

# HABITAT COMPENSATORY MEASURES CONSULTATION

## Frequently asked questions

Date 23 January 2024  
Revision 2

This FAQ has been published in support of our consultation on proposed habitat compensatory measures for lesser black-backed gulls in East Suffolk. More information about the proposals can be found on our website: [www.fiveestuaries.co.uk/stage-3-consultation](http://www.fiveestuaries.co.uk/stage-3-consultation)

If you have any further questions about the Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm project or the proposals for habitat compensatory measures, please contact us using the details at the end of this document.

### **[ADDED 23/01/24] ARE YOU AWARE THAT THE PROPOSED ACCESS FROM THE NORTH OF ORFORD NESS IS UNSUITABLE FOR VEHICULAR ACCESS?**

Following surveys undertaken since the launch of the consultation and following feedback from local elected representatives and community members, we have improved our understanding of the site. We agree that the route north from Orford Ness is unlikely to be suitable for access and will be removing it as we develop the design further. Access to site(s) on Orford Ness would be carried out by boat.

### **WHY ARE YOU PROPOSING HABITAT IMPROVEMENTS IN SUFFOLK WHEN THE PROJECT'S IMPACTS ARE OFFSHORE AND IN ESSEX?**

The environmental assessment has indicated that Lesser Black-Backed Gulls from the Alde Ore Special Protection Area could be impacted by the Project. Although the proposed wind farm will connect to the national electricity transmission network via landfall and an onshore cable connection in Essex, the turbines themselves are closer to the coast of Suffolk than Essex.

### **LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULLS AREN'T A SPECIES WE WANT TO SEE MORE OF / THEY'RE NOT A CRITICALLY THREATENED SPECIES NATIONALLY, THIS SEEMS DISPROPORTIONATE.**

The Project is required to comply with the Habitats Regulations. The potential impact has been identified as part of our required assessment and the compensation proposals developed in discussion with Natural England. Any comments received during the consultation will be

included in our Consultation Report, and these proposals will be considered along with the whole Project as part of the Examination process.

#### **WILL WE BE ABLE TO SEE THE FENCING?**

Due to the geography of the area and the limited size of the fencing, visibility from Orford itself is limited/impossible. Fencing would be visible closer to the sites.

#### **HOW TALL WILL THE FENCING BE?**

The fencing will be approximately 2m high.

#### **ARE THERE ANY MORE ATTRACTIVE OPTIONS TO PROTECT THE SITE THAN FENCING?**

Fencing provides the best option for keeping predators out of the site. Any more significant barrier could pose a flood risk to the site and surrounding areas as it would potentially collect debris.

#### **DO THE MEASURES ACTUALLY WORK?**

Evidence indicates that this can be an effective method of habitat improvement and that improvement, when carried out in the right location, is effective at encouraging an increase in breeding pairs. We will continue to monitor the site throughout its operation to evaluate if breeding pairs are increasing.

#### **WILL INCREASING LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULLS IMPACT ON OTHER SPECIES?**

The measures being proposed will be monitored and adaptive management will be implemented to help ensure the Special Protection Area site and the relevant species are maintained.

#### **WILL THIS CUT OFF EXISTING PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE SITES?**

No. Existing public rights of way will be preserved.

#### **WHY DO THE PLANS SHOW THE RED LINE BOUNDARY EXTENDING SIGNIFICANTLY FAR AWAY FROM THE SITES THEMSELVES?**

Those are the potential access routes to the site to carry out construction.

#### **WILL THIS AFFECT THE OPERATION OF BOATS FROM THE JETTY, QUAYSIDE OR SLIPWAY AT ORFORD?**

No. Construction work to install the fencing and related measures would only take a small number of weeks. We will develop a more detailed construction plan as we develop the plans further, this will include how to access the sites without affecting existing operations.

#### **ARE YOU AWARE OF THE HISTORY OF THE SITE AND/OR RISK OF UNEXPLODED ORDINANCE?**

Yes. We have been liaising with Natural England and the National Trust about the area and sites. We are starting our surveying process and will ensure that the site(s) are fully understood before any work is carried out.

### WHAT KIND OF CONSULTATION IS THIS?

We are carrying out consultation on the sites under section 42 of the Planning Act 2008 (the Act). This is a statutory requirement for including the sites in our application for a Development Consent Order. We are consulting with the community as the measures may be of interest and we would like feedback on them, however, as we expect the proposals to have no significant adverse impact, it would be disproportionate to carry out full statutory consultation with the community under section 47 of the Act.

### WHY ARE YOU CONSULTING OVER CHRISTMAS?

We intend to submit our application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) to the Planning Inspectorate in early 2024. On this timescale, we hope to be operational and generating renewable electricity by 2030. This is in keeping with the Government's objectives of producing 50GW of electricity from offshore renewables by 2030.

The need to include these compensatory measures in our DCO application was only confirmed after our statutory consultation (14 March to 12 May 2023). In order to minimise delays to the Project and to ensure that there was time to consult and consider feedback on these proposals, we chose to start the consultation as soon as possible.

We have extended allowed for a six week consultation period outside of the two week holiday period.

### CONTACT US

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