mammal mitigation plan now that suction bucket foundations were to be used in preference to piled foundations. SNH confirmed they considered the OEMP to be comprehensive and from their perspective there were no outstanding issues to be addressed. In light of SNH’s comments however, the Company amended the OEMP. SNH subsequently confirmed they were content that the amended OEMP contained sufficient detail regarding the management of reducing disturbance from vessels transiting to the site on marine wildlife and also detail on preventative measures to reduce the chance of the probability of introducing invasive non-native species in according with relevant international legislation and guidelines.

1.2.3 WDC confirmed they were content with the OEMP. RSPB and FMS provided no response.

1.3 Reasons and Considerations on which this decision is based

1.3.1 The amended OEMP was submitted to the Scottish Ministers by the Company on 30th August 2017.

1.3.2 The Scottish Ministers have fully considered all other representations received regarding the OEMP.

1.3.3 The Scottish Ministers have also considered the information detailed in the ‘Independent Evaluation of the Potential Impact of the Aberdeen Offshore Wind Farm upon Salmon and Sea Trout’ by Anthony D. Hawkins together with the reviews undertaken by the Company, CH2M, Scottish Natural Heritage and Nathan Merchant of the Centre for Marine Laboratory, 375 Victoria Road, Aberdeen AB11 9DB
www.gov.scot/Topics/marine/Licensing/marine

Environment Fisheries and Aquaculture Science relative thereto. The said information is either available on the Marine Scotland licensing page of the Scottish Government's website or upon request to the Scottish Ministers.

1.3.4 In addition, the Scottish Ministers have considered advice provided by Marine Scotland Science that there is no new information since the said s.36 consent was granted which has led to the identification of significant effects where none were previously identified in the Environmental Statement ("ES") and Supplementary Environmental Information Statement ("SEIS").

1.3.5 The information contained in the OEMP is within the parameters of what has already been assessed within the ES and SEIS submitted in respect of the said s.36 consent.

1.4 Reasoned Conclusion

1.4.1 As set out above the Scottish Ministers, are satisfied that they have sufficient information to enable them to reasonably conclude that the effects of the OEMP have already been considered within the ES and SEIS previously assessed in respect of the said s.36 consent. No new significant effects on the environment have been identified within the OEMP.

1.4.2 In taking into account the information set out above the Scottish Ministers are satisfied that this information is relevant, appropriate and up to date.

1.5 Determination and Terms of Decision

1.5.1 The Scottish Ministers, hereby approve the OEMP as submitted on 30th August 2017 and grant multi-stage consent in relation thereto.

1.5.2 In the event that the Company wishes to update or amend the OEMP, the Company must submit, in writing, details of the proposed updates or amendments to the Scottish Ministers for their written approval prior to the planned implementation of the proposed updates or amendments. It is not permissible for any works associated with the proposed updates or amendments to proceed prior to the granting of such approval.

1.5.3 Unless otherwise agreed, in writing by the Scottish Ministers, all works must proceed in accordance with the OEMP.

1.5.4 This Decision Notice has been published on the Marine Scotland licensing page of the Scottish Government's website:

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/marine/Licensing/marine/scoping/EOWDC>.

1.5.5 A copy of this Decision Notice has also been sent to the relevant planning authorities.

Signed by

[Redacted Signature]

Kerry Bell

11th October 2017

Authorised by the Scottish Ministers to sign in that behalf