

MD-LOT European Protected Species Case Handling Report

Licence Number: 00010646

Licensing Officer: [REDACTED]

Site	Seagreen 1A Export Cable Corridor
Company	Seagreen 1A Limited No. 1 Forbury Place, 43 Forbury Road, ReadingRG1 3JH
Applicant	[REDACTED]
Brief Description of Project	geotechnical surveys associated with the Seagreen 1A cable corridor
Associated Licences	

Species	harbour porpoise (<i>Phocoena phocoena</i>);bottlenose dolphin (<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>);minke whale (<i>Balaenoptera acutorostrata</i>);white-beaked dolphin (<i>Lagenorhynchus albirostris</i>)
Inshore/Offshore	Inshore

MD-LOT European Protected Species Case Handling Report

TEST 1	Purpose of licence
	Imperative reasons of overriding public interest (including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment)
Comments	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is a specific need being addressed? <p>The Seagreen 1A project will contribute to the need for new energy infrastructure and renewable energy in the UK, as highlighted by the Electricity Generation Policy Statement, the Scottish Energy Security Strategy.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What benefit does the activity provide or what need does it address – social, economic, environmental, health and safety etc? <p>The surveys are essential in the progression of the Seagreen 1A project. The Seagreen 1A project will provide a range of environmental benefits such as the production of renewable energy which, in turn, will reduce the need for fossil fuels. Economic benefits will also occur through investment in the project, the creation of jobs and the development of supporting industries in the supply chain.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why is the activity essential? <p>The surveys are essential in ensuring the safe construction and successful completion of the project. The surveys will provide important information that will help to inform the wider Seagreen 1A project.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What public interest is served? <p>The Seagreen 1A project will contribute to the Scottish and UK Government aims of tackling climate change and reducing the reliance on fossil fuels through the production of energy through renewable sources. Jobs will also be created as a result of the Seagreen 1A project going ahead.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the activity in relation to any government targets or policies? <p>The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009, the Electricity Generation Policy Statement, the Scottish Energy Strategy (2017) and the UK Energy Security Strategy (2022).</p>	
Test 1 satisfied?	YES

MD-LOT European Protected Species Case Handling Report

TEST 2	Satisfactory alternatives
Comments	
<p>The applicant has considered the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not undertaking the surveys - this would result in an inadequate understanding of the seabed conditions within the Seagreen 1A array area and export cable corridor which would result in a risk to the construction and operation of the project. - Alternative location - surveying another area would not provide the location specific data required to inform the Seagreen 1A project. - Less samples taken - fewer samples would result in a risk to the uncertainty of the project. - Alternative equipment - USBL is the industry standard for obtaining accurate elevation data. Other equipment would not provide the same accuracy. - Alternative timing of surveys - winter survey campaigns coincide with periods of lower cetacean activity in the area therefore reducing potential disturbance to EPS. Furthermore, the data is required urgently to allow key decisions for the future of the project to be made. - Duration of the surveys - this is the shortest time that the surveys can be completed in when taking into account the number of samples to be conducted and vessel transit times. 	
Test 2 satisfied?	YES

TEST 3	Favourable conservation status
Comments	
<p>NatureScot advised that there is a risk of disturbance to individual animals, therefore an EPS licence for disturbance is required under the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994. NatureScot further advise that the activities are not capable of having an adverse impact on the favourable conservation status of the EPS concerned and that all species have been correctly identified.</p> <p>NatureScot requested clarity on the sound pressure of the USBL equipment. Seagreen confirmed that the USBL will be operated at a maximum of 209re 1 µPa SPLpk. Therefore NatureScot advised mitigation for the use of the equipment is not required and an EPS licence for injury is not required.</p>	
Test 3 satisfied?	YES

Date application received: 06/12/2023

Consultation start date: 21/12/2023

Consultation end date:

Notes

Date	Text
13/12/2023	https://gridreferencefinder.com/#gr=NT6879394844 56.145267_s__c__s_-2.503833 1,NT6856895176 56.20/12/2023 Corrected coordinates received 19/12/2023. Red for inshore, green for offshore: Grid Reference Finder ht

Awaiting Information

Start date	End date	Duration (days)	Waiting for	Waiting on Information From

MD-LOT European Protected Species Case Handling Report

22/02/2024	06/03/2024	13	Seagreen have requested the licence end date is extended by a month until the end of May. Awaiting confirmation from NatureScot on the change of dates and whether this changes their advice.	Other
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Licence issue date: 15/03/2024

Date report due: 30/06/2024

Licence start date: 01/04/2024

Licence end date: 31/05/2024

National Marine Plan considerations:

The decision is: In accordance and no further action required

Comments: Policy Gen 13 Noise has been considered for the proposed geotechnical surveys. NatureScot were consulted and advised that the activities are not capable of having an adverse impact on the favourable conservation status of the EPS concerned and that all species have been correctly identified. Mitigation is also in place to minimise any impact to EPS.

Reviewed and signed by:

Signed:



Date: 15/03/2024