



Morven Hawthorn Pit Grid Connection Project

Preliminary Environmental Information Report

Volume 1, Annex 4.2: Transboundary Screening

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WSP	Morven Offshore Wind Limited

Table of Contents

1	Introduction	1
1.1	Overview.....	1
1.2	Background.....	1
1.3	Legislation and guidance.....	4
2	Consultation.....	7
2.1	Scoping consultation	7
2.2	Regulation 32 Transboundary Screening and EEA State Consultation	9
3	Screening of Transboundary Impacts	11
3.1	Background.....	11
3.2	Offshore Environment.....	11
3.3	Onshore Environment.....	14
3.4	Combined Offshore and Onshore Environment	17
4	Conclusions	20
5	References.....	21

List of tables

Table 1.1: Approximate distance between the MHPGC Project and neighbouring states	2
Table 2.1: Summary of scoping responses relevant to the assessment of potential transboundary effects....	7
Table 2.2: Regulation 32 notification responses received	9

List of figures

Figure 1.1: The MHPGC Project and neighbouring EEZs	3
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Glossary

Term	Meaning
the Applicant	The legal entity making the applications for consent; Morven Offshore Wind Limited (MvOWL).
Marine Directorate Licensing Operations Team (MD-LOT)	The part of the Scottish Government's Marine Directorate responsible for assessing and administering applications for marine licences for Scottish waters and Section 36 consent (offshore) in Scotland.
Marine Management Organisation (MMO)	The MMO, as a UK government body, is responsible for licensing, regulating and overseeing activities in the marine environment for English waters. For a DCO and deemed marine licence, the MMO acts as a statutory consultee, advising on marine planning, environmental impacts, habitats and compliance with marine licensing regulations.
MHPGC Project Scoping Opinions	Separate scoping opinions received from the Planning Inspectorate (on behalf of the Secretary of State) and Marine Directorate Licensing Operations Team (MD-LOT) (on behalf of the Scottish Ministers) and the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) in response to the MHPGC Scoping Report. The MHPGC Scoping Opinions contain the range of issues that the Planning Inspectorate, and MD-LOT in consultation with statutory stakeholders, have identified should be considered within the Environmental Impact Assessment process.
MHPGC Project Scoping Report	A Scoping Report for the MHPGC Project, scoping the likely significant effects of the project on the environment, was submitted and accepted by Planning Inspectorate (PINS) and submitted to the Scottish Ministers, via the Marine Directorate – Licensing Operations Team (MD-LOT) in February 2025.
MHPGC Project Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR)	A report that provides preliminary environmental information in accordance with the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. This is information that enables consultees to understand the likely significant environmental effects of a project and which helps to inform consultation responses.
Morven Hawthorn Pit Grid Connection Project	The MHPGC Project is comprised of the offshore export cables in Scottish and English waters from the Morven North or the Morven South offshore substation platforms(s)(OSP), landfall, onshore land substation (LSS) and AC connection cables. Also referred to in this report as the MHPGC Project, for ease of reading.
Planning Inspectorate (PINS)	The PINS is an executive agency of the UK Government responsible for administering and examining DCO applications for NSIPs in England. PINS manages the application process, oversees consultation and examination, and makes a recommendation to the relevant Secretary of State on whether consent should be granted.

Acronyms

Unit	Meaning
CEA	Cumulative Effects Assessment
DCO	Development Consent Order
EEA	European Economic Area
ECC	European Economic Community
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EU	European Union
GHG	Green House Gas
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment (England) / Appraisal (Scotland)
HVAC	High Voltage Alternating Current
HVDC	High Voltage Direct Current
LSS	Land Substation
MD-LOT	Marine Directorate - Licencing Operations Team
MHPGC	Morven Hawthorn Pit Grid Connection
MMO	Marine Management Organisation
MvOWL	Morven Offshore Wind Limited
NSIP	Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project
O&M	Operation and Maintenance
OSP	Offshore Substation Platform
PEIR	Preliminary Environmental Information Report
PINS	Planning Inspectorate
RIAA	Report to Inform Appropriate Assessment
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SoS	Secretary of State
SPA	Special Protection Area
SSC	Suspended Sediment Concentrations
TJB	Transition Joint Bay
UK	United Kingdom
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UXO	Unexploded Ordnance
ZOI	Zone of Influence

Units

Unit	Meaning
£	Pounds Sterling
km	Kilometre
nm	Nautical Miles

1 Introduction

1.1 Overview

- 1.1.1.1 This annex of the Morven Hawthorn Pit Grid Connection Project (referred to hereafter as ‘the MHPGC Project’) Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) presents the screening assessment of the transboundary receptors that have the potential to be affected by impacts from the MHPGC Project during construction, operation and maintenance (O&M), and decommissioning phases, and assesses the potential of these impacts to have a significant effect on the environment of a European Economic Area (EEA) state.

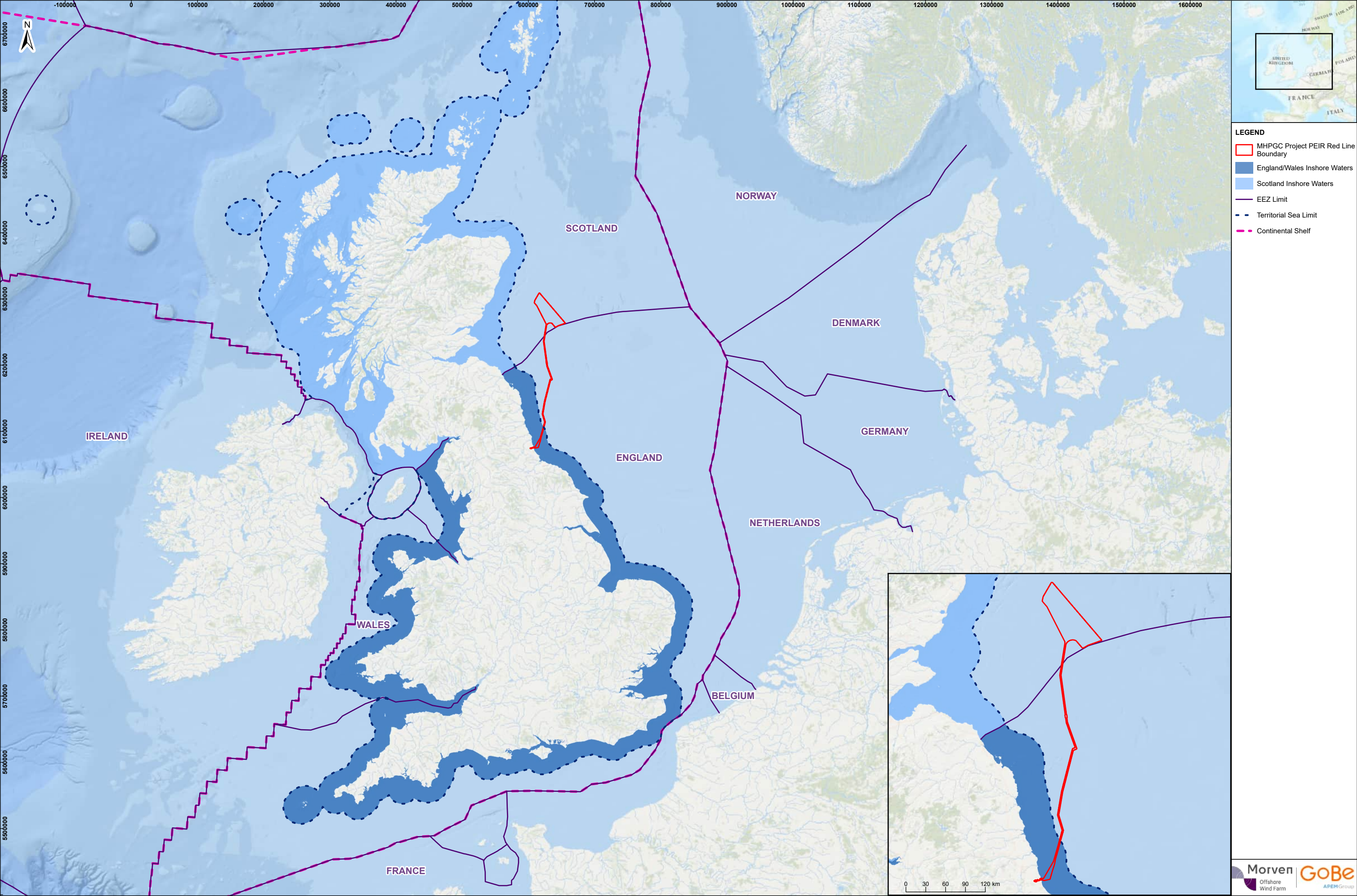
1.2 Background

- 1.2.1.1 In the United Kingdom (UK), transboundary impacts are those which may arise as the result of a project in the UK and that have the potential to significantly affect the environment of an EEA state. The MHPGC Project’s location in relation to the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) of EEA states and the UK is shown in **Figure 1.1**.
- 1.2.1.2 As part of the MHPGC Project Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping Report (RPS, 2025), Morven Offshore Wind Limited (MvOWL) (hereafter ‘the Applicant’) completed a transboundary screening impact assessment of potential transboundary effects arising from construction, O&M and decommissioning of the MHPGC project. Following feedback provided in the Scoping Opinions from the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) (on behalf of the Secretary of State (SoS)), and the Marine Directorate - Licencing Operations Team (MD-LOT) in March 2025 (PINS, 2025a; MD-LOT, 2025, respectively), this updated transboundary screening assessment has been provided for the MHPGC Project as part of the MHPGC Project PEIR, the results of which are set out in **Section 3**.
- 1.2.1.3 The MHPGC Project is not a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) in its own right. However, a direction was made under Section 35 of the Planning Act 2008 requiring the project to be treated as development for which development consent is required. As a result, the MHPGC Project is being progressed through the Development Consent Order (DCO) regime, and consideration of transboundary effects forms part of the environmental assessment process.
- 1.2.1.4 This annex provides an assessment for each relevant technical chapter of the PEIR, reflecting the potential transboundary implications arising from design development, and additional baseline information presented within the PEIR.
- 1.2.1.5 **Volume 1, Chapter 2: Project Description, of the PEIR** sets out a description of the MHPGC Project. In summary, the MHPGC Project comprises:
- High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) offshore export cables in Scottish offshore waters, English offshore waters, and English inshore waters connecting the offshore substation platforms (OSPs) from the Morven North Offshore Wind Array Project (hereafter ‘Morven North’) or the Morven South Offshore Wind Array Project (hereafter ‘Morven South’) to the transition joint bay (TJB) at landfall in England;
 - Onshore export cables (HVDC) in England;
 - Onshore land substation (LSS) in England;
 - High Voltage Alternating Current (HVAC) connection cables that will connect the proposed onshore LSS to the National Grid Hawthorn Pit Substation.
- 1.2.1.6 The MHPGC Project would be located within the offshore waters (i.e. beyond 12 nautical miles (nm) from the coast) of both Scotland and England, and within the 12nm inshore area and landward in England. The MHPGC Project is located entirely within the EEZ of the UK.
- 1.2.1.7 The distance between the MHPGC Project and the nearest maritime boundary of neighbouring states is set out in **Table 1.1**.

Table 1.1: Approximate distance between the MHPGC Project and neighbouring states

State	Approximate distance from the MHPGC Project (Scottish components) to nearest maritime border (km)	Approximate distance from MHPGC Project (English components) to nearest maritime border (km)
Norway	186	220
Denmark	235	259
Germany	246	263
The Netherlands	252	258
Faroe Islands (Denmark)	444	505
Belgium	546	413
France	572	437
Ireland	675	736
Iceland	881	942

- 1.2.1.8 The purpose of this transboundary screening assessment is to provide Scottish Ministers and the Secretary of State with the required information to inform the evaluation of the likelihood of transboundary impacts from the MHPGC Project having significant effects on the environment in EEA states and the potential requirement for consultation with EEA states. The proximity of the MHPGC Project to the EEZs of EEA states is illustrated in **Figure 1.1**.



1.3 Legislation and guidance

1.3.1 Legislative context

- 1.3.1.1 As described in **Volume 1, Chapter 5: Policy and Legislation, of the PEIR**, the MHPGC Project extends from Scottish offshore waters to an English landfall. Therefore, legislation relevant to both Scottish and English jurisdictions has been considered where applicable to transboundary effects.
- 1.3.1.2 The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Convention on EIA in a Transboundary Context (the 'Espoo Convention') requires assessment of transboundary impacts to promote "environmentally sound and sustainable development" and "enhance international co-operation in assessing a project's environmental impact" (UNECE, 2017).
- 1.3.1.3 When an activity occurring in one qualifying country may have a significant effect on another qualifying country, the Espoo Convention (named after the Finnish city of Espoo where it was adopted) requires that EIAs consider potential impacts across national borders.
- 1.3.1.4 The UK is also a signatory to the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision Making, and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (the Aarhus Convention) (EU, 2026a) and the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (the Kyiv Protocol) (EU, 2026b), which together promote access to environmental information and public participation in environmental decision-making).
- 1.3.1.5 European Union (EU) Directive 2011/92/EU (as amended, including by Directive 2014/52/EU) (the EIA Directive) implements both the Espoo and Aarhus Conventions in EU States. Following the UK's withdrawal from the EU, the requirements of the EIA Directive were transposed into UK domestic law through the relevant retained/assimilated EIA Regulations, namely: the Marine Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2007, Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 and the Marine Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2007, hereafter referred to as the "EIA Regulations". In relation to the English elements, the MHPGC Project is to be consented by way of a Development Consent Order under the Planning Act 2008.
- 1.3.1.6 Additionally, PINS provides guidance on the consultation process for developments which may have significant transboundary effects (PINS, 2026). Based on this guidance, developers should note that:
- PINS will notify the relevant state of the particular project where PINS determines that the project is EIA development likely to have significant effects on the environment in an EEA state; the applicant has no formal role in this screening process under regulation 32, which is carried out by PINS using its own transboundary screening templates (Annex 1 and Annex 2 to the guidance); and
 - developers should provide information on the potential for transboundary effects as part of their scoping request under regulation 8 of the EIA Regulations, and the suite of documents submitted with the consent application.
- 1.3.1.7 It is noted that this guidance on transboundary impacts has been prepared by PINS, therefore, it is not directly applicable to the elements of the MHPGC Project under Scottish consenting regimes. Nonetheless, it has been used to inform this transboundary screening assessment.
- 1.3.1.8 Specific guidance on transboundary and cross border effects for renewable energy projects was issued by Scottish Government in 2018 (Scottish Government, 2018) although noting this is now archived It states, "The EIA regulations require that if an EIA project is considered to have significant effects on the environment of another EEA state, then Scottish Ministers must engage with that EEA state to allow consultation if that state wishes to participate". This primarily relates to projects that may affect mobile species, projects located close to national boundaries, or areas administered by other relevant authorities. MD-LOT expect to see consideration of potential transboundary and cross border effects throughout the EIA from the scoping stage. This guidance has not been superseded nor has equivalent coverage in the latest guidance (Scottish Government, 2018).

1.3.2 Environmental Impact Assessment

- 1.3.2.1 Under the EIA Regulations, the relevant decision-making authority is required to determine if a proposed development is likely to have significant effects on the environment of an EEA state (a transboundary impact). For the Scottish elements of the MHPGC Project, Regulation 18(1)(a) of the Marine Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2007 states that where “it comes to the attention of the appropriate authority that a proposed project is the subject of an environmental impact assessment and is likely to have significant effects on the environment in an EEA State”, Scottish Ministers must:
- send certain project particulars (e.g. description of development, information on the possible significant effect on the environment in that state, and how a decision on the application may be taken) to the EEA state, as soon as possible and no later than the date of publication of the relevant notice in the Edinburgh Gazette;
 - publish the information in a notice placed in the Edinburgh Gazette, indicating the address where further information is available;
 - allow the EEA state a reasonable period in which to indicate whether it wishes to participate in the procedure provided for in the Regulations.
- 1.3.2.2 For the English elements of the MHPGC Project, which comprise development for which development consent is required, Regulation 32 of the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 imposes an equivalent duty on the SoS. Where development proposed to be carried out in England is the subject of an EIA application and is likely to have significant effects on the environment in an EEA state, the Secretary of State must, in the same manner:
- send the relevant project particulars to the EEA state, as soon as possible and no later than the date of publication of the relevant notice in the London Gazette;
 - publish the information in a notice placed in the London Gazette, indicating the address where further information is available;
 - allow the EEA state a reasonable period in which to indicate whether it wishes to participate in the consultation procedure provided for in the Regulations.

1.3.3 Habitats Regulations Assessment

- 1.3.3.1 Article 6(3) of the Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (the ‘Habitats Directive’) requires that an appropriate assessment be undertaken where a plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on a site designated for the conservation of habitats or species of international importance, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. These include Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs), which together form the Natura 2000 network within EU Member States and are referred to in the UK as ‘European Sites’. In UK practice, this extends to candidate SACs, potential SPAs, and Ramsar sites, which are afforded comparable protection as a matter of national policy.
- 1.3.3.2 As relevant to the MHPGC Project, the Habitats Directive has been transposed into UK law through:
- the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (Scotland – certain consents including Section 36 applications; England – terrestrial areas and marine waters within 12 nautical miles, including the NSIP consent);
 - the Conservation of Offshore Marine Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (Scotland – marine licences and Section 36 applications within the Scottish offshore region; England – offshore marine areas beyond 12 nautical miles).
- 1.3.3.3 In addition to the preliminary transboundary screening assessment, the Applicant has considered the potential transboundary impacts on European sites in EEA states separately through the HRA process. For the Scottish elements, Scottish Government’s ‘Marine environment: licensing and consenting requirements’ guidance confirms that, where a project is likely to have a significant effect on a European site under the Habitats Regulations, applications must include information to inform an appropriate assessment (Marine Directorate, 2025). This obligation is not limited to effects on sites within Scotland or the UK, and the Applicant’s HRA accordingly addresses the potential for cumulative and transboundary effects on Natura interests in EEA states. For the English elements,

PINS's Advice on Transboundary Impacts and Process states that "The Habitats Regulations and the Offshore Marine Conservation Regulations require (where applicable) competent authorities to carry out an appropriate assessment before granting consent for a plan where likely to have a significant effect on a European site or a European marine site (alone or in combination with other plans or projects)" (PINS, 2026).

2 Consultation

2.1 Scoping consultation

- 2.1.1.1 A Scoping Report for the MHPGC Project was issued to the PINS and MD-LOT in February 2025 (RPS, 2025). Following consultation with the appropriate statutory bodies, PINS (on behalf of the SoS) and MD-LOT both provided Scoping Opinions in March 2025 (PINS, 2025a; MD-LOT, 2025, respectively).
- 2.1.1.2 **Table 2.1** presents a summary of scoping responses that make specific reference to the consideration of transboundary impacts.

Table 2.1: Summary of scoping responses relevant to the assessment of potential transboundary effects

Comment	How and where considered in the PEIR
PINS	
ID 2.2.4: EIA Methodology and Scope of Assessment It is noted that the Scoping Report states that the following aspects have been screened in for further consideration in the ES: - fish and shellfish ecology; - offshore and intertidal ornithology; - marine mammals; - shipping and navigation; - commercial fisheries; - climate change. The Inspectorate recommends that the ES should identify whether the proposed development has the potential for significant transboundary effects, and if so, what these are, and which EEA States would be affected. The Inspectorate will undertake a transboundary screening on behalf of the SoS in due course.	The potential transboundary impacts of the topics screened in within the Scoping Report are considered within Section 3 of this document. For each of these topics, Section 3 of this document identifies whether the MHPGC Project has the potential for significant transboundary effects and, where relevant, the nature of those effects. Out of the six topics screened in during scoping, two have been screened out as a result of this transboundary screening. Climate Change and Fish and Shellfish Ecology have subsequently been screened out of further transboundary assessment because no pathway exists for likely significant effects on an EEA State. The rationale for screening decisions is provided in Section 3 of this annex. PINS's own transboundary screening, undertaken on behalf of the SoS under regulation 32 of the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017, and the EEA States identified for notification as a result, are discussed in Section 2.2 of this document.
ID: 3.4.9 Benthic Subtidal and Intertidal Ecology The Inspectorate is not able to agree to scope this matter out until it has undertaken its own transboundary screening.	The potential transboundary impacts related to benthic subtidal and intertidal ecology are considered within Volume 2, Chapter 3: Benthic Subtidal and Intertidal Ecology, of the PEIR, and Section 3.2.4 of this document, PINS's own transboundary screening, undertaken on behalf of the SoS under regulation 32 of the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017, and the EEA States identified for notification as a result, are discussed in Section 2.2 of this document.
ID 4.3.6: Terrestrial Ecology and Ornithology The Inspectorate is not able to agree to scope this matter out until it has undertaken its own transboundary screening.	The potential transboundary impacts related to terrestrial ecology and terrestrial and intertidal ornithology are considered within Volume 3, Chapter 3: Terrestrial Ecology and Terrestrial and Intertidal Ornithology, of the PEIR, and Section 3.3.3 of this document, PINS's own transboundary screening, undertaken on behalf of the SoS under regulation 32 of the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017, and the EEA States identified for notification as a result, are discussed in Section 2.2 of this document.

Comment	How and where considered in the PEIR
MD-LOT	
In relation to Physical Processes - The Scottish Ministers are broadly content with the proposed approach to mitigation and monitoring, cumulative impact assessment and transboundary impacts however, direct the Applicant to the NatureScot representation which must be fully addressed within the EIA Report.	The potential transboundary impacts related to physical processes are considered within Volume 2, Chapter 1: Physical Processes, of the PEIR , and Section 3.2.2 of this document.
In relation to Underwater Sound - The potential for transboundary impacts has been considered in Section 7.2.11 of the Scoping Report and the Scottish Ministers are content with this approach.	The potential transboundary impacts related to underwater sound are considered as part of the fish and shellfish ecology and marine mammal impacts, within Volume 2, Annex 5.1: Underwater Sound Technical Report, of the PEIR , and Section 3.2.5 and Section 3.2.6 of this document, respectively.
In relation to Benthic Subtidal and Intertidal Ecology - With regards to transboundary impacts, the Scottish Ministers agree that these can be scoped out from further assessment in the EIA Report.	It is confirmed in Volume 2, Chapter 3: Benthic Subtidal and Intertidal Ecology, of the PEIR , and Section 3.2.4 of this document that transboundary impacts for Benthic Subtidal and Intertidal Ecology have been screened out.
In relation to Fish and Shellfish Ecology - The potential for transboundary impacts has been considered in Section 7.5.11 of the Scoping Report and the Scottish Ministers are content with this approach.	It is confirmed in Volume 2, Chapter 4: Fish & Shellfish Ecology and Section 3.2.5 of this document that transboundary impacts for Fish and Shellfish Ecology have been screened out.
In relation to Marine Mammals - The Applicant has proposed to screen in a number of impact pathways into the EIA transboundary assessment for marine mammal receptors. The Scottish Ministers advise that there is no potential for transboundary impacts from the Proposed Works and no further consideration is required within the EIA Report. This is a view supported by the NatureScot representation.	The potential transboundary impacts related to marine mammals are considered within Volume 2, Chapter 5: Marine Mammals, of the PEIR and Section 3.2.6 of this document.
In relation to Offshore and Intertidal Ornithology - With regard to transboundary impacts presented in Section 7.7.11 of the Scoping Report, the Scottish Ministers advise that, there is no potential for transboundary impacts based on the information presented in the Scoping Report. This is a view supported by the NatureScot representation	The potential transboundary impacts related to offshore ornithology are considered within Volume 2, Chapter 6: Marine Ornithology, of the PEIR and Section 3.2.7 of this document, with potential transboundary impacts related to intertidal ornithology considered in Section 3.3.3 .
NatureScot	
We agree that transboundary impacts in relation to physical processes can be scoped out from further consideration.	It is confirmed in Volume 2, Chapter 1: Physical Processes, of the PEIR , and Section 3.2.2 of this document that transboundary impacts for Physical Processes have been screened out.
In relation to the potential for transboundary impacts, it is noted in Section 7.2.11 that consideration will be given to transboundary impacts of underwater sound on relevant receptors in the respective sections, including marine mammals and fish & shellfish ecology. We are content with this approach.	The potential transboundary impacts related to underwater sound are considered as part of the fish and shellfish ecology and marine mammal impacts, within Volume 2, Chapter 5: Marine Mammals, of the PEIR and Section 3.2.6 , and Volume 2, Chapter 4: Fish & Shellfish Ecology and Section 3.2.5 of this document, respectively.
The potential for transboundary impacts to fish and shellfish ecology is discussed in Section 7.5.11 of the EIA Scoping Report. The Applicant proposes to screen in a number of impact pathways, including underwater sound into the EIA transboundary assessment for this receptor group. We advise that there is no potential for transboundary impacts from the proposal description and information provided within the EIA Scoping Report.	The potential transboundary impacts related to fish and shellfish ecology are considered within Volume 2, Chapter 4: Fish & Shellfish Ecology and Section 3.2.5 of this document. It is confirmed that transboundary impacts for Fish and Shellfish Ecology have been screened out.

Comment	How and where considered in the PEIR
The potential for transboundary impacts to marine mammals is discussed in Section 7.6.11 of the EIA Scoping Report. The Applicant proposes to screen in a number of impact pathways, including underwater sound into the EIA transboundary assessment for this receptor group. We advise that there is no potential for transboundary impacts from the proposal description and information provided within the EIA Scoping Report.	The potential transboundary impacts related to marine mammals are considered within Volume 2, Chapter 5: Marine Mammals, of the PEIR and Section 3.2.6 of this document.
In relation to offshore ornithology - We advise that there is no potential for transboundary impacts from the proposal description and information provided within the EIA Scoping Report. Please see our scoping advice in respect of the Morven Offshore Wind Array (24 August 2024) –where we advise consideration will be required for cross border impacts for the array alone.	The potential transboundary impacts related to offshore ornithology are considered within Volume 2, Chapter 6: Marine Ornithology, of the PEIR and Section 3.2.7 of this document.

2.2 Regulation 32 Transboundary Screening and EEA State Consultation

- 2.2.1.1 Following receipt of the Scoping Report, PINS, on behalf of the SoS, undertook a transboundary screening of the MHPGC Project under regulation 32 of the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. This is separate from, and undertaken subsequent to, the transboundary issues raised through scoping consultation described above.
- 2.2.1.2 PINS's first transboundary screening was issued on 2 June 2025 (PINS, 2025b). On the basis of the information available from the Applicant, PINS concluded that the MHPGC Project is likely to have a significant effect on the environment in an EEA State. In reaching this view, PINS applied the precautionary approach, as set out in its advice page 'Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: Advice on Transboundary Impacts and Process' (PINS, 2026).
- 2.2.1.3 PINS accordingly determined that transboundary issues notification under regulation 32 was required, and identified the following States for notification:
- France and Belgium – due to potential impacts on commercial fisheries;
 - Denmark and the Netherlands – due to potential impacts on commercial fisheries and shipping and navigation; and
 - Norway and Iceland – due to potential impacts on shipping and navigation.
- 2.2.1.4 The SoS's duty under regulation 32 continues throughout the application process, and PINS has noted that the screening may be revisited as the EIA progresses and further information becomes available.
- 2.2.1.5 Following notification, responses have been received from three of the identified States to date, summarised in **Table 2.2** below.

Table 2.2: Regulation 32 notification responses received

Comment	How and where considered in the PEIR
Norway - Norwegian Environment Agency (point of contact for the Espoo Convention)	
Acknowledged receipt of notification and confirmed Norway wishes to participate in the regulation 32 procedure, given the potential for impacts on shipping and navigation. No substantive comments raised at this stage.	Noted. Potential transboundary effects in relation to shipping and navigation are considered in Volume 2, Chapter 8: Shipping and Navigation, of the PEIR , and discussed in Section 3.2.9 below.

Comment	How and where considered in the PEIR
Netherlands - Rijkswaterstaat Zee en Delta (Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management)	
Confirmed the Government of the Netherlands wishes to participate in the regulation 32 procedure and to be kept up to date. No comments on the proposed development raised at this stage.	Noted. Potential transboundary effects in relation to shipping and navigation are considered in Volume 2, Chapter 8: Shipping and Navigation, of the PEIR, and discussed in Section 3.2.9 below. Potential transboundary effects in relation to commercial fisheries are considered in Volume 2, Chapter 7: Commercial Fisheries, of the PEIR, and discussed in Section 3.2.7.3 below.
Denmark - Agency for Green Transition and Aquatic Environment (Ministry of Green Transition)	
Confirmed Denmark wishes to participate in the ongoing environmental assessment process. Noted that telemetry data shows marine mammals from Danish Natura 2000 sites travelling to waters off Great Britain, and requested that the assessment of marine mammals include consideration of effects on Danish marine mammal populations.	Noted. Potential transboundary effects in relation to marine mammals are considered in Volume 2, Chapter 5: Marine Mammals, of the PEIR, and discussed in Section 3.2.6 below.

- 2.2.1.6 At the time of writing, no response has been received from France, Belgium or Iceland. The Applicant will continue to monitor responses to the regulation 32 notification and will update this section, and the associated technical assessments, as the EIA progresses toward application for development consent and Marine Licence(s) to the Scottish Ministers.

3 Screening of Transboundary Impacts

3.1 Background

- 3.1.1.1 The screening of transboundary impacts has been completed against the parameters of the MHPGC Project as set out within **Volume 1, Chapter 2: Project Description, of the PEIR**.

3.2 Offshore Environment

- 3.2.1.1 The Applicant proposed to screen out transboundary impacts for certain offshore topics within the Scoping Report (RPS, 2025). MD-LOT raised no objection to the Applicant's proposed approach to screening out Physical Processes from the transboundary screening assessment and explicitly agreed that Benthic Subtidal and Intertidal Ecology could be screened out of further assessment (see **Table 2.1**), on the basis that any significant effects on the marine environment are predicted to remain localised to the MHPGC Project and, therefore, no significant effects will occur to an EEA State. PINS's own transboundary screening (PINS, 2025b), undertaken under regulation 32 of the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (see **Section 2.2**), only identified commercial fisheries and shipping and navigation as requiring further consideration or EEA State notification. Notwithstanding any agreements reached with stakeholders at scoping stage, and for completeness, the transboundary screening process has been repeated for each of these topics, with a brief conclusion presented within the following sections confirming whether there is potential for significant transboundary effects for each topic.
- 3.2.1.2 The HRA process has been followed for the MHPGC Project and has considered the potential for the MHPGC Project to impact physical processes, benthic subtidal and intertidal ecology, fish and shellfish, marine mammal and marine ornithology features of nature conservation designations in EEA States. This assessment is presented within the following documents:
- **MHPGC Project Habitats Regulations Assessment/Habitats Regulations Appraisal Screening Report, prepared to support the PEIR;**
 - **MHPGC Project Habitats Regulations Appraisal/Habitats Regulations Assessment Report to Inform Appropriate Assessment (RIAA), prepared to support the PEIR.**

3.2.2 Physical Processes

- 3.2.2.1 Baseline conditions in relation to physical processes are set out in **Volume 2, Chapter 1: Physical Processes, of the PEIR**.
- 3.2.2.2 Potential impacts on physical processes receptors as a result of the construction, O&M and decommissioning of the MHPGC Project are anticipated to be limited in duration and localised to a Zone of Influence (Zol), defined as the distance over which suspended sediment plumes may be advected and interact with potentially sensitive receptors. This has been defined by a spring tidal excursion ellipse buffer of between 5 km and 9 km around the MHPGC Project PEIR Red Line Boundary, seaward of Mean High Water Springs (MHWS).
- 3.2.2.3 This Zol is several orders of magnitude smaller than the distance between the MHPGC Project and the nearest EEA State (**Figure 1.1**). As such, no transboundary impacts upon physical processes are anticipated, and physical processes has been screened out of further transboundary assessment within the EIA process.

3.2.3 Offshore Water and Sediment Quality

- 3.2.3.1 Baseline conditions in relation to offshore water and sediment quality are set out in **Volume 2, Chapter 2: Offshore Water and Sediment Quality, of the PEIR**.
- 3.2.3.2 Potential impacts on offshore water and sediment quality receptors as a result of the construction, O&M and decommissioning of the MHPGC Project are anticipated to be limited in duration and not likely to occur beyond the Offshore Water and Sediment Quality Study Area which is a 9km buffer around the MHPGC Project PEIR Red Line Boundary, located entirely within UK territorial waters. This buffer represents the distance of one spring tidal ellipse, in order to incorporate the maximum

distance sediments may travel in one tidal cycle, as described in **Volume 2, Annex 1.2: Model Design Validation and Results, prepared to support the PEIR**. This buffer defines the likely maximum spatial extent of potential direct and indirect impacts of the MHPGC Project on offshore water and sediment quality receptors.

- 3.2.3.3 The extent of the Offshore Water and Sediment Quality Study Area is several orders of magnitude smaller than the distance between the MHPGC Project and the nearest EEA State (**Figure 1.1**). As such, no transboundary impacts upon offshore water and sediment quality receptors are anticipated, and offshore water and sediment quality has been screened out of further transboundary assessment within the EIA process.

3.2.4 Benthic Subtidal and Intertidal Ecology

- 3.2.4.1 Baseline conditions in relation to benthic subtidal and intertidal ecology are set out in **Volume 2, Chapter 3: Benthic Subtidal and Intertidal Ecology, of the PEIR**.

- 3.2.4.2 Potential impacts on benthic subtidal and intertidal ecology receptors as a result of the construction, O&M and decommissioning of the MHPGC Project, are anticipated to be limited in duration and localised to the Benthic Subtidal and Intertidal Ecology Study Area, which is a 9km buffer around the MHPGC Project PEIR Red Line Boundary, located entirely within UK territorial waters. This buffer represents the distance of one spring tidal ellipse, in order to incorporate the maximum distance sediments may travel in one tidal cycle, as described in **Volume 2, Annex 1.2: Model Design Validation and Results, prepared to support the PEIR**. This buffer defines the likely maximum spatial extent of potential direct and indirect impacts of the MHPGC Project on benthic subtidal and intertidal ecology receptors.

- 3.2.4.3 The extent of the Benthic Subtidal and Intertidal Ecology Study Area is several orders of magnitude smaller than the distance between the MHPGC Project and the nearest EEA State (**Figure 1.1**). As such, no transboundary impacts upon benthic subtidal and intertidal ecology receptors are anticipated, and benthic subtidal and intertidal ecology has been screened out of further transboundary assessment within the EIA process.

3.2.5 Fish and Shellfish Ecology

- 3.2.5.1 Baseline conditions in relation to fish and shellfish ecology are set out in **Volume 2, Chapter 4: Fish and Shellfish Ecology, of the PEIR**.

- 3.2.5.2 Potential impacts on fish and shellfish ecology receptors as a result of the construction, O&M and decommissioning of the MHPGC Project, are anticipated to be limited in duration and localised to the Fish and Shellfish Ecology Study Area, which is a 9km buffer around the MHPGC Project PEIR Red Line Boundary, located entirely within UK territorial waters. As set out in **Volume 2, Chapter 4: Fish and Shellfish Ecology, of the PEIR**, this buffer represents a worst-case scenario within which direct and indirect impacts on fish and shellfish ecological receptors are likely to be confined. This buffer defines the likely maximum spatial extent of potential direct and indirect impacts of the MHPGC Project on fish and shellfish ecology receptors.

- 3.2.5.3 The extent of the Fish and Shellfish Ecology Study Area is several orders of magnitude smaller than the distance between the MHPGC Project and the nearest EEA State (**Figure 1.1**). As such, no transboundary impacts upon fish and shellfish ecology receptors are therefore anticipated, and fish and shellfish ecology has been screened out of further transboundary assessment within the EIA process.

3.2.6 Marine Mammals

- 3.2.6.1 Baseline conditions in relation to marine mammals are set out in **Volume 2, Chapter 5: Marine Mammals, of the PEIR**.

- 3.2.6.2 Marine mammals are highly mobile receptors with ranges extending across national boundaries and between UK and EEA waters. Potential impacts associated with underwater sound may extend beyond the immediate project area and affect individuals associated with populations and designated sites in other EEA States.

3.2.6.3 Potential transboundary impacts on marine mammal receptors are:

- Injury and disturbance from underwater sound (excluding unexploded ordnance (UXO));
- Injury and disturbance from underwater sound produced by UXO low order clearance;
- Changes in prey availability;
- Collision with vessels.

3.2.6.4 Potential transboundary impacts to marine mammals and their nature conservation interests are screened into the EIA process. A transboundary assessment has been completed and is included in **Volume 2, Chapter 5: Marine Mammals, of the PEIR**. Potential impacts to European Sites with marine mammals as a qualifying feature are assessed within **MHPGC Project Habitats Regulations Appraisal/Habitats Regulations Assessment Report to Inform Appropriate Assessment (RIAA), prepared to support the PEIR**.

3.2.7 Marine Ornithology

3.2.7.1 Baseline conditions in relation to marine ornithology are set out in **Volume 2, Chapter 6: Marine Ornithology, of the PEIR**.

3.2.7.2 There is potential for transboundary impacts to ornithological receptors due to the wide foraging and migratory ranges of typical bird species in the vicinity of the MHPGC Project. In addition, a number of bird species that have been recorded in the vicinity of the MHPGC Project include those that are listed as qualifying features of European Sites in other states.

3.2.7.3 Potential transboundary impacts to marine ornithology receptors and their nature conservation interests are screened into the EIA process. A transboundary assessment has been completed and is included in **Volume 2, Chapter 6: Marine Ornithology, of the PEIR**. Potential impacts to European Sites with marine ornithology receptors as a qualifying feature are assessed within **MHPGC Project Habitats Regulations Appraisal/Habitats Regulations Assessment Report to Inform Appropriate Assessment (RIAA), prepared to support the PEIR**.

3.2.8 Commercial Fisheries

3.2.8.1 The commercial fisheries likely to be operating in the MHPGC Project Local and Regional Commercial Fisheries Study Areas are outlined in **Volume 2, Chapter 7: Commercial Fisheries, of the PEIR**. These study areas are located entirely within the UK EEZ and include fleets from other states, including France, Denmark, the Netherlands, and Germany. Due to the highly mobile nature of both commercial fish species and fishing fleets, there is the potential for the following transboundary impacts upon commercial fisheries:

- Loss or restricted access to fishing grounds for non-UK fishing fleets; and
- Displacement of non-UK fleet fishing activity to other areas.

3.2.8.2 Potential transboundary impacts to commercial fisheries receptors are screened into the EIA process. A transboundary assessment has been completed and is included in **Volume 2, Chapter 7: Commercial Fisheries, of the PEIR**.

3.2.9 Shipping and Navigation

3.2.9.1 Baseline conditions in relation to shipping and navigation are set out in **Volume 2, Chapter 8: Shipping and Navigation, of the PEIR**.

3.2.9.2 Given the international nature of vessel routeing, including to international ports such as Rotterdam and Le Havre, as well as Norwegian, Icelandic and Faroese ports, there is potential for transboundary impacts on shipping and navigation receptors. Additionally, Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway and Iceland were identified in PINS's screening (PINS, 2025b) as states potentially affected by transboundary shipping and navigation impacts.

3.2.9.3 Potential transboundary impacts to shipping and navigation receptors are screened into the EIA process. A transboundary assessment has been completed and is included in **Volume 2, Chapter 8: Shipping and Navigation, of the PEIR**.

3.2.10 Marine and Intertidal Archaeology

- 3.2.10.1 Baseline conditions in relation to marine and intertidal archaeology are set out in **Volume 2, Chapter 9: Marine and Intertidal Archaeology, of the PEIR**.
- 3.2.10.2 Potential impacts on marine and intertidal archaeology receptors as a result of the construction, O&M and decommissioning of the MHPGC Project, are anticipated to be limited in duration and localised to the Marine and Intertidal Archaeology Study Area, which for this assessment includes the MHPGC Project PEIR Red Line Boundary and a 2km buffer measured from the outer boundary, within the marine zone (seaward of mean high water springs (MHWS)). This buffer defines the likely maximum spatial extent of potential direct and indirect impacts of the MHPGC Project on marine and intertidal archaeology receptors.
- 3.2.10.3 The extent of the Marine and Intertidal Archaeology Study Area is several orders of magnitude smaller than the distance between the MHPGC Project and the nearest EEA State (**Figure 1.1**). As such, no transboundary impacts upon marine and intertidal archaeology receptors are therefore anticipated, and marine and intertidal archaeology has been screened out of further transboundary assessment within the EIA process.

3.2.11 Infrastructure and Other Sea Users

- 3.2.11.1 Baseline conditions in relation to infrastructure and other sea users are set out in **Volume 2, Chapter 10: Infrastructure and Other Sea Users, of the PEIR**.
- 3.2.11.2 Potential impacts on infrastructure and other sea users receptors as a result of the construction, O&M and decommissioning of the MHPGC Project, are anticipated to be limited in duration and localised to the Infrastructure and Other Sea Users Study Area which has been defined based on one tidal excursion from the MHPGC Project PEIR Red Line Boundary. At its maximum, the tidal excursion during spring tides is 9km from the MHPGC Project PEIR Red Line Boundary, as identified in **Volume 2, Chapter 1: Physical Processes, of the PEIR**. The Infrastructure and Other Sea Users Study Area represents the maximum extent within which increases in Suspended Sediment Concentration (SSC) may occur due to MHPGC Project activities and provides the baseline context for infrastructure and other sea receptors present within the wider area. However, SSC effects are only relevant to recreational diving receptors. For all other infrastructure and other sea users receptors, potential impacts are associated with direct interactions between the MHPGC Project and associated vessel activity and therefore only occur where those interactions are reasonably foreseeable. As such, the assessment focuses on the geographical extent of potential impact pathways for each receptor, rather than assuming effects across the entirety of the Infrastructure and Other Sea Users Study Area.
- 3.2.11.3 The extent of the Infrastructure and Other Sea Users Study Area is several orders of magnitude smaller than the distance between the MHPGC Project and the nearest EEA State (**Figure 1.1**). As such, no transboundary impacts upon infrastructure and other sea users receptors are therefore anticipated, and infrastructure and other sea users has been screened out of further transboundary assessment within the EIA process.

3.3 Onshore Environment

3.3.1 Geology, Hydrogeology and Ground Conditions

- 3.3.1.1 Baseline conditions in relation to geology, hydrology and ground conditions are set out in **Volume 3, Chapter 1: Geology, Hydrogeology and Ground Conditions, of the PEIR**.
- 3.3.1.2 Effects identified as part of the preliminary assessment in relation to geology, hydrology and ground conditions as a result of the construction, O&M and decommissioning of the MHPGC Project are anticipated to be limited in extent and not likely to occur beyond the immediate surrounding of the Geology, Hydrogeology and Ground Conditions Study Area which is a 1km buffer from the MHPGC Project PEIR Red Line Boundary: Onshore.
- 3.3.1.3 There are no identified pathways through which either direct or indirect impacts could result in significant transboundary effects on the geology, hydrogeology and ground conditions of an EEA

state. As such, no transboundary impacts upon geology, hydrology and ground conditions receptors are therefore anticipated, and geology, hydrology and ground conditions has been screened out of further transboundary assessment within the EIA process.

3.3.2 Water Resources and Flood Risk

- 3.3.2.1 Baseline conditions in relation to water resources and flood risk are set out in **Volume 3, Chapter 2: Water Resources and Flood Risk, of the PEIR.**
- 3.3.2.2 Effects identified as part of the preliminary assessment in relation to water resources and flood risk as a result of the construction, O&M and decommissioning of the MHPGC Project are anticipated to be limited in extent and not likely to occur beyond the immediate surrounding of the Water Resources and Flood Risk Study Area which incorporates water resource receptors located within 1km of the MHPGC PEIR Red Line Boundary: Onshore.
- 3.3.2.3 There are no identified pathways through which either direct or indirect impacts could result in significant transboundary effects on the water resources and flood risk of an EEA state. As such, no transboundary impacts upon water resources and flood risk receptors are therefore anticipated, and water resources and flood risk has been screened out of further transboundary assessment within the EIA process.

3.3.3 Terrestrial Ecology and Terrestrial and Intertidal Ornithology

- 3.3.3.1 Baseline conditions in relation to terrestrial ecology and terrestrial and intertidal ornithology are set out in **Volume 3, Chapter 3: Terrestrial Ecology and Terrestrial and Intertidal Ornithology, of the PEIR.**
- 3.3.3.2 Effects identified as part of the preliminary assessment in relation to terrestrial ecology and terrestrial and intertidal ornithology as a result of the construction, O&M and decommissioning of the MHPGC Project are anticipated to be limited in extent and not likely to occur beyond the immediate surrounding of the Terrestrial Ecology and Terrestrial and Intertidal Ornithology Study Area. The Terrestrial Ecology and Intertidal Ornithology assessment uses several study areas with the largest being the MHPGC PEIR Red line Boundary: Onshore, with a 10km buffer applied.
- 3.3.3.3 There are no identified pathways through which either direct or indirect impacts could result in significant transboundary effects on the terrestrial ecology and terrestrial and intertidal ornithology of an EEA state. As such, no transboundary impacts upon terrestrial ecology and terrestrial and intertidal ornithology receptors are therefore anticipated, and terrestrial ecology and terrestrial and intertidal ornithology has been screened out of further transboundary assessment within the EIA process.
- 3.3.3.4 As referenced within **Section 2.2**, in addition to the preliminary transboundary screening assessment, the Applicant has considered the potential transboundary impacts on European sites in EEA states separately through the HRA process.

3.3.4 Onshore Archaeology and Cultural Heritage

- 3.3.4.1 Baseline conditions in relation to onshore archaeology and cultural heritage are set out in **Volume 3, Chapter 4: Onshore Archaeology and Cultural Heritage, of the PEIR.**
- 3.3.4.2 Effects identified as part of the preliminary assessment in relation to onshore archaeology and cultural heritage as a result of the construction, O&M and decommissioning of the MHPGC Project are anticipated to be limited in extent and not occurring beyond the immediate surrounding of the Archaeology and Cultural Heritage Extended Study Area– Green LSS and Blue LSS which), comprise the Green LSS Option Area and the Blue LSS Option Areas respectively, with a 3km buffer.
- 3.3.4.3 There are no identified pathways through which either direct or indirect impacts could result in significant transboundary effects on the onshore archaeology and cultural heritage of an EEA state. As such, no transboundary impacts upon onshore archaeology and cultural heritage receptors are therefore anticipated, and onshore archaeology and cultural heritage has been screened out of further transboundary assessment within the EIA process.

3.3.5 Traffic and Transport

- 3.3.5.1 Baseline conditions in relation to traffic and transport are set out in **Volume 3, Chapter 5: Traffic and Transport, of the PEIR**.
- 3.3.5.2 Effects identified as part of the preliminary assessment in relation to traffic and transport as a result of the construction, O&M and decommissioning of the MHPGC Project are anticipated to be limited in extent and not likely to occur beyond the immediate surrounding of the Traffic and Transport Study Area which have been determined with a focus on areas within or adjacent to the MHPGC Project PEIR Red Line Boundary: Onshore where potential impacts in relation to traffic and transport may occur. This has been determined with the application of the following criteria:
- The road network within MHPGC Project PEIR Red Line Boundary: Onshore;
 - A 500 metre (m) buffer around the MHPGC Project PEIR Red Line Boundary: Onshore, in accordance with DMRB LA 112 guidance;
 - SRN and local roads likely to experience a $\geq 30\%$ increase in traffic (or $\geq 10\%$ in sensitive areas), in line with Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals (ISEP), (formerly Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA)) guidance 'Environmental Assessment of Traffic and Movement' (2023), and any PRoW or cycle links that have the potential to interact with these roads identified.
- 3.3.5.3 There are no identified pathways through which either direct or indirect impacts could result in significant transboundary effects on the traffic and transport of an EEA state. As such, no transboundary impacts upon traffic and transport receptors are therefore anticipated, and traffic and transport has been screened out of further transboundary assessment within the EIA process.

3.3.6 Onshore Noise and Vibration

- 3.3.6.1 Baseline conditions in relation to onshore noise and vibration are set out in **Volume 3, Chapter 6: Onshore Noise and Vibration, of the PEIR**.
- 3.3.6.2 Effects identified as part of the preliminary assessment in relation to onshore noise and vibration as a result of the construction, O&M and decommissioning of the MHPGC Project are anticipated to be limited in extent and not likely to occur beyond the immediate surrounding of the Onshore Noise and Vibration Study Area. For the purposes of identifying potential onshore noise and vibration sensitive receptors, a series of Onshore Noise and Vibration Study Areas have been defined from the MHPGC Project PEIR Red Line Boundary out to the following distances:
- The Onshore Construction Noise Study Area, an area extending 300m from the MHPGC Project PEIR Red Line Boundary. As stated within the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) LA 111: Noise and Vibration guidance, "a study area of 300m from the closest construction activity is normally sufficient to encompass noise sensitive receptors" (DMRB, 2020). In addition, BS 5228-1 states that over distances of 300 m noise predictions should be treated with caution especially where a soft ground correction factor has been applied, because of the increasing importance of meteorological effects.
 - The Onshore Construction Vibration Study Area, an area extending 100m from the MHPGC Project PEIR Red Line Boundary. As stated within the DMRB LA111 guidance, "a study area of 100m from the closest construction activity with the potential to generate vibration is normally sufficient to encompass vibration sensitive receptors" (DMRB, 2020).
 - The Onshore Construction Road Traffic Noise Study Area, an area extending 50m from the kerb line of the local road network where construction traffic (i.e. With development scenario) would result in a change in basic noise level (BNL) of 1dB or more, when compared to the baseline scenario (i.e. Without development scenario), in accordance with DMRB LA 111 (DMRB, 2020).
 - The Onshore Operational Noise Study Area, an area extending 600m from the Blue LSS Option Area and Green LSS Option Area, based on professional judgement, drawing on experience of projects of a similar scale and nature.
- 3.3.6.3 There are no identified pathways through which either direct or indirect impacts could result in significant transboundary effects on the onshore noise and vibration of an EEA state. As such, no transboundary impacts upon onshore noise and vibration receptors are therefore anticipated, and

onshore noise and vibration has been screened out of further transboundary assessment within the EIA process.

3.3.7 Onshore Air Quality

3.3.7.1 Baseline conditions in relation to onshore air quality are set out in **Volume 3, Chapter 7: Onshore Air Quality, of the PEIR**.

3.3.7.2 Effects identified as part of the preliminary assessment in relation to onshore air quality as a result of the construction, O&M and decommissioning of the MHPGC Project are anticipated to be limited in extent and not likely to occur beyond the immediate surrounding of the Onshore Air Quality Study Area. The study area for the construction phase considers construction dust and construction traffic. The dust and amenity assessment study area includes:

- a 250m buffer from the MHPGC Project PEIR Red Line Boundary: Onshore for dust. This is made up of 20m, 50m, 100m and 250m buffers.
- a 50m buffer from the routes anticipated to be used by construction vehicles on the public highway and up to 250 m from construction site entrances/exits.

3.3.7.3 There are no identified pathways through which either direct or indirect impacts could result in significant transboundary effects on the onshore air quality of an EEA state. As such, no transboundary impacts upon onshore air quality receptors are therefore anticipated, and onshore air quality has been screened out of further transboundary assessment within the EIA process.

3.3.8 Land Use, Tourism and Recreation

3.3.8.1 Baseline conditions in relation to land use, tourism and recreation are set out in **Volume 3, Chapter 8: Land Use, Tourism and Recreation, of the PEIR**.

3.3.8.2 Effects identified as part of the preliminary assessment in relation to land use, tourism and recreation as a result of the construction, O&M and decommissioning of the MHPGC Project are anticipated to be limited in extent and not likely to occur beyond the immediate surrounding of the Land Use, Tourism and Recreation Study Areas, the largest of which is the MHPGC Project PEIR Red Line Boundary: Onshore and the 5 km buffer for tourism.

3.3.8.3 There are no identified pathways through which either direct or indirect impacts could result in significant transboundary effects on the land use, tourism and recreation of an EEA state. As such, no transboundary impacts upon land use, tourism and recreation receptors are therefore anticipated, and land use, tourism and recreation has been screened out of further transboundary assessment within the EIA process.

3.3.9 Agriculture and Soils

3.3.9.1 Baseline conditions in relation to agriculture and soils are set out in **Volume 3, Chapter 9 Agriculture and Soils, of the PEIR**.

3.3.9.2 Effects identified as part of the preliminary assessment in relation to agriculture and soils as a result of the construction, O&M and decommissioning of the MHPGC Project are anticipated to be limited in extent and not likely to occur beyond the immediate surrounding of the Agriculture and Soils Study Area which comprises all land within the MHPGC PEIR Red Line Boundary: Onshore, landward of Mean High Water Springs (MHWS) with a 250m buffer applied.

3.3.9.3 There are no identified pathways through which either direct or indirect impacts could result in significant transboundary effects on agriculture and soils of an EEA state. As such, no transboundary impacts upon agriculture and soils receptors are therefore anticipated, and agriculture and soils has been screened out of further transboundary assessment within the EIA process.

3.4 Combined Offshore and Onshore Environment

3.4.1.1 The transboundary assessment has been structured to reflect the nature of the potential effects and the topic-specific assessments presented elsewhere in the chapter. Where effects are clearly attributable to either the offshore or onshore components of the Project, they are considered

separately within the relevant sections. However, some topics have the potential to arise from both offshore and onshore activities or result in a single effect pathway acting on the same receptor. These have therefore been considered within this combined section to provide a holistic assessment and avoid duplication of assessment conclusions.

3.4.2 Landscape and Visual Amenity

- 3.4.2.1 Baseline conditions in relation to landscape and visual amenity are set out in **Volume 4, Chapter 1: Landscape and Visual Amenity, of the PEIR**.
- 3.4.2.2 The assessment considers potential effects arising from the construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning phases of the MHPGC Project, including landscape and visual effects arising from offshore construction activities associated with the landfall works; including the temporary presence of construction vessels and cable installation activities within coastal waters.
- 3.4.2.3 Effects identified within **Volume 4, Chapter 1: Landscape and Visual Amenity, of the PEIR** are localised and limited to the Landscape and Visual Amenity Study Areas defined within the PEIR, comprising a 2 km study area around the landfall, onshore export cable corridor and AC connection cable corridor, and a 5 km study area around the land substation options. Both are located entirely within UK territory. The assessment of offshore construction activities concludes that any visual effects associated with the temporary presence of cable installation vessels would be short-term, temporary and reversible, and experienced only within the immediate coastal environment.
- 3.4.2.4 The extent of the Landscape and Visual Amenity Study Areas, and the geographic extent of any visual effects arising from offshore construction activities, are substantially smaller than the distance between the MHPGC Project and the nearest EEA State.
- 3.4.2.5 There are no identified direct pathways such as physical alteration of landscape or seascape resources within an EEA state, nor any indirect pathways through which changes to views, visual amenity, landscape character or seascape character could result in significant transboundary effects on landscape and visual amenity of an EEA state. As such, no transboundary impacts upon landscape and visual amenity receptors are therefore anticipated, and landscape and visual amenity has been screened out of further transboundary assessment within the EIA process.

3.4.3 Human Health

- 3.4.3.1 Baseline conditions in relation to human health are set out in **Volume 4, Chapter 2: Human Health, of the PEIR**.
- 3.4.3.2 Effects identified as part of the preliminary assessment in relation to human health as a result of the construction, O&M and decommissioning of the MHPGC Project, are anticipated to be limited in duration and not likely to occur beyond the immediate surrounding of the Human Health Study Area which is located entirely within UK territory as defined within **Volume 4, Chapter 2: Human Health, of the PEIR**.
- 3.4.3.3 There are no identified pathways through which either direct or indirect impacts could result in significant transboundary effects on human health of an EEA state. As such, no transboundary impacts upon human health receptors are therefore anticipated, and human health has been screened out of further transboundary assessment within the EIA process.

3.4.4 Socio-Economics

- 3.4.4.1 Baseline conditions in relation to socio-economics are set out in **Volume 4, Chapter 3: Socio-Economics, of the PEIR**.
- 3.4.4.2 While it should be acknowledged that the MHPGC Project is located solely within the UK and does not directly interface with the boundaries of EEA states, there is potential for the construction, O&M and decommissioning phases to result in expenditure, and by extension, increases in employment and gross value added outside of the UK, which may include EEA states.
- 3.4.4.3 Potential transboundary impacts in relation to increases in employment and gross value added are considered unlikely to be significant. As set out in **Volume 4, Chapter 3: Socio-Economics, of the PEIR**, the socio-economic assessment concluded that the beneficial

effects arising are primarily realised at the national and regional scale and are not of a magnitude sufficient to materially influence wider economic conditions. While a proportion of the MHPGC Project expenditure may occur outside of the UK, including EEA states, the projected expenditure of outside of the UK during the decommissioning phase is not considered likely to result in measurable or significant effects on the economies of individual EEA states.

- 3.4.4.4 On this basis, while a pathway exists for expenditure related socio-economic benefits to extend beyond the UK the magnitude and geographic distribution of these effects are not considered sufficient to give rise to significant transboundary effects. As such, no transboundary impacts upon socio-economics receptors are therefore anticipated, and socio-economics has been screened out of further transboundary assessment within the EIA process.

3.4.5 Climate Change

- 3.4.5.1 Baseline conditions in relation to climate change are set out in **Volume 4, Chapter 4: Climate Change, of the PEIR**.
- 3.4.5.2 While the MHPGC Project is located solely within the UK and does not directly interface with the boundaries of EEA states, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions produced the construction, O&M and decommissioning phase would contribute to atmospheric concentration changes that drive climate change at a global scale. The atmospheric concentration of GHGs and the resulting effects of climate change are influenced by all sources and sinks globally, whether anthropogenic or natural.
- 3.4.5.3 GHG emissions as a result of the construction, O&M and decommissioning of the MHPGC Project would contribute to global atmospheric GHG concentrations. However, any impacts associated with these emissions would occur at a global scale rather than within any specific geographic area or individual EEA state.
- 3.4.5.4 As climate change effects arising from GHG emissions are global in nature and cannot be attributed to particular states or regions, no discrete transboundary impact pathways have been identified between the MHPGC Project and any EEA state. As such, no transboundary impacts upon climate change receptors are therefore anticipated, and climate change has been screened out of further transboundary assessment within the EIA process.

4 Conclusions

- 4.1.1.1 This transboundary screening has been carried out taking into consideration the location of the MHPGC Project and **Volume 1, Chapter 2: Project Description, of the PEIR**.
- 4.1.1.2 Transboundary impacts have been screened out for all onshore and combined offshore and onshore topics. For offshore topics, transboundary impacts have been screened out with the exception of the following topics where, based on current information available, the MHPGC Project has the potential to have significant effects on the environment in other EEA States:
- Marine Mammals;
 - Marine Ornithology;
 - Commercial Fisheries;
 - Shipping and Navigation.
- 4.1.1.3 These topics have been screened into the transboundary assessment and likely significant effects have been considered in the respective topic specific chapters of the PEIR (Volume 2, Chapters 5 to 8).

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