

Good afternoon,

Thank you for the invitation to comment on the documents.

The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) licence, regulate and plan marine activities in the seas around England so that they're carried out in a sustainable way.

The MMO prepares marine plans for [marine plan areas](#), which are increasingly being used as the regional basis for marine management. To date, the [South](#) and [East](#) Marine Plans have been adopted, and we are in the process developing the [North West](#), [North East](#), [South East](#) and [South West](#) Marine Plans (the remaining marine plans).

In preparing the marine plans we take account of other plans, and during the process we have high levels of engagement and join up with both coastal local authorities and the terrestrial planning system.

The remaining marine plans were subject to public consultation between 14 January and 20 April this year, and at that point became a material consideration in decision-making. The remaining marine plans will be submitted to the Secretary of State later this year, with an intention to adopt them in early 2021.

The MMO welcomes the aims of the project and we support a more coordinated and planned approach to grid connection and offshore transmission planning going forward.

Through the public consultation on the remaining marine plans we have found that our stakeholders generally support a more coordinated approach to grid planning, and we have made note of this in the supporting text of the final versions of the remaining marine plans. Coordination and Co-existence with subsea cable assets is an identified issue in marine planning that the MMO would welcome a resolution to.

We note with interest the findings of the Holistic Approach to Offshore Transmission Planning Report, particularly the six regional offshore wind development zones as detailed in Figure 2 of the Offshore coordination consultation document. We would be interested to discuss how marine plan areas and marine planning policy can facilitate further refinement and development of these areas into detailed designs.

The MMO also has the following comments to make on the Cost-Benefit Analysis Report:

- In the next phase of the project it would be useful to see consenting costs included in the CAPEX, and perhaps time taken to consent in a separate section of the CBA
- As possible cable routings and technology choices become clearer it would be useful to see more detailed consideration of environmental impacts, including impacts on protected sites and species
- It would be beneficial to include coexistence with other uses of the sea – such as fisheries – in the social section of the CBA.

Earlier this year the 2nd [Three-year Report on the East Marine Plan](#) recommended that the plan be amended or replaced. As and when this process starts the MMO would like to continue engaging with National Grid to understand how the recommendations from this project can be integrated into the updated East Marine Plan. This is especially relevant for the recommendations made in the Offshore Connections Review Report regarding bundling Crown Estate leases with connection offers, as this may have direct implications on marine planning policy.

Please don't hesitate to get in touch if you'd like to discuss any of the above further.

Kind regards,
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