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Environmental Impact Assessment Report

Volume 1, Chapter 1: Introduction

MarramWind Offshore Wind Farm

December 2025

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Contents

1. Introduction	3
1.1 MarramWind	3
1.2 The Applicant	3
1.3 Overview of the Project	4
1.4 Introduction to this Environmental Impact Assessment Report	5
1.5 Application for consent	6
1.5.1 Key consents, licences and permissions	6
1.5.2 EIA project team	6
1.5.3 Application and associated documents	7
1.6 Environmental Impact Assessment	8
1.6.1 Scope of the EIA	8
1.6.2 Structure of this EIA Report	9
1.6.3 Accessing the EIA Report	12
1.7 References	13
1.8 Glossary of terms and abbreviations	14
1.8.1 Abbreviations	14
1.8.2 Glossary of terms	14
Table 1.1 Offshore and onshore consent applications documentation	7
Table 1.2 EIA Report Structure	9

Volume 2, Figures

Figure 1.1 Red Line Boundary

1. Introduction

1.1 MarramWind

- 1.1.1.1 MarramWind Offshore Wind Farm (hereafter referred to as 'the Project') is wholly owned by ScottishPower Renewables (SPR) United Kingdom (UK) Limited. MarramWind Limited, a subsidiary of SPR, is the Applicant for the Project.
- 1.1.1.2 The Project is a proposed floating wind farm located in the North Sea, with a grid connection capacity of up to 3 gigawatts (GW). The location of the Project is determined by the Option Area Agreement (OAA), which is the spatial boundary of the Northeast 7 (NE7) Plan Option within which the electricity generating infrastructure will be located. The NE7 Plan Option is located north-east of Rattray Head on the Aberdeenshire coast in north-east Scotland, approximately 75 kilometres (km) at its nearest point to shore and 110km at its furthest point. An Option to Lease Agreement for the Project within the NE7 Plan Option was signed in April 2022.
- 1.1.1.3 A summary of the Project is provided in **Section 1.3** and a comprehensive description of the Project is provided in **Chapter 4: Project Description** of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIA) Report.

1.2 The Applicant

- 1.2.1.1 MarramWind Limited (hereafter referred to as 'the Applicant') is a company wholly owned by SPR.
- 1.2.1.2 SPR is part of the ScottishPower group of companies, operating in the UK under the Iberdrola Group, and is a leading UK renewables developer with over 40 operational wind farms generating 3GW of green energy. ScottishPower is the first integrated energy company to generate 100% green electricity in the UK. Focused on wind energy, smart grids and driving the change to a greener future, ScottishPower is investing £24bn to 2028 on renewable power and transmission and distribution grids.
- 1.2.1.3 Iberdrola Group is a world leader in the development of offshore wind energy, with five operational wind farms and four major projects under construction. With a committed investment of €8bn from 2025 to 2028, this will give 5.7GW of installed offshore capacity by 2028. This is part of the €58bn investment plan announced in 2025 by Iberdrola, 35% of which is being invested to grow the overall installed capacity of renewable power to 60GW by 2028.

1.3 Overview of the Project

1.3.1.1 The Project's generating infrastructure will be located in the North Sea, within the 'Scottish Zone' (as defined in the Scotland Act 1998) of the United Kingdom (UK) Exclusive Economic Zone. The generating infrastructure is specifically located within the spatial extent of the NE7 Plan Option, covered by the OAA, (see **paragraph 1.1.1.2**). The Project's location is shown in **Volume 2, Figure 1.1: Red Line Boundary**.

1.3.1.2 The Red Line Boundary is a geographical area within which the offshore wind farm; associated offshore and offshore infrastructure will be located. It represents the boundary identified for the relevant planning and consent applications. The Red Line Boundary is presented in **Volume 2, Figure 1.1** and described in **Chapter 4: Project Description**.

1.3.1.3 In March 2024, National Electricity System Operator published the 'Beyond 2030' report, which presented the ScotWind elements of the Holistic Network Design Follow Up Exercise. This report confirmed that the full 3GW connection for the Project will be connected to the Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks (SSEN) Netherton Hub at Longside, near Peterhead. This update informed further refinement of the Project design envelope following the EIA Scoping Stage in January 2023 (see **Chapter 3: Site Selection and Consideration of Alternatives** for further details).

1.3.1.4 The Project's offshore infrastructure, located seaward of mean high water springs (MHWS), includes the following:

- wind turbine generators (WTGs), including floating units (platforms and station keeping system);
- array cables;
- subsea distribution centres;
- subsea substations;
- offshore substations;
- reactive compensation platform(s) (if required); and
- offshore export cables to connect the offshore infrastructure to the landfall(s).

1.3.1.5 The Project's onshore infrastructure, located landward of mean low water springs (MLWS) includes:

- landfall(s) – the infrastructure associated with landfall(s) located above MLWS;
- underground onshore export cables running from the landfall(s) to the onshore substations;
- onshore substations co-located on one site;
- underground grid connection cables connecting the onshore substations to the grid connection point at SSEN Netherton Hub; and
- tie-in to the grid connection point (SSEN substation at the Netherton Hub, which is a separate project and does not form part of the consenting applications which this EIA relates to).

1.4 Introduction to this Environmental Impact Assessment Report

1.4.1.1 At Scoping, the Applicant proposed an EIA Report would be prepared that covers the entire Project, including both the offshore and onshore generating and connection infrastructure (MarramWind Limited, 2023). The EIA Report (in accordance with the EIA Regulations) will be required to support the consents and licences identified in **Section 1.5.1**.

1.4.1.2 This EIA Report documents the findings of a comprehensive EIA which has been carried out for the Project. The process includes the analysis of likely environmental effects (both positive and negative) of a proposed project, and it provides recommendations for mitigating adverse impacts. The EIA Report serves as a crucial tool for decision-makers, helping them understand the environmental implications of a project before granting development consent.

1.4.1.3 The EIA process for the Project culminates in the provision of and Statutory Consultation on an EIA Report, prepared in accordance with applicable planning legislation as set out in Section 2.3 in **Chapter 2: Legislative and Policy Context**. Further information on the EIA process and the role of the EIA Report is provided in **Chapter 5: Approach to the EIA**. The EIA Report will describe the likely significant effects associated with the Project during its construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning.

1.4.1.4 This EIA Report has been prepared in accordance with the following sets of applicable Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations (hereafter referred to as the EIA Regulations):

- The Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017;
- The Marine Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2007;
- The Marine Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017; and
- The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017.

1.4.1.5 The EIA Regulations set out procedures for assessing, consulting upon and informing decision-making for Projects that are likely to have significant environmental effects. The EIA Regulations require the provision of an EIA Report alongside the applications for consent under Section 36 (s.36) of the Electricity Act 1989, marine licences and planning permission under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997. Section 2.2 in **Chapter 2: Legislative and Policy Context** provides further detail on the required consents.

1.4.1.6 Production of an EIA is mandatory for development projects defined under Schedule 1 of the EIA Regulations. Development projects defined in Schedule 2 only require an EIA if they are likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of their nature, size, or location. Section 2.2 in **Chapter 2: Legislative and Policy Context** provides further information on the requirement for an EIA for the Project.

1.4.1.7 This EIA Report has been prepared to comply with the EIA Regulations, Table 2.1 in **Chapter 2: Legislative and Policy Context** signposts to where the information is provided in the EIA Report. The findings of the EIA are set out within this EIA Report (see **Table 1.2** for further details on the structure).

1.4.1.8 This EIA Report presents a design envelope that has been refined since Scoping (MarramWind Limited, 2023).

1.5 Application for consent

1.5.1 Key consents, licences and permissions

1.5.1.1 The key consents, licences and permissions that are required to construct and operate the Project include:

- s.36 consent under the Electricity Act 1989;
- Marine licences under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (between 12 nautical miles (nm) and 200nm);
- Marine licences under the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 (between 0nm and 12nm); and
- Planning Permission in Principle (PPiP) under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.

1.5.1.2 Further information can be found in Section 2.2 of **Chapter 2: Legislative and Policy Context**.

1.5.1.3 Consent for the onshore aspects of the Project can be sought either via a planning permission application made in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 to Aberdeenshire Council, or through 'deemed' planning permission as part of a single application for consent for the Project under s.36 of the Electricity Act 1989, as permitted by the Growth and Infrastructure Act 2013.

1.5.1.4 The Applicant has considered these potential consenting options and consequently intends that separate offshore and onshore applications will be made. The offshore application will be submitted to the Marine Directorate – Licensing Operations Team (MD-LOT) and will comprise: s.36 consent under the Electricity Act 1989 and marine licences under the under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (between 12nm and 200nm) and the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 (between 0nm and 12nm). The onshore application will be a single PPiP application submitted to Aberdeenshire Council, in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.

1.5.1.5 The EIA Report has been informed by the Scoping Opinions of MD-LOT (Scottish Government, 2023) and Aberdeenshire Council (Aberdeenshire Council, 2023), including the Aberdeenshire Council Pre-application Advice Report (Aberdeenshire Council, 2024), along with from key statutory and non-statutory consultees.

1.5.2 EIA project team

1.5.2.1 The preparation of the EIA for the Project is being led by WSP Environment & Infrastructure Solutions UK Limited (hereafter referred to as 'WSP').

1.5.2.2 WSP is registered with the Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals and its Environmental Impact Assessment Quality Mark scheme. The scheme allows organisations that lead the co-ordination of EIAs in the UK to make a commitment to excellence in their EIA activities and have this commitment independently reviewed.

1.5.2.3 A number of specialist consultancies have also provided technical specialist input into the EIA aspect assessments, as indicated in **Table 1.2**. Pursuant to the EIA Regulations, this EIA Report has been prepared by competent experts and the relevant expertise or qualifications of the experts is provided in **Volume 3, Appendix 1.1: Competent Experts**.

1.5.3 Application and associated documents

1.5.3.1 Separate consents, licences and permissions for the offshore (seaward of MHWS) and onshore (landward of MLWS) infrastructure of the Project will be required and will be applied for by the Applicant. **Table 1.1** provides a summary of the offshore and onshore application documentation.

1.5.3.2 A comprehensive overview of the consents, licenses, permissions, and their corresponding legislation and policy is presented in **Chapter 2: Legislative and Policy Context** of this EIA Report.

Table 1.1 Offshore and onshore consent applications documentation

Document	Leading author
Offshore application accompanying documents	
EIA Report	WSP
Non-Technical Summary	WSP
Offshore consent applications cover letter	WSP / The Applicant
S.36 application	The Applicant
Marine Licence Application 1 – Generating Station	WSP / The Applicant
Marine Licence Application 2 – Transmission Phase 1	The Applicant
Marine Licence Application 3 – Transmission Phase 2	The Applicant
Marine Licence Application 4 – Transmission Phase 3	The Applicant
Offshore renewable energy: marine licences and s.36 consent application checklist	The Applicant
Offshore Planning Statement	WSP
MD-LOT Gap Analysis	The Applicant / WSP
MarramWind Scoping Report	The Applicant / WSP
MD-LOT Scoping Opinion	MD-LOT
Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) Report	WSP
Report to Inform Appropriate Assessment	WSP / APEM Ltd
Habitats Regulations Appraisal (without prejudice) Derogation Case	The Applicant / WSP / APEM Ltd
Nature Conservation Marine Protected Area Assessment	WSP
Fisheries Mitigation Monitoring and Communication Plan	NiMa Consultants Ltd
Written Scheme of Investigation including Protocol for Archaeological Discoveries	WSP / COARS

Document	Leading author
Marine Pollution Contingency Plan	WSP
Offshore Invasive Non-Native Species Mitigation Plan	WSP
Safety Zone Statement	Anatec Ltd
Nature Positive Plan	The Applicant
Socio-Economic Action Plan	The Applicant
Onshore application accompanying documents	
EIA Report	WSP
Non-Technical Summary	WSP
PPiP Application Cover Letter	WSP / The Applicant
PPiP Application	WSP / The Applicant
Location Plan	WSP
Proposed Site Plan	WSP
Onshore Planning Statement	WSP
Design and Access Statement	WSP
PAC Report	WSP
Report to Inform Appropriate Assessment	WSP / APEM
Nature Positive Plan	The Applicant
Socio-Economic Action Plan	The Applicant

1.6 Environmental Impact Assessment

1.6.1 Scope of the EIA

1.6.1.1 In January 2023, the MarramWind Scoping Report (MarramWind Limited, 2023) was submitted by the Applicant to MD-LOT and Aberdeenshire Council to support a request for a formal Scoping Opinion from the Scottish Ministers and Aberdeenshire Council in relation to the Scoping Report. The Scoping Opinions provided in response to the request were received in March 2023 from Aberdeenshire Council (Aberdeenshire Council, 2023) and May 2023 from MD-LOT (Scottish Government, 2023). The representations made as part of both Scoping Opinions, together with the pre- and post-Scoping workshops held with stakeholders, provided guidance to the Applicant when defining the proposed scope and approach to the EIA Report. As a result of this EIA Report focuses on the topics detailed in **Table 1.2**.

1.6.1.2 Details of the consultation with statutory and non-statutory stakeholder carried out by the Applicant is presented in **Chapter 5: Approach to the EIA**. A summary of the aspect specific consultations is also included in each aspect chapter (see **Chapters 6 to 33**).

1.6.2 Structure of this EIA Report

1.6.2.1 This EIA Report comprises of four volumes:

- **Volume 1: EIA Report chapters:**
 - ▶ **Chapters 1 to 5** – introductory chapters;
 - ▶ **Chapters 6 to 18** – offshore chapters;
 - ▶ **Chapters 19 to 27** – onshore chapters;
 - ▶ **Chapters 28 to 34** – whole-project chapters;
- **Volume 2: EIA Report figures;**
- **Volume 3: EIA Report appendices; and**
- **Volume 4: Implementation Plans.**

1.6.2.2 **Table 1.2** provides the EIA Report structure.

Table 1.2 EIA Report Structure

Chapter / Volume	Leading author
Non-Technical Summary	WSP
Volume 1: EIA Report chapters	
Chapter 1: Introduction	WSP
Chapter 2: Legislative and Policy Context	WSP
Chapter 3: Site Selection and Alternatives	WSP
Chapter 4: Project Description	WSP
Chapter 5: Approach to the EIA	WSP
Chapter 6: Marine Geology Oceanography and Physical Processes	ABPmer
Chapter 7: Marine Water and Sediment Quality	WSP
Chapter 8: Underwater Noise	WSP
Chapter 9: Electromagnetic Fields	WSP
Chapter 10: Benthic, Epibenthic and Intertidal Ecology	WSP
Chapter 11: Marine Mammals	APEM Ltd

Chapter / Volume	Leading author
Chapter 12: Offshore and Intertidal Ornithology	APEM Ltd
Chapter 13: Fish Ecology	WSP
Chapter 14: Commercial Fisheries	NiMa Consultants Ltd
Chapter 15: Shipping and Navigation	Anatec Ltd
Chapter 16: Marine Archaeology and Cultural Heritage	WSP
Chapter 17: Seascape, Landscape and Visual	WSP
Chapter 18: Infrastructure and Other Marine Users	WSP
Chapter 19: Ground Conditions and Contamination	WSP
Chapter 20: Water Resources and Flood Risk	WSP
Chapter 21: Air Quality	WSP
Chapter 22: Land Use	WSP
Chapter 23: Terrestrial Ecology and Ornithology	WSP
Chapter 24: Onshore Archaeology and Cultural Heritage	WSP
Chapter 25: Onshore Noise and Vibration	WSP
Chapter 26: Traffic and Transport	WSP
Chapter 27: Landscape and Visual	WSP
Chapter 28: Climate Resilience	WSP
Chapter 29: Greenhouse Gases	WSP
Chapter 30: Socio-Economics	WSP
Chapter 31: Civil and Military Aviation	WSP
Chapter 32: Inter-Related Effects Assessment	WSP
Chapter 33: Cumulative Effects Assessment	WSP
Chapter 34: Summary	WSP
Volume 4: Implementation Plans	
<i>Offshore Implementation Plans</i>	
Outline Construction Method Statement	The Applicant
Outline Environmental Management Plan	WSP

Chapter / Volume	Leading author
Appendix 1: Outline Marine Pollution Contingency Plan	
Outline Scour Protection Management Plan	The Applicant
Outline Piling Strategy	The Applicant
Outline Cable Plan	The Applicant
Outline Project Environmental Monitoring Programme	WSP
Outline Offshore Invasive Non-Native Species Management Plan	WSP
Outline Marine Mammal Mitigation Protocol	WSP
Outline Commercial Fisheries Monitoring, Management, Mitigation and Coexistence Strategy	Brown and May
Outline Vessel Management and Safety Plan	Anatec Ltd
Outline Lighting and Marking Plan	Anatec Ltd
Outline Written Scheme of Investigation (Offshore)	WSP
<i>Onshore Implementation Plans</i>	
Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan	WSP
Outline Operation Drainage Management Strategy Appendix 1: Outline Indicative Sustainable Urban Drainage Plan for the Onshore Substations during Operation	WSP
Outline Written Scheme of Investigation (Onshore)	WSP
Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan Appendix A: Outline Travel Plan Appendix B: Outline Core Path Management Plan	WSP
Outline Landscape and Architectural Strategy Appendix A: Supporting Figures Appendix B: Outline Landscape Maintenance Plan	WSP

1.6.3 Accessing the EIA Report

- 1.6.3.1 This EIA Report is available online via the Project website at the following link:
marramwind.co.uk/documents
- 1.6.3.2 Hard copies and pen drives can be made available on request from the Applicant via the website.
- 1.6.3.3 This EIA Report accompanies relevant consenting applications submitted to both Aberdeenshire Council (onshore PPiP application) and MD-LOT (marine licence applications and s.36 applications). Responses and comments on this EIA Report and the associated consenting applications should be made directly to Aberdeenshire Council or MD-LOT as appropriate, rather than to the Applicant.

1.7 References

Aberdeenshire Council, (2023). *Aberdeenshire Council's Scoping Opinion for Offshore Wind Farm Project at MarramWind Offshore Wind Farm.* [online] Available at: <https://upa.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=RPB0TVCA04U00> [Accessed: 23 April 2025].

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Marine (Scotland) Act 2010. (2010 asp. 5). [online] Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2010/5/data.pdf> [Accessed: 22 June 2023].

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The Marine Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017. (2017 No. 115). [online] Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2017/115/contents/made> [Accessed: 22 June 2023].

The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017. (2017 No. 102). [online] Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2017/102/contents/made> [Accessed: 22 June 2023].

The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997. (1997 c. 8). [online] Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1997/8/contents> [Accessed: 22 June 2023].

1.8 Glossary of terms and abbreviations

1.8.1 Abbreviations

Acronym	Definition
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
GW	gigawatt
km	kilometres
MD-LOT	Marine Directorate – Licensing Operations Team
MHWS	Mean High Water Springs
MLWS	Mean Low Water Springs
NE7	Northeast 7 Plan Option
nm	nautical mile
OAA	Option Area Agreement
PAC	Pre-Application Consultation
SPR	ScottishPower Renewables UK Limited
SSEN	Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks
UK	United Kingdom

1.8.2 Glossary of terms

Term	Definition
Aberdeenshire Council	One of 32 divisions of Scotland, designated as a Council area for the purposes of local government, covering Aberdeenshire.
Cumulative Effects Assessment	Assessment of effects as a result of the incremental changes caused by other past, present and reasonably foreseeable human activities and natural processes together with the Project.
EIA Regulations	Terminology used in this EIA Report to refer to four sets of regulations: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017;• The Marine Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017;• The Marine Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2007; and• The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017.

Term	Definition
Environmental Impact Assessment Report	The written output presenting the full findings of the EIA.
Environmental Impact Assessment	The process of evaluating the likely significant environmental effects of a proposed project or development over and above the existing circumstances (or 'baseline').
Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment	International membership organisation for environment and sustainability professionals.
Likely significant effects	It is a requirement of the EIA Regulations to determine the likely significant effects of the Project on the environment which should relate to the level of an effect and the type of effect.
Marine Directive – Licensing Operations Teams	Formerly known as Marine Scotland – Licensing Operations Team, MD-LOT is the regulator for determining marine licence applications on behalf of the Scottish Ministers in the Scottish inshore region (between 0 and 12 nautical miles) under the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010, and in the Scottish offshore region (between 12 and 200 nautical miles) under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009.
Marine licence	Licence required for certain activities in the marine environment and granted under either the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 or the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010.
MarramWind Limited ('the Applicant')	MarramWind Offshore Wind Farm (hereafter referred to as 'the Project') is wholly owned by ScottishPower Renewables UK Limited (SPR). MarramWind Limited, a subsidiary of SPR, is the Applicant for the Project.
Mean High Water Springs	The average throughout a year of the heights of two successive high waters during those periods of 24 hours (approximately once a fortnight) when the tidal range is greatest.
Mean Low Water Springs	The average throughout a year of the heights of two successive low waters during those periods of 24-hours (approximately once a fortnight) when the tidal range is greatest.
National Electricity System Operator's Holistic Network Design	To provide a coordinated onshore and offshore design for a 2030 network to meet government objectives of connecting 40 gigawatts (GW) of offshore wind in Great Britain by 2030, including 11GW in Scotland as well net zero by 2050 for GB and 2045 for Scotland. The HND aims to provide an economic, efficient, operable, sustainable and coordinated National Electricity Transmission System (NETS) including the onshore and offshore assets required to connect offshore wind and considering internal interconnectors.
Offshore	Pertaining to the seaward side of MHWS, and typically in reference to locations some distance from the coast.
Onshore	Pertaining to the landward side of MLWS.
Option Agreement Area	Term for the wind farm site upon the seabed at a location specified in the Option Agreement between the Crown Estate Scotland and a developer. It is the agreement that allows the developer the rights to undertake such tests,

Term	Definition
	survey and site investigations that do not entail the temporary or permanent installation of any works or structures on the seabed.
Planning Permission in Principle	PPiP establishes the acceptability of a type of development or land use on a site without requiring a significant level of detail about the design and implementation of a development proposal. This approach is typically used for major development proposals to avoid the initial high costs of detailed design work and to retain design flexibility. A PPiP application only seeks initial consent for, as a minimum, a proposed land use and associated suite of high-level development parameters (including access from a public road) within a defined site boundary. All detailed design and implementation matters would be deferred to subsequent applications for Approval of Matters Specified in Conditions (AMSC).
Project	The MarramWind Offshore Wind Farm Project that is the subject of this EIA Report, as described in Chapter 4: Project Description .
Red Line Boundary	The Red Line Boundary is a geographical area within which the offshore wind farm; associated onshore and offshore infrastructure will be located. It represents the boundary identified for the relevant planning and consent applications.
Scoping Opinion	A Scoping Opinion is adopted by the Planning Authority and Scottish Ministers for a proposed project.
Scoping Report	A report that presents the findings of an initial stage in the Environmental Impact Assessment process.
Scottish Government Marine Directorate (formerly Marine Scotland)	Civil service directorate for Scotland, which is responsible for the integrated management of Scotland's seas.
ScottishPower Renewables UK Limited	Part of the Iberdrola group and 100% owner of MarramWind Limited.
Section 36 consent	Consent that can be granted under section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 for the construction or extension, and operation, of an electricity station.
Statutory stakeholder	A stakeholder who must be given opportunity to engage with the Project as the Project design develops, as required under the relevant consenting regime(s).
The Crown Estate Scotland	The public corporation of the Scottish government that is responsible for the management of land and property in Scotland, as owned by the monarch " <i>in right of the Crown</i> ".
United Kingdom	The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, comprising England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

