



15. Scoping Conclusions

15.1. Summary of Scoping

Tables 15-1 and 15-2 provide a summary of the impacts of the Project that have been scoped 'in' to the MEA and those impacts it is proposed to scope out of the assessment, for physical and biological receptors and socio-economic receptors respectively.

For certain receptors, the scoping assessment of impacts has been divided by several sensitive receptors. For example, intertidal and subtidal benthic ecology considers intertidal habitats, subtidal broadscale habitats and subtidal Annex I habitats. The scoping conclusion for each sensitive receptor may differ. The tables below identify for each impact where at least one of the receptors has been Scoped IN to the MEA.

Table 15-1 : Summary of the Impacts to be Included with the MEA – Physical and Biological Receptors

C – Construction, O&M – Operations and Maintenance, D - Decommissioning

Potential Impact	Physical Environment			Intertidal and Subtidal Benthic Ecology			Fish and Shellfish			Intertidal and Marine Ornithology			Marine Mammals and Marine Reptiles		
	C	O&M	D	C	O&M	D	C	O&M	D	C	O&M	D	C	O&M	D
Temporary habitat loss/seabed disturbance Disturbance of intertidal and subtidal seabed morphology <i>(Abrasion / disturbance of the substrate on the surface of the seabed Penetration and/or disturbance of the substratum below the surface of the seabed, including abrasion)</i>	IN	OUT	OUT	IN	IN	IN	IN	IN	IN	-	-	-	-	-	-
Permanent habitat loss <i>(Physical change (to another seabed type or sediment type) Water flow (tidal current) changes including sediment transport considerations)</i>	IN	OUT	OUT	IN	IN	OUT	IN	IN	OUT	-	-	-	-	-	-
Temporary increase and deposition of suspended sediments <i>(Changes in suspended solids (water clarity) Smothering and siltation rate changes Hydrocarbon & PAH contamination)</i>	IN	OUT	OUT	IN	IN	IN	IN	OUT	IN	OUT	OUT	OUT	-	-	-
Underwater noise changes	-	-	-	OUT	OUT	OUT	OUT	OUT	OUT	-	-	-	OUT	OUT	OUT
Introduction or spread of marine invasive non-native species (MINNS)	-	-	-	OUT	OUT	OUT	OUT	OUT	OUT	-	-	-	-	-	-
Changes in distribution of prey species	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	IN	IN	OUT	IN	IN	IN
Electromagnetic changes /Barrier to species movement	-	-	-	-	OUT	-	-	IN	-	-	-	-	-	OUT	-
Visual / physical disturbance or displacement	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	IN	IN	IN	OUT	OUT	OUT
Temperature increase	OUT	OUT	OUT	-	OUT	-	-	OUT	-	-	-	-	-	OUT	-
Collision Risk	-	-	-	-	-	-	OUT	OUT	OUT	-	-	-	OUT	OUT	OUT
Accidental spills	OUT	OUT	OUT	OUT	OUT	OUT	-	-	-	OUT	OUT	OUT	OUT	OUT	OUT



Potential Impact	Physical Environment			Intertidal and Subtidal Benthic Ecology			Fish and Shellfish			Intertidal and Marine Ornithology			Marine Mammals and Marine Reptiles		
	C	O&M	D	C	O&M	D	C	O&M	D	C	O&M	D	C	O&M	D
<i>(Hydrocarbon & PAH contamination)</i>															
Modifications to tidal and wave regimes and associated impacts to morphological features	OUT	OUT	OUT	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Release of contaminated sediments	OUT	OUT	OUT	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table 15-2: Summary of the Impacts to be Included with the MEA – Socio-Economic Receptors

C – Construction, O&M – Operations and Maintenance, D - Decommissioning

Potential Impact	Commercial Fisheries			Shipping & Navigation			Other Marine Users			Marine Archaeology		
	C	O&M	D	C	O&M	D	C	O&M	D	C	O&M	D
Temporary restricted access to fishing ground (including required static gear clearance)	IN	IN	IN	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Temporary displacement of fishing activity into other areas	IN	IN	IN	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Loss of grounds	-	IN	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Changes in distribution of target species	IN	IN	IN	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Temporary increase and deposition of suspended sediments <i>(Changes in suspended solids (water clarity) Smothering and siltation rate changes Hydrocarbon & PAH contamination)</i>	IN	OUT	OUT	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Interaction with other seabed infrastructure	-	-	-	-	-	-	OUT	OUT	OUT	-	-	-
Occupancy of seabed – Below seabed	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	IN	-	-	-	-
Occupancy of seabed – on seabed	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	IN	-	-	-	-
Direct impacts to marine archaeology assets, resulting in damage and/or loss	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	IN	IN	IN
Indirect impacts to marine archaeology assets, resulting in damage, loss, relocation and/or destabilisation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	IN	IN	IN
Vessel collisions	IN	IN	IN	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impact on human safety due to Reduced visibility	IN	IN	IN	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Anchor strike/drag	IN	IN	IN	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-



Potential Impact	Commercial Fisheries			Shipping & Navigation			Other Marine Users			Marine Archaeology		
	C	O&M	D	C	O&M	D	C	O&M	D	C	O&M	D
Fishing gear snagging	IN	IN	IN	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Displacement of vessels Due to project vessels blocking navigation features. Disturbance to existing shipping patterns	IN	IN	IN	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reduction in under keep clearance	IN	IN	IN	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Interference with marine navigational equipment	OUT	IN	OUT	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

15.2. Marine Environmental Appraisal Structure

The structure of the Marine Environmental Appraisal (MEAp), which will describe the findings and conclusions of the marine environmental assessment (MEA) and will enable robust and consistent consideration of the significant of effects, including cumulative impacts. The technical chapters will be informed by the Non-Statutory Scoping Opinions that will be provided by the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) and Marine Directorate - Licensing Operations Team (MD-LOT) in response to this Scoping Report. Technical supporting information will be provided as appendices to the main MEAp. A non-technical summary will accompany the MEAp.

The MEAp will likely be structured as follows:

- Non-Technical Summary
- Introduction
- The Need for the Development and Project Alternatives
- Project Description
- Assessment Scope and Methodology
- Designated Sites
- Marine Physical Processes
- Intertidal and Subtidal Benthic Ecology
- Fish and Shellfish
- Intertidal and Offshore Ornithology
- Marine Mammals and Marine Reptiles
- Shipping & Navigation
- Commercial Fisheries
- Other Marine Users
- Marine Archaeology
- Cumulative Effects Assessment
- Schedule of Mitigation
- Conclusions
- Technical Appendices
 - Compliance with Marine Plan(s)
 - Water Framework Directive Screening
 - Shadow Habitats Regulations Assessment (Screening and if necessary, Report to Inform Appropriate Assessment)
 - Shadow Marine Conservation Zone Assessment (Screening and if necessary, Stage 1 Assessment)
 - Navigation Risk Assessment
 - Marine Archaeology Technical Assessment



Each technical topic chapter will likely be structured as follows:

- Study Area Definition
- Data Sources
- Consultation
- English Assessment
 - Description of the Existing and Likely Evolving Baseline
 - Relevant Embedded Mitigation
 - Significance Assessment
 - Project Specific Mitigation
 - Residual Effect
- Scottish Assessment
 - Description of the Existing and Likely Evolving Baseline
 - Relevant Embedded Mitigation
 - Significance Assessment
 - Project Specific Mitigation
 - Residual Effect

15.3. Next Steps and Scoping Questions

The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) and Marine Directorate - Licensing Operations Team (MD-LOT) (as the Regulatory Authorities) will request statutory stakeholders provide an opinion on the Marine Environmental Appraisal Non-Statutory Scoping Report. These opinions will be collated into one Scoping Opinion from England and one Scoping Opinion for Scotland, which will be returned to the Applicants. Concurrently, the Applicants will also seek opinions on the Marine Environmental Appraisal Non-Statutory Scoping Report from other non-statutory stakeholders to ensure a robust assessment process.

The following questions are designed to assist stakeholders in providing feedback to the Applicant on the Marine Environmental Appraisal Non-Statutory Scoping Report:

- Do you agree with the combined approach of including both the English and Scottish Study Areas within one Marine Environmental Appraisal?
- Do you agree that the data sources and assessment approach identified is sufficient to characterise the baseline for the non-statutory marine environmental assessment?
- Are there any other data sources, surveys or additional studies, which you think the Project Team should have regard to in the preparation of the marine environmental assessment?
- Is there any additional guidance and policy that the Project Team should have regard to in the preparation of the marine environmental assessment?
- Do you agree with the impact pathways identified, and are there any other impact pathways that you think the Project Team should consider in the preparation of the marine environmental assessment?
- Do you agree with how impact pathways have been scoped in and out?
- Do you agree that the design and preliminary mitigation measures described provide a suitable means for managing and mitigating the relevant potential impacts?
- Are there any relevant stakeholders that you think the Project Team have missed?
- Do you have any other comments?



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