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Date: 20 December 2024

Dear Kirsty,

Please consider the information provided below as an addendum to the Scoping Opinion adopted by the Scottish Ministers on 29 April 2024 (“the Scoping Opinion”) in relation to the Stromar Offshore Wind Farm (“the Proposed Development”).

1. Background

- 1.1. On 10 January 2024, Scottish Ministers received a Scoping Report (“the Scoping Report”) from Stromar Offshore Windfarm Limited (“the Developer”), submitted as part of a request for a scoping opinion in relation to the Proposed Development.
- 1.2. Following the adoption of the Scoping Opinion on 29 April 2024, Marine Directorate – Licensing Operations Team (“MD-LOT”) on behalf of Scottish Ministers identified that while the local authority for the proposed cable landfall site and the two neighbouring local authorities were consulted on the Scoping Report, the Highland Council and Orkney Islands Council were not. Given the geographical location of the proposed wind farm array, MD-LOT recognises that these local authorities should also have been included in the consultation process.
- 1.3. In light of the omission of the Highland Council and Orkney Islands Council from the original consultation, MD-LOT facilitated a second consultation 15 October 2024 to provide the Highland Council and Orkney Islands Council an opportunity to comment on the Scoping Report.
- 1.4. A response was received from Orkney Islands Council on 8 November 2024. The Highland Council was unable to provide a detailed response but submitted brief comments on the Seascape, Landscape, and Visual Impact Assessment (“SLVIA”) on 5 December 2024.
- 1.5. These comments have been incorporated into this addendum, and should be read in conjunction with the Scoping Opinion, available at <https://marine.gov.scot/node/25115>, to inform the content of the Environmental Impact Assessment (“EIA”) Report.

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1.6. Unless explicitly stated otherwise in this addendum, the advice provided in the Scoping Opinion remains valid.

2. Fish and Shellfish Ecology

2.1. Section 5.5 of the Scoping Opinion, regarding Fish and Shellfish Ecology, remains valid.

2.2. With regards to the Cumulative Impacts Assessment for fish and shellfish ecology, the Scottish Ministers highlight the additional tidal/wave sites north of Burray and east of Deerness noted by Orkney Islands Council and advise that these should be included in the assessment.

3. Commercial Fisheries

3.1. Section 5.8 of the Scoping Opinion, regarding Commercial Fisheries, remains valid.

3.2. Additionally, the Scottish Ministers draw attention to the representation made by Orkney Islands Council to ensure that the following impacts are fully assessed:

- displacement, including related impacts on the wider marine environment, on fish stocks and the use of fuel by fishing vessels; and
- the economic and cultural importance of fishing on fragile island communities.

3.3. The Scottish Ministers further recommend the Developer engages with Orkney Fisheries Association and the Orkney Regional Inshore Fisheries Group in line with the representation from Orkney Islands Council.

4. Shipping and Navigation

4.1. Section 5.9 of the Scoping Opinion, regarding Shipping and Navigation, remains valid.

4.2. Additionally, the Scottish Ministers highlight the comments made by Orkney Islands Council with regards to impacts on the operation of Orkney Harbour Areas being assessed within the EIA. The assessment should also include potential impacts on lifeline ferry services, particularly during construction activities such as wind turbine deployment and cable laying operations. The Scottish Ministers advise that Northlink Ferries and Pentland Ferries should be engaged with in this regard.

5. Military and Civil Aviation

5.1. Section 5.11 of the Scoping Opinion, regarding Military and Civil Aviation, remains valid.

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5.2. The Scottish Ministers wish to also draw attention to the representation made by Orkney Islands Council to ensure that any potential impacts on aviation in relation to Kirkwall airport are considered within the EIA.

6. Socio-economics, Tourism and Recreation

6.1. With regards to socio-economics, tourism and recreation, Section 5.13 of the Scoping Opinion remains valid.

6.2. Additionally, the Scottish Ministers highlight the representation made by Orkney Islands Council relating to onshore impacts and recommend that the onshore impacts from port and supply chain activity should be considered and assessed for a range of probable scenarios where port locations remain unknown. The Scottish Ministers advise that the comments made by Orkney Islands Council regarding socio-economic impacts should be considered. Furthermore the Scottish Ministers recommend that the advice from Orkney Islands Council regarding the Tourism and Recreation Study Area is considered within the EIA Report.

7. Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact

7.1. With regard to Seascape, Landscape, and Visual Impact, the Scottish Ministers advise that the comments provided in this addendum to the Scoping Opinion supersede the conclusions outlined in Section 5.12 of the Scoping Opinion.

7.2. The Scottish Ministers highlight that Orkney Islands Council and The Highland Council agree that a SLVIA should be undertaken as part of the EIA. In line with the representation made by Orkney Islands Council, the Scottish Ministers broadly agree with the viewpoints that relate to Orkney included within the Scoping Report. Additionally, the Scottish Ministers highlight the additional viewpoint, Brough of Deerness, Chapel and Settlement Scheduled Monument (SM4654), recommended in the representation made by Orkney Islands Council and advise that this should be included in the assessment.

7.3. The Scottish Ministers broadly agree with the impacts scoped in and out of the assessment as detailed in Table 17.5 of the Scoping Report. The Scottish Ministers highlight the additional receptors that have been added in the representation from Orkney Islands Council and advise that these additions should be included in the assessment.

7.4. The Scottish Ministers highlight The Highland Council view that an SLVIA should be carried out which considers impacts for coastal landscape designations, seaboard settlements and known promoted coastal recreational attractions. The Scottish Ministers advise that this should be fully considered within the EIA Report.

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8. **Wet Storage**

8.1. Orkney Islands Council provided comments on 'wet storage'. The comments made by the Scottish Ministers in Section 2.4.15 of the Scoping Opinion in regards to this topic remain valid.

9. **Habitats Regulation Appraisal (“HRA”) Screening Report**

9.1. With regards to the HRA Screening Report, in addition to the advice provided within the Scoping Opinion, the Scottish Ministers advise that the Scapa Flow Special Protection Area (“SPA”) and the North Orkney SPA must be included in the assessment, as highlighted by Orkney Islands Council.

Yours sincerely,

Rosanne Dinsdale
Marine Directorate - Licensing Operations Team