



Scottish Natural Heritage Dualchas Nàdair na h-Alba

All of nature for all of Scotland
Nàdar air fad airson Alba air fad

BY EMAIL

Yvonne Edmond
Transport Scotland
yvonne.edmond@transport.gov.scot

15 November 2016
Our ref: CEA143369
Your ref: 116298

Dear Ms Edmond,

Harbours Act (1964), Section 16 Harbour Revision Order Screening and scoping opinion for the Beatrice Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. Marine Base development at Wick Harbour

Thank you for consultation dated 21 October 2016, requesting a screening and scoping opinion for the above proposal.

1. Summary

We advise the proposal is unlikely to have significant impacts on the environment but recommend appropriate mitigation is agreed to safeguard the natural heritage interests described below. We further advise that the supporting information for this proposal is updated to reflect changes that have occurred to the development since submission of the Marine Licence application.

2. Background

We have been engaged in pre-application discussions with the applicant since February 2016. We have also provided advice to Marine Scotland on the Marine Licence application for this development and this response is attached for your information.

3. Appraisal of the impacts of the proposal and our advice

Since submission of the Marine Licence application, we note changes have occurred to the proposed development. Although the proposal will still be located within the inner harbour, it will be sited at a quayside location rather than the Telford Jetty. Therefore, we advise the supporting information for the new proposal should be updated to reflect the changes that have taken place. For our interests, we recommend this should include:

- **Impacts on protected areas:** Assessment of the likely impacts to the East Caithness Cliffs Special Protection Area (SPA) and Nature Conservation Marine Protected Area (MPA) ¹ should be updated accordingly. Based on previous information for this development, we concluded a proposal of this scale within the inner harbour was unlikely to have a significant effect on the qualifying interests of the SPA or the protected features of the MPA. Please see our attached response to Marine Scotland for further information.

¹ Further information on these sites are available from SiteLink at: <http://www.snh.gov.uk/publications-data-and-research/snhi-information-service/sitelink/>

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- **Impacts on protected species:** Assessment of the likely impacts to European Protected Species (EPS) and other protected species should also be updated to reflect changes to the proposed development. Previous information included ‘soft-start’ mitigation for piling works to reduce impacts to cetaceans (EPS) and other marine mammals. We assume this would still be the case for the new proposal but advise this is clarified within any future application. We also recommend pre-construction checks are carried out for protected species (e.g. breeding birds, otter etc.) to ensure no offence is committed. Our website includes further information and advice in relation to protected species².

Please note our comments are given ‘without prejudice’ to a full and detailed consideration of the impacts of the proposal if submitted as a formal application.

Please let me know if you need any further information or advice from us in relation to this proposal.

Yours sincerely

Siân Haddon

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Northern Isles and North Highland
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Attached documents:

- SNH response to Marine Licence Application 05971, 28 July 2016 (104.59KB)

² Available from: <http://www.snh.gov.uk/planning-and-development/advice-for-planners-and-developers/protected-animals/>