

Annex Two

MD-LOT European Protected Species Licence Case Handling Report

Licence Number: 00010425

Licensing Officer: [Redacted]

Site	Eastern Green Link 4 ("EGL4") Cable Corridor
Company	SP Transmission PLC 320 St. Vincent Street Glasgow G2 5AD
Applicant	[Redacted]
Brief Description of Project	Geophysical and Geotechnical Surveys for Electricity Cable Route
Associated Licences	Basking Shark Licence 00010426

Species	harbour porpoise (<i>Phocoena phocoena</i>);bottlenose dolphin (<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>);minke whale (<i>Balaenoptera acutorostrata</i>);Risso's dolphin (<i>Grampus griseus</i>);white sided dolphin (<i>Lagenorhynchus acutus</i>);short beaked common dolphin (<i>Delphinus delphis</i>);killer whale (<i>Orcinus orca</i>);white-beaked dolphin (<i>Lagenorhynchus albirostris</i>);humpback whale (<i>Megaptera novaeangliae</i>);long-finned pilot whale (<i>Globicephala melas</i>)
Inshore/Offshore	Inshore and Offshore

TEST 1	Purpose of licence
	preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment
Comments	
<p>The Applicant has supplied the following information:</p> <p>The cable for the wider EGL4 project cannot be installed without detailed inspection of the seabed in order to assess seabed conditions to finalise routing and allow micro-siting and to ensure the most suitable option is put forward. Therefore a scenario whereby the surveys are not undertaken is not an option in this instance.</p> <p>The survey is required to support the installation of a new subsea HVDC cables (EGL 4) that are needed to provide additional network capacity and greater power transfer capability across the Anglo-Scottish border. The associated EGL 4 HVDC cables cannot be installed prior to assessing the seabed in order to inform the identification of the final cabling route for which this survey is required. This is to ensure the preservation of the surrounding marine environment. The survey results will inform the applicant of the most appropriate route for cable deployment.</p>	

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EPS/Basking Shark application for surveys are not in relation to specific government targets or policies however, they contribute to the wider program of works for the EGL 4 HVDC cables to increase transmission and support broader renewables targets.

Applicant is not undertaking a statutory function during the seabed survey

Test 1 satisfied?	YES
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TEST 2	Satisfactory alternatives
Comments	
<p>Regulation 44(3)(a) of the Habitat Regulations 1994 and Regulation 55(7)(a) of the Conservation of Offshore Marine Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 requires the Scottish Ministers to be satisfied that there is no satisfactory alternative before an EPS Licence can be issued for the Licensable Operations. For the survey data that is required to be collected to assess seabed conditions the proposed methods and equipment must be used as there are no technological alternatives. No suitable alternatives could be identified by the applicant. By not performing the seabed surveys, the applicant could be endangering marine habitats during cable installation activities if the seabed conditions within the marine installation corridor are unknown.</p> <p>The survey must take place within the marine installation corridor for the planned EGL4 HVDC cables to inform later installation activities. The survey must be completed prior to EGL4 installation which is scheduled to complete 2030/1. The specified equipment and methods are required to collect the necessary data needed to determine seabed conditions.</p>	
Test 2 satisfied?	YES

TEST 3	Favourable Conservation Status ("FCS")
Comments	
<p>NatureScot has concluded in its advice of 25 July 2023 that the activity will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the populations of the species concerned at Favourable Conservation Status (FCS) in their natural range if the mitigation measures detailed in their response and those detailed EGL 4 Protected Species Assessment & Marine Mammal Mitigation Plan (Doc Ref: C01494_NGET_REP_D0125_Rev0) are followed.</p> <p>JNCC advised in its response dated 19 July 2023 that due to the linear nature of the survey (and therefore not repeatedly working in the same area) and the equipment being used, any disturbance that occurs to cetacean EPS will be localised and temporary. It advised that the proposed survey will not have a significant effect on the Favourable Conservation Status (FCS) of the cetacean EPS populations</p>	
Test 3 satisfied?	YES

Date application received: 24/05/2023 **Date variation application received:**

Consultation start date: 23/06/2023

Consultation end date: 21/07/2023

Notes

Date	Text	Created By
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Awaiting Information

Start date	End date	Duration (days)	Waiting for	Waiting on Information From
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Licence issue date: 12/09/2023

Date report due: 31/07/2024

Reviewed and signed by:

[Redacted]

Signed:

Date: 11 September 2023