

RE: Offshore Energy SEA 3 Consultation - Historic England Response

Thank you for consulting Historic England on the OFFSHORE ENERGY STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (OESEA3) ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT: Future Leasing/Licensing for Offshore Renewable Energy, Offshore Oil & Gas, Hydrocarbon Gas and Carbon Dioxide Storage and Associated Infrastructure (March 2016)

Historic England is the Government's statutory adviser on all matters relating to the historic environment in England. We are a non-departmental public body established under the National Heritage Act 1983 and sponsored by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). We champion and protect England's historic places, providing expert advice to local planning authorities, developers, owners and communities to help ensure our historic environment is properly understood, enjoyed and cared for.

An important matter to identify in this SEA Environmental Report, in reference to previous SEA exercises, is how this report now directs attention to Development Consent Orders (DCO), as granted for nationally significant offshore wind farm developments. In particular, the provision made within DCOs for conditions to deliver archaeological mitigation (e.g. paragraph 4.4.9, 4.5.12 and footnote on page 476). It is therefore helpful to see reference in the SEA to National Policy Statements (e.g. EN-3) that captures the concept that subject to satisfactory conclusion of archaeological mitigation it is possible to identify a positive impact (i.e. knowledge gain) from seabed energy infrastructure developments. However, effective delivery post-consent and realisation of DCO conditions directed at cultural heritage is essential.

As an overall comment, Historic England found the report to be well written and clearly structured and set out.

Historic England also has some specific comments to make on particular sections of the environmental report, and these are set out below.



PDF page counter	Section/Paragraph/bullet point	Comments
23	Overview of main sources.../third bullet point	Amend to: "Physical damage to submerged heritage/archaeological contexts from infrastructure construction, vessel/rig anchoring etc. and how the setting of any coastal historic environmental assets might be affected and loss of access."
95	Table 3.1/Landscape-Seascape	While reference is made to "character of the landscape/seascape", particular attention is given to the visual resource. It is important to add that the approach adopted through the Historic Seascape Characterisation programme is to identify a perception of historic character and therefore it is through any subsequent SEA exercise to determine objectively how the identified character, spatially defined, might change independently of whether it is "visible" or not
220	4.5.3.3/fourth paragraph	Amend to historic perception of character rather than "local perceptions"
220	4.5.33/fifth paragraph	Reference to add to bibliography: Firth, A. (2013) <i>Historic Environment Guidance for Wave and Tidal Energy</i> . Published by Fjordr Ltd on behalf of English Heritage, Historic Scotland and Cadw.
334	5.8.2.5	The text mentions "Value is also locally variable, with stakeholders having differing views on what may be valued", however, inclusion of how historic seascape might be perceived should also be mentioned.
354	Regional Sea 6	Mention is made of Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site and associated sensitivity in reference to energy infrastructure developments as could occur in the adjacent marine area - the inclusion of such detail is welcomed

Shane Gould BA MSocSci MSc MCIfA
Senior National Infrastructure Adviser
Planning Advice and Reform
Government Advice Team
Historic England
1 Waterhouse Square
138-142 Holborn
London EC1N 2ST

Direct Dial: 020 7973 3841
Email: shane.gould@HistoricEngland.org.uk

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Historic England, The Engine House, Fire Fly Avenue, Swindon SN2 2EH
Telephone 01793 44 5050 Facsimile 01793 41 4707
HistoricEngland.org.uk



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