



## Neart na Gaoithe

### O&M Pontoons Pre-Application Consultation Report

December 2020

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# Marine (Scotland) Act 2010: Section 24

This Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) Report has been prepared to accompany the Marine Licence Application for the installation of a pontoon at Eyemouth Harbour to Marine Scotland Licensing Operations Team (MS-LOT). This PAC Report has been written in line with the requirements of the Marine Licensing (Pre-application Consultation) (Scotland) Regulations 2013.

## 1 Proposed Licensable Marine Activity

Please describe below, or where there is insufficient space, in a document attached to this form the proposed licensable marine activity, including its location.

The Neart na Gaoithe (NnG) Offshore Wind Farm (Revised Design) received consent under Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 from the Scottish Ministers on 03 December 2018 and was granted two Marine Licences by the Scottish Ministers, for the Wind Farm and the associated Offshore Transmission Works (OfTW), on 03 December 2018. The S36 consent and Wind Farm Marine Licence were revised by issue of a variation to the S36 Consent and Marine Licence 06677/19/0 on 04 June 2019, and the OfTW Marine Licence by the issue of Marine Licence 06678/19/1 on the 05 June 2019 and subsequently by MS-00008954 on the 12 October 2020. The Project is being developed by Neart na Gaoithe Offshore Wind Limited (NnGOWL), hereafter referred to as ‘The Applicant’.

NnGOWL is seeking to apply for a Marine Licence from Marine Scotland Licensing Operations Team (MS-LOT) for the installation of a pontoon at their Operations & Maintenance (O&M) Base at Eyemouth Harbour. Once operational, NnG Offshore Wind Farm will require O&M activities throughout its life, approximately 25 years. Eyemouth Harbour has been selected as the O&M base due to its proximity to the windfarm and the suitability of the facilities offered.

The installation of the pontoon requires a PAC event under Regulation 4 of The Marine Licensing (Pre-application Consultation) (Scotland) Regulations 2013 as the pontoon over 50 m in length.

A concept design for the pontoons has been prepared, as shown in Figure 1. This is based on installing two lengths of pontoon within the Gunsreen Basin; attaching one to the quayside wall on the east and one to the seawall on the west. The design seeks to avoid any piling or underwater activity.

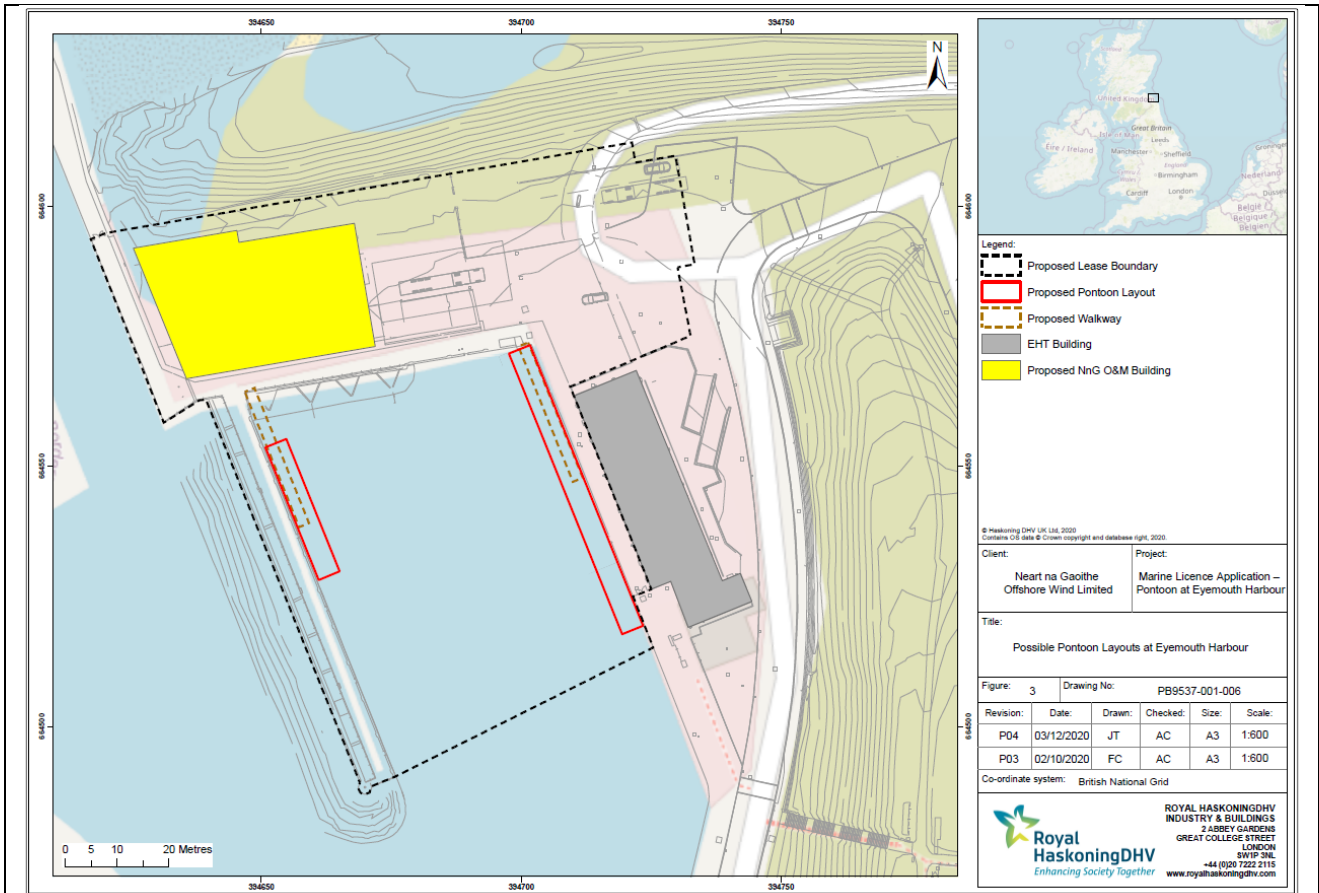


Figure 1. Concept design for the floating pontoons and the proposed onshore O&M base

The design criteria for the pontoon has been developed to cover the design, supply and installation of pontoons, linkspan, bankseat and associated restraints (mooring/fixing mechanisms) to accommodate a minimum of three vessels within Gunsgreen Basin. Design specifications are as follows:

- vessel lengths of up to 3 m x 27 m;
- a clear width of at least 1.5 m - 2.0 m without trip hazards on the pontoon deck, with a maximum width of 4.0 m;
- to ensure that berths for vessels provide safe and suitable access facilities to enable vessel loading, personnel embarkation/disembarkation, minor vessel maintenance and fuelling;
- minimising the crane reach from Smeaton Quay whilst ensuring that the rise and fall of the pontoon is not impeded;
- the capability to berth vessels and leave them unattended when not in use;
- to provide the capability to temporarily provide access for a fourth vessel (i.e. where rafting-up will occur); and
- ensuring the access for personnel is possible at all states of the tide.

Access to the pontoons will be in the form of a linkspan bridge, or brow, of sufficient length to ensure a maximum gradient of 1:4 at Lowest Astronomical Tide (LAT). There will be sufficient clearance from the linkspan/brow over the pontoon deck to prevent damage at maximum water level, including flooding, sea level rise, storm surge, waves and pontoon freeboard.

The pontoons will be fixed to the side of the existing quayside through the use of galvanised steel H-beams attached to the quayside wall and seawall concrete piles using three to four fixing plates that are 350 x 500 mm in size. The H-beams will sit approximately 150 mm off the quayside and will not reach the seabed. The H-beams will be installed during low tide, with no underwater construction activity taking place. The H-Beams will be lowered by crane into Gunsgreen Basin; for those H-Beams attached to the seawall, they will be towed across the Basin before being secured in place.

The pontoons will be delivered by truck/Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) to the harbour where they will then be lifted by crane from Smeaton Quay and lowered into Gunsreen Basin. Once placed in the water, they will be towed by tug vessel or lowered by crane into place and fixed into position by attaching them to the H-Beams. It is anticipated that installation will take place over a four-week period between June and August 2021. Visual maintenance checks will be carried out on a weekly and monthly basis.

The pontoons will be used all year round with some vessel movements being undertaken in the hours of darkness. It is estimated that for each of the crew transfer vessels (CTVs) there will be one vessel movement per day, with increased activity in the summer months when offshore conditions are more favourable for performing proactive maintenance tasks.

The pontoons will remain in operation for the lifetime of the NnG Offshore Wind Farm, which is expected to be until 2071. Once the NnG Offshore Wind Farm is due for decommissioning, supporting infrastructure, such as the floating pontoon at Eyemouth Harbour, will also need to be decommissioned. There are currently two options for decommissioning: return the site to its original condition or pass pontoon responsibilities over to EHT.

## 2 Applicant Details

<b>Title</b>	<b>Initials</b>	<b>Surname</b>
Miss	C	Gilchrist
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Is this prospective application the proposed licensee?

YES

NO

If NO, please complete Section 3 below.

### 3 Proposed Licensee Details

Not applicable.

### 4 Pre-application Online Consultation Event

Please describe below or, where there is insufficient space, in a document attached to this form the pre-application online consultation event

The PAC event was advertised in the three newspapers local to Eyemouth Harbour: East Lothian Courier, Berwickshire News and The Berwickshire Advertiser on 20 August 2020 (see Figure 2 for full newspaper advert), as well as being uploaded to Marine Scotland's website on the same date. Notice of the PAC event was also provided via email on 20 August 2020 to the full stakeholder list held by EHT which comprises of 120-150 stakeholders from the below groups and organisations:

- Local residents
- Recreational users of the harbour, mainly leisure craft owners
- Councillors
- Local volunteers from organisations such as: RNLI, Rotary, Town Council, Development Trust, Berwickshire Maritime Trust, SPLASH and Friends of Eyemouth Fort
- Local fishermen and associations such as Anglo Scottish Fishermens' Association and Fishermens' Mutual Eyemouth as well as all fishermen in the local fishing fleet
- Local businesses mainly through Eyemouth and District Chamber of Trade but also some local businesses who are based in or around the harbour, such as, Boatyard, seafood processors, accommodation providers, cafes/restaurants on the harbourside and the Gunsreen House Trust
- Local charter boat operators

This email contained the same information as Figure 2 and provided a link to the Applicant's website which contained further information that could be downloaded on the proposed marine licensable activity.



Figure 2. Newspaper advert published on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2020 into three newspapers local to Eyemouth Harbour

Alongside this newspaper publication a storyboard was also uploaded to the NnG website on 20 August 2020 to provide all stakeholders with further information. The storyboard was uploaded in a PDF downloadable format for all stakeholders to access and outlined:

- background information on the NnG offshore windfarm size;
- background information on the O&M base;
- description of the proposed marine licensable activity, i.e. the location and design of the pontoon(s);
- the Marine Licence application process and the timeframes of decisions; and
- contact details and an explanation of how the public can engage with the NnG consents team.

The PAC event was held exactly six weeks later from the newspaper and storyboard publication, on 01 October 2020. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the physical distancing guidance that has been put in place by the Scottish Government, the PAC Regulations were amended by The Marine Works and Marine Licensing (Miscellaneous Temporary Modifications) (Coronavirus) (Scotland) Regulations 2020 (“the Amending Regulations”) and became effective on 20 May 2020, meaning that the PAC event had to be held online. The platform chosen was Microsoft Teams. The Applicant held two 1 hour-long PAC events to maximise attendance; one at 13:00 and another at 19:00. Both events were approached in an identical manner by the Applicant.

At the first event, held at 13:00, 10 stakeholders from the following organisations attended:

- The Applicant
- Eyemouth Harbour Trust
- Fishermen’s Mission
- Local business owner (D. R. Collin & Son)

At the second event, held at 19:00, 12 stakeholders from the following groups attended:

- The Applicant
- Eyemouth Harbour Trust



- Eyemouth resident
- Representative for the diving, charter and angling boats
- Local Councillor
- Local business owner
- Anglian Scottish Fishermen’s Association
- Maritime Trust
- Fishing boat owner
- Local engineer

## 5 Information provided by the Prospective Applicant at the Pre-application Online Consultation Event

Please provide below or, where there is insufficient space, in a document attached to this form details of any information provided by the prospective application for a marine licence at the pre-application online consultation event

To begin the PAC events, the Applicant introduced the team before stakeholders were invited to introduce themselves; there was no obligation to do so. The Applicant then gave a five-minute presentation covering:

- background information on the NnG offshore wind farm;
- why Eyemouth harbour was chosen for the NnG O&M base;
- where the O&M activities will be based within Eyemouth harbour;
- the role of the onshore O&M facility and its separate planning application;
- proposed pontoon layout options\*:
  - two parallel pontoons fixed to the quay wall with H Beams, one on each side of the Basin. This option was highlighted as being the preferred option (for layout, see *Figure 1*);
  - one L-shaped pontoon fixed with Seaflex fastenings; and
  - one L-shaped pontoon fixed with piles.
- the marine licence application process and relevant regulations; and
- contact details to engage with the Applicant. At this stage, stakeholders were informed that they had until 8 November 2020 to raise any issues or questions that they wanted to be included within the PAC report; however, they were encouraged to contact NnG at any time.

\* At the time of the PAC Event, three different pontoon layout options were under review. Since then, a preferred design has been selected as described in Section 1 above.

All attendees were then invited to ask any questions related to the development (see Section 6 for full details). Once all questions had been answered the Applicant stated and addressed two questions which had been submitted to the Applicant prior to the PAC event (see Section 6). The PAC event was then brought to a close.

Both PAC events followed the structure explained above.

Minutes were taken during both PAC events, both of which were circulated to the attendees of each session.

## 6 Information received by the Prospective Applicant at the Pre-application online Consultation Event

Please provide below or, where there is insufficient space, in a document attached to this form of any comments and objections received by the prospective application for a marine licence at the pre-application online consultation event

### **PAC Event – 13:00**

During the first PAC event, at 13:00, a representative from a local business (D.R. Collin & Son) questioned if the Northern Irish fishing boats, who traditionally fish in the area, would be affected. EHT reassured the representative that their operations would not be affected because berths will be made available elsewhere in the harbour as historically, even at the busiest times, the harbour has never had to turn boats away. The local business also asked about dredging levels. EHT informed the stakeholders that although the harbour depth was originally dredged to 3 m below chart datum, it has not been maintained since. However, due to the size of the CTV's proposed by the Applicant, dredging will now need to be carried out regularly to maintain the depth of 3 m below chart datum, which will benefit all users.

The local business went on to ask if there would be an impairment of the services provided, such as to bunkering, the ice plant or the fuel facility. EHT explained that the fuel facility would be replaced by a new facility and moved to the other side of the harbour, whilst the O&M base would have its own fuel facility so fuel supply would never be limited. EHT went on to explain that the ice plant and bunkering would not be affected. The local business further asked how many support vessels would be based at Eyemouth harbour and what size they would be. The Applicant explained that there will be three to four CTV's which are expected to be a minimum of 27 m in length. The local business then asked about recruitment and the training of apprentices locally. The Applicant explained that jobs were being advertised locally and that there will be more jobs advertised in 2021.

A representative from the Fishermen's Mission questioned the stakeholder attendance and whether the Applicant had any plans to inform all harbour users. The representative asked if that they could distribute the PAC Event presentation more widely. The Applicant welcomed the presentation being distributed as widely as possible and committed to sending the presentation round to all stakeholders after the meeting.

### **PAC Event – 19:00**

During the second PAC event, at 19:00, a representative from the Anglian Scottish Fishermen's Association asked about the design and layout of the pontoon, questioning if it would be feasible to turn the pontoon 90 degrees so that it did not touch the quay adjacent to the harbour offices and instead to lay against the northern quay. The Applicant explained that a number of different designs and layouts had been considered and that the northern quay wall in question was very difficult to attach anything to due to the mixed age of the wall and the rock revetments present. The representative also asked why piling was being considered, and believed that anchoring would be a better solution. The Applicant welcomed the feedback, explained that an option with Seaflex fastenings was also being considered and explained that all options were still being considered. The Anglian Scottish Fishermen's Association representative then went onto ask if there would be any financial implications to Eyemouth Harbour users arising from the Applicant's operations. The Applicant explained that everything required for project use, will be provided and funded by the Applicant (i.e. fuel dispensers).

A Trustee of EHT asked about the effect of the pontoon design on the Marine Licence process and if there was any consultation carried out for this. The Applicant explained that the pontoon would be over 50 m in length, whatever the design. The Applicant further explained that the design of the pontoon was first published in the storyboard, available on the Applicant's website, six weeks prior to the PAC event; however, since then further designs, such as the parallel pontoons, have been presented. The Applicant explained that this PAC event would be a good chance to voice any opinions on the pontoon design and reassured all stakeholders that the Applicant is happy to engage in communication at any point.

A Local Councillor asked if there are any consultation events open to all and if this is the right stage for stakeholders to engage. The Applicant explained that engagement at this stage would be beneficial; however, there is also a four-week consultation period with Marine Scotland where any formal representations can be sent in. The Local Councillor further asked how the Applicant is making sure that the community is able to be a part of the consultation and if there were any other methods being employed other than newspaper publications and online events. The Applicant explained that normally the PAC event would be held in person, and that this would be the Applicant's preference; however, due to the

PAC regulations being amended by The Marine Works and Marine Licensing (Miscellaneous Temporary Modifications) (Coronavirus) (Scotland) Regulations 2020 (“the Amending Regulations”) due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all PAC events have to be held online. The Applicant went on to explain that they would send on the presentation and encouraged it to be distributed to all interested. EHT also reassured the Local Councillor that they had been trying to get around to all harbour users face-to-face (outside, where possible, wearing appropriate PPE and from a 2 m distance) to discuss the proposed plans and that if there were any individuals or groups particularly interested in finding out more about the development then EHT would be happy to arrange a meeting with them.

A fishing boat owner (a local resident) also asked about the fuelling berth that is currently available and if it would still be accessible. EHT explained that the fuel jetty will still be available; however, that it will be moved and upgraded, benefitting those who use it. The fishing boat owner also went on to ask how the pontoon would be attached. The Applicant explained that there are a couple of options; a piled solution, a Seaflex fastening method, and attaching the pontoon using H Beams. The fishing boat owner explained that the pressure on the L-shaped pontoon from the weather and CTV presence will mean it will have to be secured well and that piling would work better in the northern end of the basin. The Applicant noted the advice and explained that they would feed all information back to the engineering team.

An Eyemouth resident raised a question around job creation and who would benefit from any jobs created through the proposed O&M facility. The Applicant explained that there will be a number of new jobs created through bringing the O&M base to Eyemouth and that some technician roles, offered by Siemens, have already been advertised locally. The Applicant explained that in the following year (2021) the main phase of recruitment will begin and there will be a wide range of roles offered. The Applicant went on to further explain that there will also be opportunities for local companies to support the running of the O&M facility, such as taxi companies or small scale fabrication and catering companies.

Within both PAC events, the following questions were raised by the Applicant as they were submitted prior to the consultation event to be addressed; the stakeholder who raised these requested to remain anonymous:

1. *“Who is paying for the cost of the pontoons in the harbour basin, is this Eyemouth Harbour Trust or NnG?”*  
The Applicant explained that the pontoons will be paid for by NnGOWL.
2. *“What are NnG’s plans for the pontoons should they leave Eyemouth?”*  
The Applicant responded that discussions are still ongoing with EHT; however, it is expected that at the end of the project they will either be removed by NnG or handed over to EHT for their use.

## 7 Amendments made, or to be made, to the Application for a Marine Licence by the Prospective Applicant following their Consideration of Comments and/or Objections received at the Pre-application Online Consultation Event

Where any amendments are made, or are to be made, by the prospective applicant for a marine licence to the marine licence application as a direct result of their consideration of comments and/or objections received at the pre-application online consultation event, please provide below or, where there is insufficient space, in a document attached to this form details of such amendments

All information that was presented and discussed during the PAC event was generally well received by all stakeholders who attended, seeing it as a positive investment for Eyemouth. Whilst no formal objections were made, one stakeholder, the local engineer and fishing boat owner, commented on the L-shaped pontoon designs presented and recommended not using such design as the stakeholder deemed it less resistant to the weather extremes and to be less practical in comparison with the other design of parallel pontoons. At the time of the PAC Event, the final pontoon design was not yet confirmed. As stated above, The Applicant said they would pass the concerns on to the engineering design team.

## 8 Explanation of Approach taken by the Prospective Applicant where, following Relevant Comments and/or Objections being received by the Prospective Applicant at the Pre-application Online Consultation Event, no Relevant Amendment is made to the Application for a Marine Licence

Where, following comments and/or objections having been received by the prospective applicant for a marine licence at the pre-application online consultation event, no relevant amendment is made to the application for a marine licence by the prospective application, then please provide below or, where there is insufficient space, in a document attached to this form an explanation of the approach taken

All information presented and discussed during both PAC events was generally well received by all stakeholders in attendance and no objections were made. One fishing boat owner did raise a concern over one of the potential designs which was presented by the Applicant, stating that the piled L-shaped design would only be stable enough to withstand weather conditions if it was fixed onto the northern side of the basin. The Applicant welcomed this feedback and said they would pass on the information to their design engineers. Because at the time of the PAC event the final design of the pontoon had not been confirmed, no amendments to the Marine Licence application were required.

## 9 CERTIFICATION

Insert Name	Claire Gilchrist
Insert Address	Neart na Gaoithe Offshore Wind Limited
	Atria One, Level Six, 144 Morrison Street
Town	Edinburgh
County	Midlothian
Postcode	EH3 8EX

I certify that I have complied with the legislative requirements relating to pre-application consultation and that the pre-application consultation has been undertaken in accordance with the statutory requirements.

[Redacted]

Signature

Date 07 December 2020