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E:MD.MarineLicensing@gov.scot

Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994

Application for a licence to disturb or injure marine European protected species (EPS) for one of the following purposes

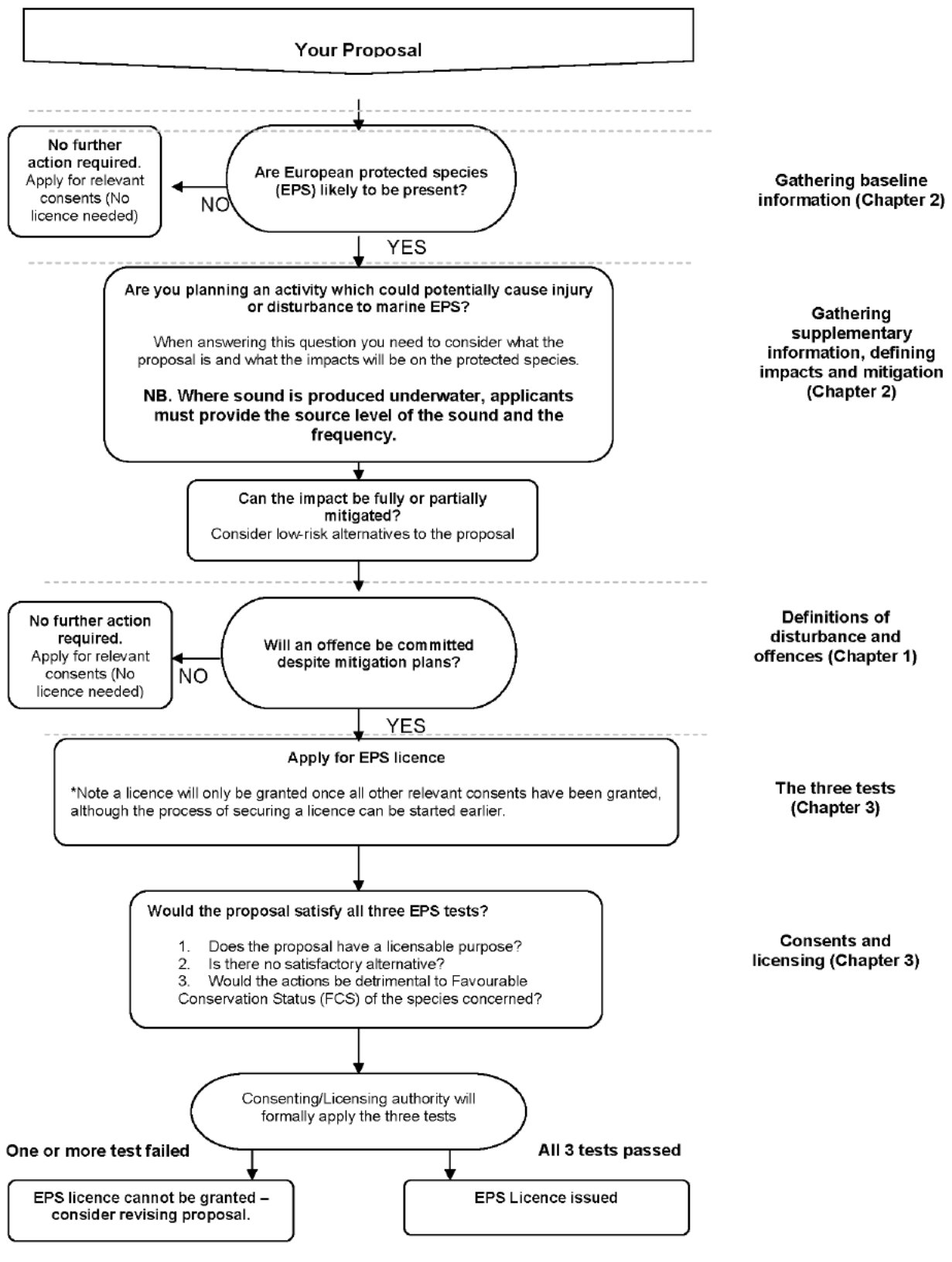
- For preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest (including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment)
- For preventing the spread of disease
- For preventing serious damage to livestock, foodstuffs for livestock, crops, vegetables, fruit, growing timber or any other form of property, or to fisheries.

Please use this application form if you wish to undertake works/activities that would affect European protected species in the Scottish inshore marine area (0 – 12nm).

Important : Before completing this form, please read these notes carefully Applicants are advised to read these notes in conjunction with [The Protection of Marine European Protected Species from injury and disturbance: Guidance for Scottish Inshore Waters](#). If further clarification is needed please contact Marine Directorate Licensing Operations Team (MD-LOT) on 0300 244 5046 or email: MD.MarineLicensing@gov.scot

Flowchart showing the decision-making process

Please refer to the relevant chapter of [The Protection of Marine European Protected Species from injury and disturbance: Guidance for Scottish Inshore Waters](#)



Please complete all relevant sections of the form.

Please ensure that you answer questions fully in order to avoid delays.

The completed application should be sent to Marine Directorate Licensing Operations Team (MD-LOT) at the address below or emailed to MD.MarineLicensing@gov.scot.

If the activity relates to a renewable energy project, completed applications should be sent to Marine Scotland Licensing Operations Team (MD-LOT) at the address below or emailed to MD.MarineRenewables@gov.scot

We will not process unsigned application forms.

Please ensure that you provide appropriate information to support your application. Applicants can provide this supporting information in the form of an EPS Risk Assessment. Guidance can be found in [The Protection of Marine European Protected Species from injury and disturbance: Guidance for Scottish Inshore Waters](#). Please contact MD-LOT if you wish to discuss the level of supporting documentation required for your application. Failure to provide sufficient supporting information may delay the consultation and licensing process.

MD-LOT will aim to determine whether a licence should be issued **within 6 to 8 weeks of acceptance of a completed application**. However, please note that for large scale or complex projects, the determination period may be longer.

If you experience any problems filling in this form, please contact MD-LOT.

Please use this application form if you wish to undertake works/activities that would affect European protected species in the Scottish marine area (0 – 12nm).

Please note that European protected species are also protected in the offshore marine environment (between 12 and 200 nautical miles). Species in this area are protected under The Conservation of Offshore Marine Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

Do not use this form if your application relates to scientific, research, conservation or educational purposes. Please contact NatureScot, email licensing@nature.scot, Telephone 01463 725364 or visit the [NatureScot website](#) for a licence application for these purposes. NatureScot also issues licences for the purposes of marking animals or plants in relation to conservation or introducing them to particular areas for conserving natural habitats, and for protecting zoological or botanical collections.

Before a licence can be granted, it is essential that other relevant licences or consents have been secured for the proposed activity (eg Marine licence).

It is the responsibility of the applicant to obtain any other consents or authorisations that may be required.

Part A

Section 1 Personal details

Please provide details of the individual, company or partnership you wish to be named on the licence. The licensee is responsible for ensuring compliance with the licence and its conditions. Under the Conservation (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1994 (as amended) it is an offence to fail to comply with the terms and conditions of a licence.

Section 2 Previous applications

Please provide details of any previous relevant licences.

Part B

Section 3

Species

Please provide details of the species that will be affected by the work, the number likely to be affected and a description of how this number was determined. The number of animals must be the maximum that could be affected prior to any mitigation measures being applied. This information can be described in detail in your supporting information. You will need to provide detailed proposals (to be included in the 'supporting information') of all the mitigation work that you plan to carry out which will affect European protected species.

Location

Describe the location of the proposed works. Include a list of the latitude and longitude co-ordinates (WGS84) of the boundary points of the proposed project. WGS84 is the World Geodetic System 1984 and the reference co-ordinate system used for marine licence applications. Co-ordinates taken from GPS equipment should be set to WGS84. Coordinates taken from recent admiralty charts will be on a WGS84 compatible datum. Ordnance survey maps do not use WGS84. In a few cases, (e.g. laying of cables or pipelines) it may only be practicable to supply co-ordinates for the start and end points.

Example: For positions read from charts the format should be as in the example: 55°55.555'N 002°22.222'W (WGS84). The decimal point specifies that decimals of minutes are used and the datum is stated explicitly. If seconds are used then the format should be as in the example: 55°55'44"N 2°22'11"W (WGS84).

It is important that the correct positions, in the correct format, are included with this application, as any errors will result in the application being refused or delayed.

Section 4 Consideration of designated sites

Please provide details of any designated sites affected by your proposals. You are advised to consult NatureScot, or other appropriate regulator, if the work you propose to do affects a European site, a MPA or a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

Section 5 Activities to be licensed

Please indicate the activities you intend to undertake that would otherwise be unlawful. Provide details of the proposed commencement and completion dates of the activities. The licence start date will not be backdated, since to commence a project for which a licence has not been obtained may constitute an offence resulting in appropriate legal action.

It is the licensee's responsibility to apply for any further licences or an extension prior to the expiry of the initial licence.

Section 6 Purpose of the licence application

Please indicate the purpose of the licence application, the first of the legal tests. Please complete the relevant annex to provide justification for the licensing purpose. This is the legal basis of the application.

Section 7 Satisfactory alternatives

Please provide your consideration of why there is no satisfactory alternative. This must include all other options that have been evaluated, the alternative sites that were considered by you and why they were rejected (if no other sites were considered, you must provide the reasons why), as well as all alternative methods of carrying out the work and alternatives dates / timings.

In relation to each alternative considered, please provide an explanation of why you consider it to be satisfactory or unsatisfactory. In respect of any alternative sites please provide the location(s) and details of the alternative site(s), or your views on how the activity/proposal might have been achieved differently, and any other helpful information; e.g., pros and cons of alternative sites, or whether there is likely to be demand for all suitable sites to be used to meet an identified need. Please explain how this conclusion was reached.

Section 8 Summary of the planning / licensing position

Detail all consents and licences required for the proposed project and indicate those that you have applied for or received.

Section 9 Noise monitoring

Under the Marine Strategy Regulations (2010), there is now a requirement to monitor loud, low to mid frequency (10Hz to 10kHz) impulsive noise. This includes use of seismic airguns, other geophysical surveys (<10kHz), pile driving, explosives and certain acoustic deterrent devices. This monitoring requires completion of a form at the application stage (giving details of the proposed work) as well as completion of a 'close-out' form (giving details of the actual dates and locations where the activities occurred). The close-out form should be returned within 12 weeks of completing the 'noisy' activity or, in the case of prolonged activities such as piling for harbour construction or wind farms, at quarterly intervals or after each phase of foundation installation. These forms are available on the [Marine Noise Registry website](#).

Section 10 Scotland's National Marine Plan

Scotland's National Marine Plan has been prepared in accordance with the EU Directive 2014/89/EU, which came into force in July 2014. The Directive introduces a framework for maritime spatial planning and aims to promote the sustainable development of marine areas and the sustainable use of marine resources. It also sets out a number of minimum requirements all of which have been addressed in this plan. In doing so, and in accordance with article 5(3) of the Directive, the Marine Directorate has considered a wide range of sectoral uses and activities and have determined how these different objectives are reflected and weighted in the marine plan. Land-sea interactions have also been taken into account as part of the marine planning process. Any applicant for a marine licence should consider their proposals with reference to Scotland's National Marine Plan. A copy of Scotland's National Marine Plan can be found on the [Scottish Government website](#).

Indicate whether you have considered the project with reference to Scotland's National Marine Plan and provide details of considerations made with reference to the policies, including but not limited to General Policies 9 and 13 (GEN 9 and GEN 13), that have been considered. If you have not considered the project with reference to Scotland's National Marine Plan please provide an explanation.

Section 11 Privacy notice

This section briefly describes the Scottish Ministers responsibilities in relation to Data Protection based on the requirements of the data protection laws and the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004 and the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.

Part D

Section 12 Declaration and warning

It is important to read the declaration and warning sections before signing the application form.

Site visits and compliance checks

It is possible that the licensing authority may undertake a site visit prior to the issue of a licence. The majority of site visits will be arranged several days in advance and will be conducted in the presence of the licensee (or applicant) however there may be occasions when a site visit will be made at short notice.

Licensees should be aware that they may receive a request for a site visit by the licensing authority, or a person authorised by the licensing authority, to assess site conditions against the conditions of the licence. It is essential that if any of the agreed mitigation measures contained in the application and supporting information are changed for any reason, the licensing authority is informed as soon as possible.

The Licensing authority will monitor compliance with licences issued based on the information included in licence reports.

Where to seek further information

Further information can be obtained from Licensing Operations Team at the address below.

Marine Directorate - Licensing Operations Team
Scottish Government
375 Victoria Road
Aberdeen
AB11 9 DB

Tel: 0300 244 5046
Email: MD.MarineLicensing@gov.scot

While every effort has been made to ensure the information contained in this document is accurate, nothing in this document should be taken to replace the current legislation in force at this time. You are advised to obtain qualified legal advice in relation to your rights and responsibilities under the 1994 Regulations and other legislation.

Part A. The applicant: personal details

These questions relate to the person who will be the named licensee. The licence can be issued to an individual or a company or a partnership and the licensee will be responsible for ensuring compliance with the licence and the conditions of the licence. Under the Conservation (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1994 (as amended) it is an offence to fail to comply with any condition imposed by a licence.

1. Name of applicant

[Redacted]

Title:

Company name:

SSEN Transmission

Business title (if appropriate):

Marine Consents and Environment Manager

Address:

Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission Plc
Inverlismond House
200 Dunkeld Road
Perth
PH1 3AQ

Tel no. (inc. dialling code):

[Redacted]

Email address:

[Redacted]

2. The applicant: previous applications:

Have you previously held a wildlife licence issued in the UK? (please tick as appropriate)

Yes ☒ No ☐ (If yes, please complete below, if no, please go to Part B)

Who issued the licence?

MD-LOT

Licence number (most recent licence)

EPS-00011260 / BS-00011261

Year in which the licence was issued.

2025

What species were covered by the licence?

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

What activity was covered by the licence e.g. disturb, injure?

This licence was granted for the purpose of permitting disturbance. Use of survey equipment including ultra-short baseline positioning system (USBL)

Part B. The application

3. Species

(a) Please indicate which species is / are affected by the proposed works.

Common name(s): Harbour porpoise;
Bottlenose dolphin;
White-beaked dolphin;
Minke whale

Scientific name(s) Phocoena phocoena;
Tursiops truncatus;
Lagenorhynchus albirostris;
Balaenoptera acutorostrata

(b) How many individual animals will be affected by licensed work? This number must be the maximum number that could be affected before any mitigation measures are applied.

Harbour Porpoise: disturbance of up to 17 individuals, 0.01% of the UK portion of the North Sea population
Bottlenose dolphin: disturbance of up to 1 individuals, 0.05% of the UK portion of the Greater North Sea population,
Bottlenose dolphin: disturbance of up to 3 individuals, 1.33% of the Coastal East Scotland population,
White-beaked dolphin: disturbance of up to 3 individuals, 0.01% of the UK portion of the Celtic and Greater North Sea population
Minke Whale: disturbance of up to 2 individuals, 0.02% of the UK portion of the Celtic and Greater North Sea population

Please provide a description of how this number was calculated / estimated

To ensure a precautionary assessment of disturbance, the most recent abundance and density estimates from the SCANS surveys have been applied for all cetacean EPS confirmed in the nearshore survey area. A conservative EDR of 3 km has been adopted for non-impulsive geophysical sources, corresponding to a potential disturbance area of approximately 28.3 km². Applying SCANS densities to this area provides a worst-case estimate of the number of individuals potentially exposed during survey operations.

Please see accompanying EPS Risk Assessment for further information on above assessments.

(c) Location of proposed licensed action

Latitude and Longitude co-ordinates (WGS84) defining the extent of the project. Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

Latitude								Longitude							
		°			.		'N				°			.	'W
		°			.		'N				°			.	'W
		°			.		'N				°			.	'W
		°			.		'N				°			.	'W
		°			.		'N				°			.	'W
		°			.		'N				°			.	'W
		°			.		'N				°			.	'W
		°			.		'N				°			.	'W

- (d) Provide a brief description of the proposed activity and the methods to be used. This should make clear which equipment / activities you consider require an EPS licence and also the equipment / activities you consider do not require an EPS licence.

Detailed information should be included in your supporting information. Please provide details of the source levels and frequencies of underwater noise if relevant.

The geophysical survey campaigns are scheduled to take place between August 2026 and August 2028, with an estimated 60 days of survey operations, and a further four weeks for borehole operations within this period. These surveys within Scottish waters will cover an approximate survey length of 145 km, where 28 km falls within the nearshore area.

The proposed nearshore survey activities may include the use of MBES, SSS, MAG, SBP, USBL, Borehole, Diver and ROV. Only the high frequency SBP systems proposed for the works, including CHIRP and parametric SBPs, the USBL and borehole operations have the potential to injure or disturb marine mammals; however, injury is assessed as negligible considering the distance and volume would need to the sound sources which is considered highly unlikely. While the surveys may generate temporary and localised underwater noise, any disturbance to EPS is expected to be minor and short-lived. A small proportion of individuals within the local population may experience behavioural responses; however, these effects will not result in population-level impacts. To ensure compliance with the Habitats Regulations, an EPS Licence for disturbance is being sought.

Please see accompanying EPS Risk Assessment for further information on activities and sound source levels.

- (e) Briefly state how you will minimise the impact of your proposed work on European protected species.

Detailed information should be included in your supporting information.

The mitigation strategy only applies to SBP operations. Other proposed geophysical sources are assessed as having negligible risk of injury to EPS and therefore do not require mitigation.

Measures are based on JNCC (2017) guidelines and include marine mammal observers, a 30-min pre-survey search of a 500m mitigation zone, soft-start procedure and operational controls (e.g., power down/shut down equipment during line turns, vessels will maintain a survey speed of approximately 4 kts, adherence to SMWWC (2017)).

Please see accompanying EPS Risk Assessment for further information on mitigation measures to minimise the impact of the proposed geophysical survey.

4. Consideration of designated sites

Designated Areas: National Nature Reserves (NNR), Sites of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Protection Area (SPA), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Ramsar sites, Marine Protected Areas (MPA). Information on designated sites is available on [NatureScot's website](#).

- (a) Will any part of the proposed activity fall within /or adjacent to an area covered by a designated site eg SSSI, SAC, MPA? Yes ☒ No ☐
- (b) Please give the name of the designated site(s) and either the outcome of your consultations or the reason why you have not consulted (see note 4). Please enclose any relevant correspondence.

The Southern Trench MPA falls within the 3 km screening distance and has been considered for impacts within this assessment in relation to minke whale. The proposed survey activities will only minimally overlap with the Southern Trench MPA, with the maximum potential disturbance area representing just 1.12% of the MPA and only for a short duration, likely only a few days out of the wider survey campaign. Any disturbance would cease once operations move more than 3 km beyond the MPA boundary, and effects are expected to be temporary and recoverable for minke whales. Mitigation measures for SBP, USBL and borehole operations will also be applied within the MPA, further reducing potential disturbance impacts.

Overall, the proposed survey activities are not expected to damage or adversely affect the protected features of the Southern Trench MPA, nor will they prevent the site from meeting its conservation objectives. For further details please see accompanying EPS Risk Assessment.

5. Activities to be licensed

Proposed methods

(a) Please complete all relevant columns in the table below to indicate the methods you propose to use, the activity involved and the time period in which you propose to use each method. This information will be used when preparing the licence to cover activities that would otherwise be unlawful, and failure to give full details may result in an inappropriate licence being issued.

Activity to be licensed (please tick)					Time period	
Capture	Kill (exceptional circumstances only)	Injure	Transport	Disturb/ Harass	Method to be used, (e.g. piling)	From To
☐	☐	☐	☐	☒	SBP	August 2026 August 2028
☐	☐	☐	☐	☒	USBL	August 2026 August 2028
☐	☐	☐	☐	☒	Percussive Borehole	August 2026 August 2028
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		

6. Purposes of the licence application (tick one box only)

A licence can only be issued if 3 specific legal tests are met. The section below relates to the first of these tests. The options shown are taken from the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994.

Please indicate which purpose relates to the proposed works

(a) Preserving public health or public safety (we will require evidence that there is a risk to public health or public safety e.g. an imminent risk of flooding) Regulation 44(2)(e) ☐

Complete annex A

(b) 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) Regulation 44(2)(e) ☒

Complete annex B

(c) Preventing the spread of disease Regulation 44(2)(f) ☐

Complete annex C

(d) Preventing serious damage to livestock, foodstuffs for livestock, crops, vegetables, fruit, growing timber or any other form of property, or to fisheries. Regulation 44(2)(g). ☐

Complete annex D

In addition

(e) If you wish to use acoustic deterrent devices to protect fish farm sites in Scottish waters, you must also complete Annex E ☐

7. Satisfactory alternatives

This relates to the second of the legal tests which must be satisfied. Please explain why there is no satisfactory alternative to carrying out the proposed work affecting the species. You must describe all possible alternatives which were considered and why they were considered unsatisfactory. Alternatives may include but should not be limited to alternative equipment, methods, location and timing. You must also consider the option of not undertaking the work. It is not acceptable to state that 'there is no alternative'.

The British Energy Security Strategy set out the United Kingdom (UK) Government's ambition to connect up to 50 GW of offshore generation to the electricity network by 2030. This will require additional network capacity and greater power transfer capability across the Anglo-Scottish border. The Project (EGL 3) is part of this major reinforcement of the electricity transmission system, that will allow renewable power to reach consumers. The Project has been identified in the initial list of Accelerated Strategic Transmission Investment (ASTI) projects by Ofgem, the UK energy regulator.

For the proposed geophysical surveys, there are no practical alternatives that would achieve the same objectives without compromising the integrity of the project. While alternative equipment could be used, such substitutions would significantly reduce data quality and reliability, undermining the purpose of the surveys and the ability to progress the development safely and efficiently.

8. Other licences / consents

Please detail below all licences / consents you have applied for or received. Before a licence can be granted, it is essential that other relevant licences or consents have been secured for the proposed activity (eg Marine licence).

Type of licence / consent (e.g. marine licence, local planning authority, local works licence)	Date applied for	Reference no.	Date of issue of licence / consent
Marine Licence Exemption (English waters)	Pending	Pending	Pending

9. Noise monitoring

Please indicate if any of the following noise generating activities will be taking place during the operations:

Use of explosives ☐ Piling ☐ Use of Acoustic Deterrent Devices ☐
Survey equipment operating in the range 10 Hz – 10kHz ☒

If you have ticked any of the above boxes please complete a proposed activity form on the [Marine Noise Registry website](#).

Please note the form must only be completed once for each activity. If you have already completed a form for this activity (eg through the marine licensing process) please give details.

JNCC Marine Noise Registry Activity Numbers: 4046 (4050 for the English section)

EPS licence applications will not be accepted until this form has been completed and submitted.

10. Scotland's National Marine Plan

Provide details of considerations made with reference to the relevant policies that have been considered.

Please see accompanying EPS Risk Assessment for further information on above assessments to see that the proposed activity complies with policy measures in Scotland's National Marine Plan.

11. Privacy notice

The Scottish Government's Marine Directorate - Licensing Operations Team (MD-LOT) has a range of statutory responsibilities including determining applications for licences to disturb or injure marine European protected species (EPS) under the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 and The Conservation of Offshore Marine Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and Basking shark licences under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

MS-LOT will, where necessary, process personal information including: names, addresses, email addresses and telephone numbers to determine a licence application. Personal information will be stored securely in the Scottish Government's official corporate record.

A full privacy notice can be found on the [Scottish Government website](#). If you are unable to access this, or you have any queries or concerns about how your personal information will be handled, contact MS-LOT at: Marine Scotland - Licensing Operations Team, Marine Laboratory, 375 Victoria Road, Aberdeen, AB11 9DB. Email: MD.MarineLicensing@gov.scot

Have you remembered to enclose supporting information with your application, as described in the accompanying guidance? Please check

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| Completed application form | ☐ |
| Completed annex | ☐ |
| Map or chart | ☐ |
| Correct co-ordinates | ☐ |
| EPS risk assessment or supporting information | ☐ |

Part C. Declarations

12. I have read and understand the guidance provided in this application form. I declare that the particulars given are correct to the best of my knowledge and belief, and I apply for a licence in accordance with these particulars.

I authorise employees or representatives of the Scottish Ministers to enter the site which is subject to this application for the purpose of monitoring and inspecting the permitted works.

Warning

Under the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended) it is an offence to fail to comply with the conditions imposed by a licence. The licensee is responsible for ensuring compliance with the licence.

The Scottish Ministers can modify or revoke a licence at any time, provided there are good reasons. Any licence that may be issued is likely to be revoked immediately if it is discovered that false information was provided and resulted in the issue of a licence.

Under the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994, any person who in order to obtain a licence knowingly or recklessly makes a statement or representation, or furnishes a document or information which is false in a material particular, shall be guilty of an offence and may be liable to criminal prosecution. Any person found guilty of such offences is liable on summary conviction to imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months or to a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale (currently £5,000), or to both imprisonment and a fine.

Note: Previous convictions for wildlife offences will be taken into account and in some cases may mean that the Scottish Ministers do not consider it appropriate to grant a licence.

Signature of the
Applicant

[Redacted]

Date 10/04/2026

(The person named at part 1)

Name in block letters

[Redacted]

Note – If signing on behalf of a company, please append your signature with “on behalf of company name”.

The completed application should be signed and sent to Marine Directorate Licensing Operations Team (MD-LOT) at the address below or emailed to MD.MarineLicensing@gov.scot or MD.MarineRenewables@gov.scot

Please remember to include all supporting information.

Marine Directorate - Licensing Operations Team
Scottish Government
375 Victoria Road
Aberdeen
AB11 9DB

Disclaimer

While every effort has been made to ensure the information contained in this document is accurate, nothing in this document should be taken to replace the current legislation in force at this time. You are advised to obtain qualified legal advice in relation to your rights and responsibilities under the 1994 Regulations and other legislation.

Annex A

Only to be completed if you selected preserving public health or public safety in question 6 of the application form

Please complete all questions

Give details of the risk to public health or safety

How has the risk been identified? Please give details of any expert advice received.

How will the proposed activity address the identified risk?

Annex B

Only to be completed if you selected for imperative reasons of overriding public interest (including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment) in question 6 of the application form

Please complete all questions

What benefits will be provided by the proposed activity? Give details and indicate if they are social, economic or environmental. Please indicate if the benefits are short or long term.

The proposed geophysical survey will deliver significant long-term environmental, economic, and social benefits. The geophysical surveys are required to further investigate the seabed conditions within the Survey Area in order to inform design development and associated environmental assessment. Environmentally, the transmission of renewable energy will contribute to national and international targets to significantly reduce carbon emissions.

Economically, the project underpins major infrastructure investment, creates jobs, and facilitates affordable, secure energy supply.

Socially, it strengthens energy security and contributes to climate resilience, benefiting communities across the UK. While short-term benefits include employment during survey and construction phases, the primary advantages are long-term, delivering substantial environmental gains and supporting national and international climate commitments.

What public interest will be served? Who will benefit from the proposed activity? Does the proposed activity address a need?

The proposed activity serves a clear public interest by enabling the development of critical energy infrastructure that supports the UK's transition to net zero. It addresses an urgent national need to increase transmission capacity for renewable electricity, particularly offshore wind, from Scotland to areas of high demand in England. This will benefit the public by improving energy security, reducing carbon emissions, and supporting affordable, sustainable energy supply.

Wider beneficiaries include households, businesses, and communities across the UK, as well as the offshore wind industry and the economy through job creation and investment. By facilitating progress on legally binding climate targets, the activity delivers long-term environmental and social gains of national and international significance.

Why is it imperative the proposed activity goes ahead?

Without these surveys, the project cannot progress through consenting and design stages, delaying or preventing delivery of essential infrastructure that supports legally binding net-zero targets, energy security, and climate resilience.

The primary objective of the geophysical survey is to collect detailed seabed data to inform the optimal placement of the cable route. This includes determining water depths, mapping seabed morphology, identifying natural features such as pockmarks and anchor scars, and assessing shallow geological conditions. The survey will also locate potential hazards, including man-made objects and unexploded ordnance (UXO), which could affect installation safety. In addition, the survey will provide seabed characterisation data to guide the selection of geotechnical and environmental sampling locations. These data will support the Environmental Baseline Survey and facilitate ground-truthing for future habitat assessments.

Does the proposed activity support any local regional or national policies? Please give details. Are you fulfilling a statutory role?

The activity fulfils a statutory role by enabling compliance with planning and environmental assessment requirements for the EGL3 interconnector project. The geophysical survey provides essential data for route planning, environmental impact assessment, and risk management, ensuring the project can proceed lawfully and safely in accordance with regulatory standards.

Annex C

Only to be completed if you selected for preventing the spread of disease in question 6 of the application form

Please complete all questions

What disease(s) is / are at risk of being spread if the proposed activity does not go ahead? Please give details of any expert advice received.

How will the proposed activity prevent the spread of disease? Please give details of any expert advice received.

Annex D

Only to be completed if you selected for preventing serious damage to livestock, foodstuffs for livestock, crops, vegetables, fruit, growing timber or any other form of property, or to fisheries in question 6 of the application form.

Please complete all questions

What serious damage has occurred or will occur if the proposed activity does not go ahead? Please give details of any expert advice received.

How will the proposed activity prevent serious damage? Please give details of any expert advice received.

Annex E

Only to be completed if you intend to operate ADDs at marine fish farm sites in Scotland Please complete a copy of this annex for each individual site included on your application Please complete all questions

Site name and ID (FS number)

Device Type 1

Device Details

Device name (and version if applicable)

Number of devices proposed

Source level of device (rms and SPLpeak)

Typical frequency content

Please give details of the proposed duty cycle (or available settings) including the system duty cycle

Duration of use of device (e.g. hours per 24 hour period)

Time of use (e.g particular time of day or time of year)

If multiple devices of this type are to be used, please give details of numbers to be deployed and locations in relation to the site.

Management of ADD Use

Please give details of the cues/triggers and the decision process to activate ADDs. These cues / triggers should be specific and measurable and should relate to predation events by seals rather than presence of seals in the area.

Give details of how ADD use is to be reviewed

Give details of criteria for deactivation or removal of ADDs (including if they appear to be ineffective)

Give details of ADD deployment plans and any relevant planning conditions relating to ADD use

Please use additional sheets if you propose to use more than one device type