



Morven Hawthorn Pit Grid Connection Project

Preliminary Environmental Information Report

Volume 4, Chapter 3: Socio-Economics

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Annexes

Annex number	Annex title
Volume 4, Chapter 3.1	Economic Impact Technical Report

Glossary

Term	Meaning
Alternating current (AC) connection cables	AC cables that will connect the proposed onshore land substation to the National Grid Hawthorn Pit Substation.
Blue Onshore Land Substation (LSS) Option Area	Proposed location option for the onshore land substation, located west of the A19 and south of the access road to the Jade Business Park.
Commitments	Measures (embedded mitigation & secondary) to be adopted during the construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning phases of the MHPGC Project.
Cumulative effect	The combined effect of the MHPGC Project in combined with the effects from other proposed developments, on the same receptor or resource.
Cumulative effects assessment	Assessment of the likely effects arising from the MHPFC Project alongside the likely effects arising from other proposed developments on the same receptor or resource.
Displacement	The extent to which economic activity in one area is offset by reductions in economic activity in another area. This term is used in relation to socio-economics.
Deadweight	Activity that would have happened without the project.
Economic activity rate	The percentage of the working age population that are taking part in the labour market, either in employment or looking for employment.
Economic sector	A segment of the economy comprising businesses with similar activities, products or services (e.g. construction).
Embedded mitigation	Measures included as part of the project design. Includes both primary and tertiary mitigation.
Employment (Jobs)	This is a measure of employment which considers the headcount employment in an organisation or industry.
Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)	The process of identifying and assessing the significant effects likely to arise from a project. This requires consideration of the likely changes to the environment, where these arise as a consequence of a project, through comparison with the existing and projected future baseline conditions.
Gross Value Added	This is a measure of economic output, the economic value added by an organisation, industry or region and is typically estimated by subtracting the non-staff operational costs from the turnover of an organisation.
Green Onshore LSS Option Area	Proposed location option for the onshore land substation, located between Jade Business Park (Spring Rd, Murton, Seaham SR7 9DR) and the National Grid Hawthorn Pit Substation.
Inter-related effects	Effects that may arise from the interactions between different EIA topic effects considered within the project-alone assessment, potentially leading to more significant effects than if they were to be considered in isolation
Landfall	The area in which the offshore export cables make landfall (come onshore) and the transitional area between the offshore cabling and the onshore cabling. This term applies to the entire landfall area between the trenchless technique exit pits and the transition joint bay inclusive of all construction works.
Leakage	The extent to which effects 'leak out' of the study area, e.g. supply chain spending taking place outside of the United Kingdom. This term is used in relation to socio-economics.

Term	Meaning
Magnitude	A combination of the spatial extent, duration, frequency and reversibility of an impact
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 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.
Maximum design scenario (MDS)	The realistic worst case scenario, selected on a topic-specific and impact specific basis, from a range of potential parameters for the MHPGC Project.
Mean High Water Springs (MHWS)	The most inshore level location reached by the sea at high tide during mean high water spring tide. This is defined as the average throughout the year, of two successive high waters, during a 24-hour period in each month when the range of the tide is at its greatest.
Mean Low Water Springs (MLWS)	The average height of the low water levels of each pair of successive low waters during the periods of about 24 hours when the tidal range is at its greatest.
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 MD-LOT in February 2025.
MHPGC Project Scoping Opinions	Separate scoping opinions received from PINS (on behalf of the Secretary of State) and MD-LOT (on behalf of the Scottish Ministers) in response to the MHPGC Project Scoping Report. The MHPGC Project Scoping Opinions contain the range of issues that PINS, and MD-LOT in consultation with statutory stakeholders, have identified should be considered within the EIA process.
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 platform(s) (OSP), landfall, onshore export cables, the onshore LSS and AC connection cables. Also referred to in this report as the MHPGC Project, for ease of reading.
MHPGC Project PEIR Red Line Boundary	The area within which all components of the MHPGC Project will be located, including areas required on a temporary basis during construction and/or decommissioning (such as construction compounds).
MHPGC PEIR Red Line Boundary: Onshore	Spatial extent used to define the environmental assessment within the PEIR. The area within which all onshore components of the MHPGC Project will be located landward of MHWS, including areas required on a temporary basis during construction and/or decommissioning (e.g. construction compounds).
Morven North Offshore Wind Array Project (hereafter 'Morven North')	The Morven North Offshore Wind Array Project which includes the wind turbines and foundations, OSPs and foundations, inter-array and interconnector cables and associated infrastructure located within the Morven North Boundary.
Morven South Offshore Wind Array Project	The Morven South Offshore Wind Array Project, which includes the wind turbines and foundations, OSPs and foundations, inter-array and interconnector cables and associated infrastructure located within the Morven South Boundary.
Morven Branxton Area Grid Connection Project ('MBAGC Project')	The Morven Branxton Area Grid Connection Project will be comprised of the offshore export cable in Scottish waters from the Morven North or the Morven South Offshore Substation Platforms, the onshore export cable and

Term	Meaning
	the onshore land substation in the vicinity of Branxton in East Lothian, Scotland.
Morven Programme	The Morven Programme comprises the MHPGC Project, Morven North, Morven South, and MBAGC Project collectively.
National Grid Hawthorn Pit Substation	The National Grid substation at Hawthorn Pit, County Durham, which the AC connection cables will connect into from the onshore land substation.
Offshore export cables	High voltage direct current (HVDC) cables which bring electricity from either the Morven North OSP or the Morven South OSP to the transition joint bay (TJB) at landfall.
offshore substation platforms (OSPs)	OSPs comprise the support structure, topside and electrical components used for collecting the electricity generated by the wind turbine generators for the passage or transmission to landfall. These OSPs can be divided into two types: • HVAC (High Voltage Alternating Current) collector substations; • HVDC (High Voltage Direct Current) converter substations.
Onshore components	Infrastructure landward of the transition joint bay at landfall, comprising onshore export cable, onshore export cable corridor, onshore land substation (LSS) AC connection cable and AC connection cable corridor and associated temporary and permanent infrastructure including temporary and permanent compound areas and accesses.
Onshore export cables	HVDC cables which bring electricity from the TJB to the onshore land substation.
Onshore land substation (LSS)	A purpose-built site comprising a compound containing the electrical components for converting the HVDC to HVAC power. The LSS site associated with the MHPGC Project adjusts the power quality and power factor to meet the requirements of power supply being fed to the National Grid Hawthorn Pit Substation.
Operations and maintenance phase (O&M)	The operational and maintenance phase of the MHPGC Project.
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.
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.
Primary mitigation	Measures included as part of the location or design of the MHPGC Project made during the pre-application phase that are an inherent part of the MHPGC Project and do not require additional action to be taken. This includes modifications arising through the iterative design process. These measures will be secured through the consent itself through the description of the MHPGC Project, the parameters and associated commitments secured by the DCO and marine licence, or both.
Relevant sectors	The sectors most relevant to the expected labour market demand for the cumulative assessment. They have been defined using the following Standard Industrial Classifications: 06: Extraction of crude petroleum and natural gas, 41: Construction of buildings, 42: Civil engineering, 43: Specialised construction activities, 50: Water transport, 71: Architectural and engineering activities; technical testing and analysis.
Residual effects	Effects that continue to exist after mitigation has been applied.

Term	Meaning
Secondary mitigation	Actions that will require further activity to achieve the anticipated outcome and may be imposed as part of the planning consent, or through inclusion in the ES. These include measures required to reduce the significance of environmental effects and may be secured through an environmental management plan. For secondary mitigation measures, both pre-mitigation and residual effects are presented.
Significance	Effect factor that is determined by the magnitude of impact along with the sensitivity of the receptor.
Socio-economics Local Study Areas	The areas as shown in Figure 3.1 .
Socio-economics Study Areas	The Socio-economics Study Areas are the areas where the baseline environment and potential economic impacts have been assessed as described in more detail in section 3.4.2 below.
Socio-economics Tourism and Recreation Study Area	The area as shown in Figure 3.2 .
Supply Chain Development Statement	As part of ScotWind leasing, the Supply Chain Development Statement provides structure for project specific supply chain information to be communicated with government and industry, through project development, deployment and into operations. The Supply Chain Development Statement requires applicants to produce information about expected supply chain expenditure.
Tertiary mitigation	Actions that would occur with or without input from the EIA process feeding into the design. These include actions that will be undertaken to meet other existing legislative requirements, or actions that are considered to be standard practices used to manage commonly occurring environmental effects.
Transboundary effects	Assessment of likely significant effects resulting from MHPGC Project on the interests of another European Economic Area (EEA) state(s).
Transboundary impact	Potential impacts resulting from MHPGC Project and affecting another European Economic Area (EEA) state.
Transition Joint Bay (TJB)	An underground bay housing a joint which connects the offshore export cables to the onshore export cables. The TJB will be located in the vicinity of the onshore side of the landfall.
Years of employment	This is a measure of employment which is equivalent to one person being employed for a year and is typically used when considering short-term employment impacts, such as those associated with construction.

Acronyms

Acronym	Meaning
BESS	Battery Energy System Storage
CEA	Cumulative Effect Assessment
CoCP	Code of Construction Practice
DCO	Development Consent Order
Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DESNZ	Department for Energy Security and Net Zero
ECC	Export Cable Corridor
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ES	Environmental Statement

Acronym	Meaning
EU	European Union
ICES	International Council for the Exploration of the Seas Statistical Areas
IEMA	Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment
IMF	International Monetary Fund
GBDVS	Great Britain Day Visitors Survey
GBTS	Great Britain Tourism Survey
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GVA	Gross Value Added
HVDC	High Voltage Direct Current
IEMA	Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment
ISEP	Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals
LSS	Land Substation
MAU	Marine Analytical Unit
MBAGC	Morven Branxton Area Grid Connection
MD-LOT	Marine Directorate – Licensing Operations Team
MDS	Maximum Design Scenario
MHPGC	Morven Hawthorn Pit Grid Connection
MHWS	Mean High Water Springs
MLWS	Mean Low Water Springs
MMO	Marine Management Organisation
MPA	Marine Protected Area
MPS	Marine Policy Statement
NCN	National Cycle Network
NISRA	Northern Ireland Statistics Research Agency
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
NPS	National Policy Statements
NRS	National Records of Scotland
O&M	Operations and Maintenance
ONS	Office for National Statistics
OSP	Offshore Substation Platform
OWF	Offshore Wind Farm
PEIR	Preliminary Environmental Information Report
PINS	Planning Inspectorate
PRoW	Public Rights of Way
RQF	Regulated Qualifications Framework
SCDS	Supply Chain Development Statement
SoS	Secretary of State
UK	United Kingdom

Units

Unit	Meaning
£	Pounds Sterling
£m	Million Pound Sterling
km	Kilometres
Km ²	Squared Kilometres
%	Percent

3 Socio-economics

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1.1 This chapter of the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) presents the preliminary findings of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) work undertaken to date for the Morven Hawthorn Pit Grid Connection Project (hereafter 'MHPGC Project'), as described in **Volume 1, Chapter 2: Project Description, of the PEIR**.
- 3.1.1.2 The chapter considers the potential impacts and effects on socio-economics that could result from the construction, operation and maintenance (O&M) and decommissioning phases of the MHPGC Project. Specifically, it relates to the offshore elements of the MHPGC Project from the offshore substation platform(s) (OSPs) within Morven North Offshore Wind Array Project or Morven South Offshore Wind Array Project (hereafter 'Morven North and Morven South') located within Scottish offshore waters, transiting through English offshore and inshore waters, to Mean High Water Springs (MHWS) at landfall as well as the onshore elements of the MHPGC Project landward of Mean Low Water Springs (MHWS) at landfall to the National Grid Hawthorn Pit Substation in England.
- 3.1.1.3 This chapter describes the methodology, datasets that have informed the preliminary assessment, baseline conditions, including future baseline, mitigation measures and the preliminary residual significant effects on socio-economics that could result from the MHPGC Project.
- 3.1.1.4 The assessment is informed by the following chapters:
- **Volume 1, Chapter 2: Project Description, of the PEIR;**
 - **Volume 1, Chapter 4: Approach to Environmental Impact Assessment, of the PEIR;**
 - **Volume 1, Chapter 5: Policy and Legislation, of the PEIR;**
 - **Volume 4, Chapter 5: Inter-related Effects, of the PEIR;**
 - **Volume 2, Chapter 7: Commercial Fisheries, of the PEIR;**
 - **Volume 2, Chapter 8: Shipping and Navigation, of the PEIR;**
 - **Volume 2, Chapter 10: Infrastructure and Other Sea Users, of the PEIR;**
 - **Volume 3, Chapter 5: Traffic and Transport, of the PEIR;**
 - **Volume 3, Chapter 6: Onshore Noise and Vibration, of the PEIR;**
 - **Volume 3, Chapter 7: Onshore Air Quality, of the PEIR;**
 - **Volume 3, Chapter 8: Land Use, Tourism and Recreation, of the PEIR;**
 - **Volume 4, Chapter 1: Landscape and Visual Amenity, of the PEIR.**
- 3.1.1.5 The chapter also draws on information contained within the following annexes:
- **Volume 1, Annex 4.1: Draft Commitments Register, of the PEIR;**
 - **Volume 1, Annex 4.2: Transboundary Screening, of the PEIR;**
 - **Volume 1, Annex 4.3: Cumulative Screening and Location Plan, of the PEIR;**
 - **Volume 4, Chapter 3.1: Economic Impact Technical Report, of the PEIR.**
- 3.1.1.6 This PEIR provided a comprehensive overview of the MHPGC Project's potential environmental impacts and mitigation measures, presenting relevant data to stakeholders for review and feedback. The PEIR will also be informed by the ongoing pre-application consultation process.
- 3.1.1.7 Following statutory consultation, comments will be reviewed and considered, where appropriate, in preparation of the Environmental Statement (ES) that will accompany the application to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) for development consent and a marine licence application to Marine Directorate Licensing Operations Team (MD-LOT).

3.2 Legislative and policy context

3.2.1 Overview

- 3.2.1.1 The full relevant legislation and policy context for the MHPGC Project has been detailed in **Volume 1, Chapter 5: Policy and Legislation, of the PEIR**. This section sets out the legislation and planning policy that is relevant to the socio-economics assessment.

3.2.2 Legislation

3.2.2.1 There is no legislation specific to the assessment of socio-economics.

3.2.3 National policy context

National Policy Statements

3.2.3.1 National Policy Statements (NPS) set out the primary policy framework for a Development Consent Order (DCO) under which the MHPGC Project will be considered. This framework includes guidelines, requirements and criteria that the MHPGC Project must meet to obtain consent and proceed with development. (Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ), 2025a).

3.2.3.2 **Table 3.1** provides details of the NPS relevant to socio-economics and how and where they are covered in the PEIR:

- NPS for energy (EN-1) (DESNZ, 2025a);
- NPS for renewable energy infrastructure (EN-3) (DESNZ, 2025b);
- NPS for electricity networks infrastructure (EN-5) (DESNZ, 2025c).

Table 3.1: Summary of the NPS provisions relevant to socio-economics

Summary of relevant NPS provisions	How and where considered in the PEIR
NPS EN-1	
Paragraph 4.3.4: <i>"To consider the potential effects, including benefits, of a proposal for a project, the applicant must set out information on the likely significant environmental, social and economic effects of the development, and show how any likely significant negative effects would be avoided, reduced, mitigated or compensated for, following the mitigation hierarchy. This information could include matters such as employment, equality, biodiversity net gain, community cohesion, health and well-being."</i>	Economic impacts, including employment, are considered in Section 3.8 . The MHPGC Project will seek to avoid, minimise and mitigate potential effects, as outlined in Volume 1, Annex 4.1: Draft Commitments Register, of the PEIR . Embedded mitigation relevant to socio-economics is presented in Section 3.7 . Effects on communities have been scoped out (Table 3.29).
Paragraph 4.3.5: <i>"For the purposes of this NPS and the technology specific NPSs the ES should cover the environmental, social and economic effects arising from pre-construction, construction, operation and decommissioning of the project."</i>	Economic impacts during pre-construction, construction, operation and decommissioning are considered in Section 3.8 .
Paragraph 4.3.12: <i>"Where some details are still to be finalised, the ES should, to the best of the applicant's knowledge, assess the likely worst-case environmental, social and economic effects of the proposed development to ensure that the impacts of the project as it may be constructed have been properly assessed"</i>	Potential impacts have been assessed based on the likely worst-case scenario, as outlined in Table 3.30 .
Paragraph 5.13.2: <i>"Where the project is likely to have socio-economic impacts at local or regional levels, the applicant should undertake and include in their application an assessment of these impacts as part of the ES (see Section 4.3)."</i>	Potential economic impacts are considered at the local and national levels in Section 3.8 . Potential social impacts have been scoped out (Table 3.29).
Paragraph 5.13.3: <i>"The applicant is strongly encouraged to engage with relevant local authorities during early stages of project development so that the applicant can gain a better understanding of local or regional issues and opportunities."</i>	Scoping responses were received from relevant local stakeholders, and Table 3.5 sets out how these have been responded to.

Summary of relevant NPS provisions	How and where considered in the PEIR
Paragraph 5.13.4: <i>The assessment should consider “the creation of jobs and training opportunities. Applicants may wish to provide information on the sustainability of the jobs created, including where they will help to develop the skills needed for the UK’s transition to Net Zero.”</i>	Potential economic impacts, including job creation, are considered in Section 3.8.
Paragraph 5.13.4: <i>The assessment should consider “any indirect beneficial impacts of the region hosting the infrastructure, in particular in relation to use of local support services and supply chains.”</i>	Potential economic impacts are considered in Section 3.8, including the economic impact on local supply chains.
Paragraph 5.13.4: <i>The assessment should consider “effects (positive and negative) on tourism and other users of the area impacted.”</i>	Potential impacts on tourism are considered within Volume 3, Chapter 8: Land Use, Tourism and Recreation, of the PEIR and the economic effects are considered in Section 3.8. Potential impacts on other users are considered within the relevant chapters (Volume 2, Chapter 10: Infrastructure and Other Sea Users, of the PEIR and Volume 3, Chapter 5: Traffic and Transport, of the PEIR)
Paragraph 5.13.4: <i>The assessment should consider “the impact of a changing influx of workers during the different construction, operation and decommissioning phases of the energy infrastructure.”</i>	Demographic impacts are not expected to occur as a result of a development of this size and therefore have not been included within the scope of the assessment (Table 3.29).
Paragraph 5.13.4: <i>The assessment should consider “cumulative effects – if development consent were to be granted for a number of projects within a region and these were developed in a similar timeframe, there could be some short-term negative effects, for example a potential shortage of construction workers to meet the needs of other industries and major projects within the region.”</i>	Cumulative effects related to socio-economics are considered within Section 3.9.
Paragraph 5.13.5: <i>“Applicants should describe the existing socio-economic conditions in the areas surrounding the proposed development and should also refer to how the development’s socio-economic impacts correlate with local planning policies.”</i>	The existing socio-economic conditions are considered in Section 3.4. Relevant local policies are considered in Section 3.2.5.
Paragraph 5.13.6: <i>“Socio-economic impacts may be linked to other impacts, for example visual impacts considered in Section 5.10 but may also have an impact on tourism and local businesses.”</i>	Potential impacts on the tourism economy and any relevant local businesses, including from visual impacts, are considered in Section 3.8.
Paragraph 5.13.6: <i>“Applicants are encouraged, where possible, to demonstrate that local suppliers have been considered in any supply chain.”</i>	Potential economic impacts are considered in Section 3.8.
Paragraph 5.13.7: <i>“Applicants should consider developing accommodation strategies where appropriate, especially during construction and decommissioning phases, that would include the need to provide temporary accommodation for construction workers if required.”</i>	Demographic and housing impacts are not expected to occur as a result of a development of this size and therefore have not been included within the scope of the assessment (Table 3.29).

Summary of relevant NPS provisions	How and where considered in the PEIR
Paragraph 5.13.8: <i>"The Secretary of State should consider whether mitigation measures are necessary to mitigate any adverse socio-economic impacts of the development. For example, high quality design can improve the visual and environmental experience for visitors and the local community alike."</i>	Potential impacts on the tourism economy, including from visual impacts, are considered in Section 3.8. The MHPGC Project will seek to avoid, minimise and mitigate potential effects, as outlined in Volume 1, Annex 4.1: Draft Commitments Register, of the PEIR. Embedded mitigation relevant to socio-economics is presented in Section 3.7.
Paragraph 5.13.9: <i>"The Secretary of State should have regard to the potential socio-economic impacts of new energy infrastructure identified by the applicant and from any other sources that the Secretary of State considers to be both relevant and important to its decision."</i>	Potential economic impacts are considered in Section 3.8. Social impacts have been scoped out (Table 3.29).
Paragraph 5.13.10: <i>"The Secretary of State may conclude that limited weight is to be given to assertions of socio-economic impacts that are not supported by evidence (particularly in view of the need for energy infrastructure as set out in this NPS)"</i>	A detailed methodology, including the sources of data used, is provided in Volume 4, Chapter 3.1: Economic Impact Technical Report, of the PEIR.
Paragraph 5.13.11: <i>"The Secretary of State should consider any relevant positive provisions the applicant has made or is proposing to make to mitigate impacts (for example through planning obligations) and any legacy benefits that may arise as well as any options for phasing development in relation to the socio-economic impacts."</i>	The MHPGC Project will seek to avoid, minimise and mitigate potential effects, as outlined in Volume 1, Annex 4.1: Draft Commitments Register, of the PEIR. Embedded mitigation relevant to socio-economics is presented in Section 3.7.
Paragraph 5.13.12: <i>"The Secretary of State may wish to include a requirement that specifies the approval by the local authority of an employment and skills plan detailing arrangements to promote local employment and skills development opportunities, including apprenticeships, education, engagement with local schools and colleges and training programmes to be enacted."</i>	Given the scale of the development, no employment and skills plan is proposed.
NPS EN-3	
Paragraph 2.8.153 <i>"Offshore wind farms and offshore transmission infrastructure will occupy an area of the sea or seabed. For offshore wind farms in particular it is inevitable that there will be an impact on navigation in and around the area of the site. This is relevant to both commercial and recreational users of the sea who may be affected by disruption or economic loss because of the proposed offshore wind farm and/or offshore transmission."</i>	Effects on shipping and navigation are considered in Volume 2, Chapter 8: Shipping and Navigation, of the PEIR, and as no significant effects have been identified these have been scoped out (Table 3.29). Effects on commercial fisheries are considered in Volume 2, Chapter 7: Commercial Fisheries, of the PEIR and potential economic impacts arising are considered in Section 3.8.

National Planning Policy Framework

- 3.2.3.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has the potential to be considered important and relevant to the Secretary of State (SoS) consideration of the MHPGC Project (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2025). **Table 3.2** provides details of the elements of the NPPF that are relevant to socio-economic and how and where they are covered in the PEIR or will be covered within the ES.

Table 3.2: Summary of NPPF requirements relevant to socio-economics

NPPF section	How and where this is considered in the PEIR
Introduction, paragraph 8a: <i>“Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):</i> <i>an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure”</i>	The contribution of the MHPGC Project to economic growth is considered in Section 3.8.
Building a strong, competitive economy, paragraph 85: <i>“Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future. This is particularly important where Britain can be a global leader in driving innovation, and in areas with high levels of productivity, which should be able to capitalise on their performance and potential.”</i>	The contribution of the MHPGC Project to economic growth is considered in Section 3.8.
Building a strong, competitive economy, paragraph 87c <i>“Planning policies and decisions should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors. This includes making provision for:</i> <i>c) the expansion or modernisation of other industries of local, regional or national importance to support economic growth and resilience.”</i>	The contribution of the MHPGC Project to economic growth is considered in Section 3.8.
Building a strong, competitive economy, paragraph 88c <i>“Planning policies and decisions should enable:</i> <i>c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside”.</i>	Impacts on tourism, including rural tourism developments within the vicinity of MHPGC Project, are considered in Section 3.8.

3.2.4 Marine planning policy context

3.2.4.1 The following marine plans are relevant to socio-economics and have informed the assessment of preliminary effects in this chapter, their relevance to the MHPGC Project is outlined in Table 3.3:

- The United Kingdom’s (UK) Marine Policy Statement (MPS) (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), 2020);
- Scotland’s National Marine Plan (MD-LOT, 2015);
- Northeast Marine Plan (Marine Management Organisation (MMO), 2024).

Table 3.3: Marine planning policy relevant to socio-economics

Marine plan description	How and where considered in the PEIR
UK Marine Policy Statement	
Economic and Social Considerations 2.5.2 <i>"Well-planned marine developments that deliver environmental, social, and economic benefits—such as investment opportunities, export growth, and tax revenue—will be actively supported as part of achieving sustainable development goals."</i>	Economic impacts are considered in Section 3.8 . Cumulative effects assessment (including supporting the development of manufacturing) has been undertaken and is presented in Section 3.9 .
Energy production and infrastructure development 3.3.4 <i>"Decision makers should consider the potential impact of inward investment in offshore wind, wave, tidal stream and tidal range energy related manufacturing and deployment activity; as well as the impact of associated employment opportunities on the regeneration of local and national economies. All of these activities support the objective of developing the UK's low carbon manufacturing capability."</i>	Cumulative effects assessment (including supporting the development of manufacturing) has been undertaken and is presented in Section 3.9 .
Energy production and infrastructure development 3.3.19 <i>"Being the most mature of the offshore renewable energy technologies, offshore wind has the potential to have the largest impact in the medium-term on security of energy supply and carbon emission reductions through its commercial scale output. Expansion of the offshore wind supply is likely to require significant investment in new high-value manufacturing capability with potential to regenerate local and national economies and provide employment."</i>	Cumulative effects assessment (including supporting the development of manufacturing) has been undertaken and is presented in Section 3.9 .
Scottish National Marine Plan	
Policy GEN 2 Economic Benefit Sustainable development which provides economic benefit to communities is encouraged.	Economic impacts are considered in Section 3.8 .
Paragraph 4.7 <i>"Sustainable development and use of the marine environment can provide multiple economic benefits at a community and national level, including economic growth, skills development, employment, maintaining or increasing population levels and opportunities for investment and trade."</i>	Economic impacts at the local and national level, including employment and a breakdown by sector, are considered in Section 3.8 . The potential for investment in the supply chain is considered in Table 3.43 . Demographic effects have been scoped out, as discussed in Table 3.29 .
Paragraph 4.8 <i>"The economic benefit of proposed development and use should be considered carefully and taken into account, appropriately and proportionately, in marine decision making."</i>	Potential economic impacts are considered in Section 3.8 .
Paragraph 4.9 <i>"Particular consideration should be given to opportunities that aim to provide benefit to communities, including local job creation and local training either directly or through supply chain projects."</i>	Potential economic impacts are considered in Section 3.8 , including at the local level and in local supply chains.
Policy 11: Offshore Wind and Marine Renewable Energy <i>"Economic benefits from offshore wind, wave and tidal energy developments maximised by securing a competitive local supply chain in Scotland."</i>	Potential economic impacts are considered in Section 3.8 . Cumulative effects assessment (including supporting the development of manufacturing) has been undertaken and is presented in Section 3.9 .
Northeast Marine Plan	

Marine plan description	How and where considered in the PEIR
NE-REN-1 - Proposals that enable the provision of renewable energy technologies and associated supply chains, will be supported.	Potential economic impacts, including in the local supply chain, are considered in Section 3.8 .
NE-EMP-1 Proposals that result in a net increase in marine-related employment will be supported, particularly where they meet one or more of the following: 1) are aligned with local skills strategies and support the skills available 2) create a diversity of opportunities 3) create employment in locations identified as the most deprived 4) implement new technologies - in, and adjacent to, the north east marine plan areas."	Potential economic impacts are considered in Section 3.8 . Relevant marine and local policies are considered in Table 3.3 and Table 3.4 .
NE-ACC-1: Proposals that may have significant adverse impacts on public access should demonstrate that they will, in order of preference: a) avoid b) minimise c) mitigate - adverse impacts so they are no longer significant.	The MHPGC Project will seek to avoid, minimise and mitigate potential effects, including on public access. Effects on tourism, including from changes in public access, are considered in Section 3.8 . Embedded mitigation relevant to socio-economics is presented in Section 3.7 .
NE-TR-1: Proposals that may have significant adverse impacts on tourism and recreation activities must demonstrate that they will, in order of preference: a) avoid b) minimise c) mitigate - adverse impacts so they are no longer significant.	Effects on tourism are considered in Section 3.8 , based on the impacts arising from changes in environmental conditions, following mitigation (e.g. visual impacts). How the mitigation hierarchy has been applied relevant to socio-economics is presented in Section 3.7 .

3.2.5 Local policy context

3.2.5.1 The onshore components of the MHPGC Project lie within the jurisdiction of Durham County Council near Seaham and close to the border with Sunderland City Council's administrative area, as discussed in **Section 3.4.2**. The following local policy is relevant to socio-economics and has informed the assessment of preliminary effects in this chapter:

- County Durham Plan (Durham County Council, 2020);
- City Plan 2026-2035 (Sunderland City Council, 2026).

3.2.5.2 Their relevance of specific policies to the MHPGC Project is outlined in **Table 3.4**.

Table 3.4: Local policy relevant to socio-economics

Policy description	How and where considered in the PEIR
County Durham Plan	
Policy 33 – Renewable and Low Carbon Energy <i>"Renewable and low carbon energy development in appropriate locations will be supported. In determining planning applications for such projects significant weight will be given to the achievement of wider social, environmental and economic benefits."</i>	Wider economic benefits are considered in Section 3.8 .

Policy description	How and where considered in the PEIR
Sunderland City Plan 2026-2035	
Ambition: <i>Inward investment, job creation and high performing businesses and employers create opportunities for all residents of the city, with Sunderland making a significant contribution to the UK's economic growth</i>	The contribution of the MHPGC Project to economic growth is considered in Section 3.8 .

3.3 Consultation and engagement

3.3.1 Scoping

- 3.3.1.1 The MHPGC Project Scoping Report 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 provided a Scoping Opinion in March 2025 (PINS, 2025; MD-LOT, 2025).
- 3.3.1.2 **Table 3.5** sets out the key comments raised during the scoping process specific to socio-economics, with details of how these comments have been addressed within the PEIR.

Table 3.5: Summary of scoping responses relevant to socio-economics

Comment	How and where considered in the PEIR
Marine Analytical Unit	
Given the scale of this project, Marine Analytical Unit (MAU) agree that only economic impacts on Scotland will be assessed.	Economic impacts in Scotland are considered in Section 3.8 .
We broadly agree with the proposed approach for assessing economic impacts, in particular that the assessment will include direct, indirect and induced impacts for all phases of the project. We recommend that the assessment takes into account deadweight, leakage, displacement and substitution, and that sensitivity analysis will be performed to account for risk, uncertainty and optimism bias.	Deadweight, leakage, displacement and substitution are discussed in Volume 4, Chapter 3.1: Economic Impact Technical Report, of the PEIR . Direct, indirect and induced effects are considered across the construction, O&M, and decommissioning phases. As the assessment is based on the worst case scenario, which would represent the lowest realistic economic impact, no sensitivity analysis has been undertaken.
We expect to see a detailed description of the methodology used to assess economic impacts in the assessment, including specific details about the methodological approach taken and any key assumptions that underpin any estimates. This may be supplied in a technical annex if necessary.	A detailed methodology is provided in Volume 4, Chapter 3.1: Economic Impact Technical Report, of the PEIR , which includes the approach taken and key assumptions.
MD-LOT	
The Scottish Ministers are content that only economic impacts on Scotland will be assessed in the EIA Report.	Potential economic impacts in Scotland are considered in Section 3.8 .
In terms of the approach to assessing economic impacts, the Scottish Ministers broadly agree with what the Applicant has proposed and that the assessment will include direct, indirect and induced impacts for all phases of the Proposed Works. The Scottish Ministers direct the Applicant further to the MAU advice and recommend that this is fully considered when bringing together the EIA Report.	Potential economic impacts, including direct, indirect and induced impacts, are considered in Section 3.8 . In line with the responses above, comments from the MAU have been considered within the assessment.

Comment	How and where considered in the PEIR
The Scottish Ministers additionally direct the Applicant to the MAU advice in terms of employment impacts and the methodology used to assess economic impacts and request that this is fully considered and implemented by the Applicant in the EIA Report.	Potential economic impacts are considered in Section 3.8 . A detailed methodology is provided in Volume 4, Chapter 3.1: Economic Impact Technical Report, of the PEIR .
PINS	
ID54.1 The Inspectorate is content to scope out socio-economic effects on the English and UK economies from commercial fisheries. However, the Inspectorate is not content to scope out the socio-economic effects from commercial fisheries on the local socio-economic study area. There is not enough information at this time to identify the scale of any potential impacts from the proposed development on commercial fisheries.	Effects on commercial fisheries are considered in Volume 2, Chapter 7: Commercial Fisheries, of the PEIR . Socio-economic effects from changes to commercial fisheries are discussed in Section 3.8 and will be assessed in the ES, once mitigation has been developed.
ID54.2 The Inspectorate is content to scope out socio-economic effects on the English and UK economies from shipping and navigation. However, the Inspectorate is not content to scope out the socio-economic effects from shipping and navigation on the local socio-economic study area. There is not enough information at this time to identify the scale of any potential impacts from the proposed development on shipping and navigation.	Effects on shipping and navigation are considered in Volume 2, Chapter 8: Shipping and Navigation, of the PEIR . As no significant effects have been identified these have been scoped out (Table 3.29).
ID54.3 The proposed assessment methodology in the Scoping Report is high level and does not identify what would be considered a significant effect in EIA terms for the socio-economic assessment. The ES should make clear how any likely significant effects have been determined for socio-economic aspects of the proposed development and clearly describe the methodology adopted for the assessment. Where professional judgement has been used this should be supported with robust evidence.	The methodology for assessing significant effects is provided in Section 3.5 .

3.3.2 Further consultation and engagement

3.3.2.1 No additional consultation with respect to socio-economics has been undertaken.

3.4 Baseline Characterisation

3.4.1 Overview

3.4.1.1 **Volume 1, Chapter 2: Project Description, of the PEIR** sets out the description of the MHPGC Project and **Volume 1, Chapter 4: Approach to Environmental Impact Assessment, of the PEIR** sets out the overarching approach that has been used in developing the preliminary environmental information.

3.4.1.2 This section describes the methods and data sources used to characterise the baseline for socio-economics within the study area and describes the existing baseline characteristics.

3.4.2 Socio-Economics Study Areas

3.4.2.1 To identify the Socio-economics Local Study Area, Scottish Government guidance on identifying study areas for assessing the impact of marine developments (Marine Scotland, 2022) has been used. While there is no similar guidance for England, the principles are transferable.

3.4.2.2 The guidance identifies six principles for identifying the relevant study area for offshore development:

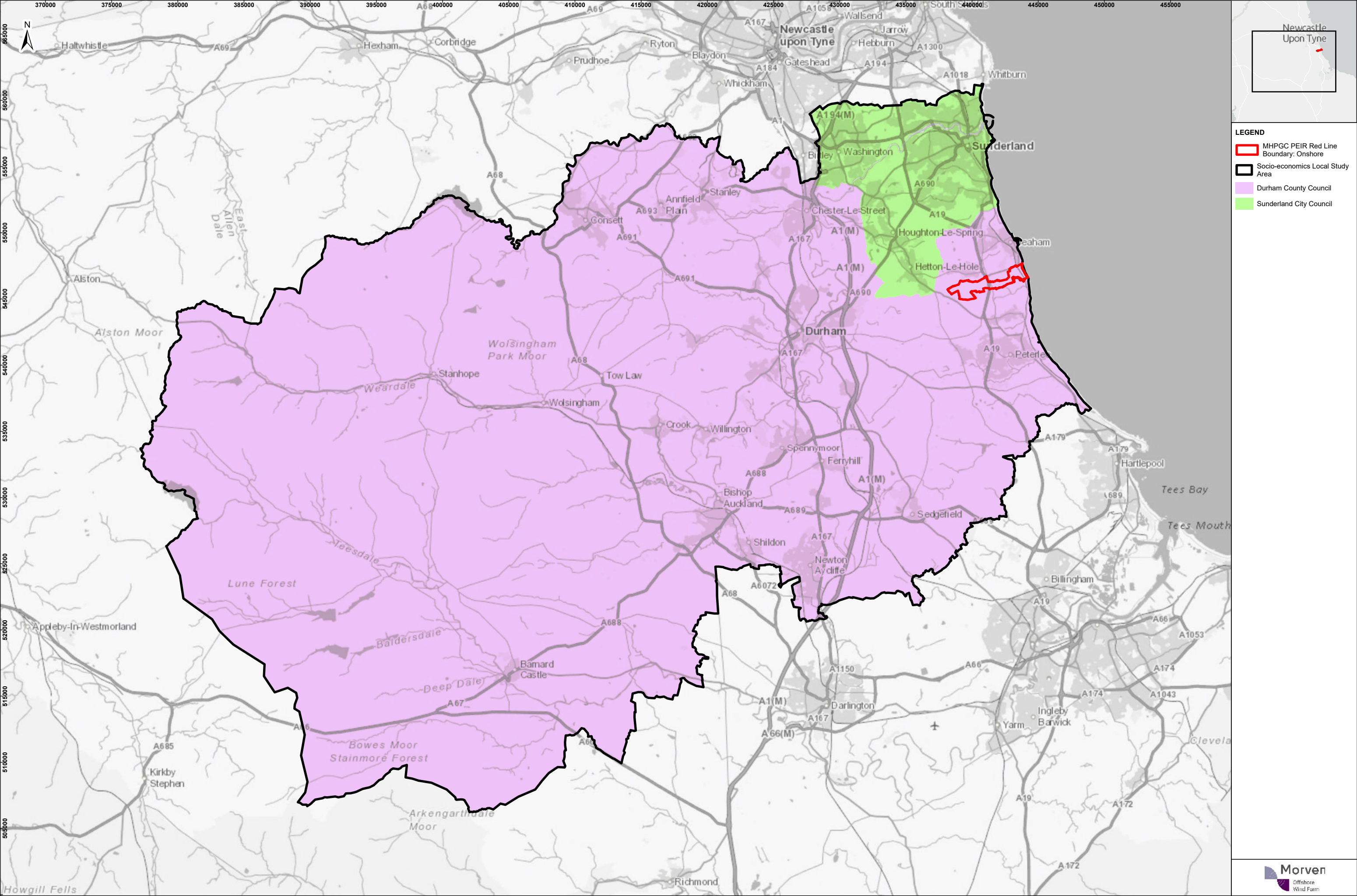
- Principle 1 (Dual Geographies): The local area for the supply chain and investment impacts should be separate from the local area(s) for wider socio-economic impacts, including tourism and recreation;
- Principle 2 (Appropriate Impacts): The appropriate impacts to be considered for assessments should be identified before defining the local areas;
- Principle 3 (Epicentres): The local areas should include all the epicentres of the appropriate impacts;
- Principle 4 (Accountability): The local areas used in the assessment should comprise of pre-existing economic or political geographies (community councils, local authorities, development agencies) to enhance accountability;
- Principle 5 (Understandable): The local areas should be defined in such a way that they are understandable to the communities they describe;
- Principle 6 (Connected Geography): The local area for the supply chain and investment impacts should consist of connected (including coastal) pre-existing economic or political geographies.

3.4.2.3 While much of the MHPGC Project is located offshore, for most of the socio-economic impacts the relevant Socio-economic Study Areas are onshore. The local socio-economic impacts has been determined by the locality of the MHPGC Project PEIR Red Line Boundary and the onshore land substation (LSS), which are considered epicentres of impact (in line with Principle 3 (Epicentres)) and are located on the Durham Coast near Seaham. Therefore, the following local authorities (hereafter referred to as the Socio-economics Local Study Area) have been identified: Durham County Council and Sunderland City Council (in line with Principle 4 (Accountability), Principle 5 (Understandable) and Principle 6 (Connected Geography)). The Socio-economics Local Study Area is shown on **Figure 3.1**.

3.4.2.4 The MHPGC Project consists of an offshore component, in Scottish and English waters, and onshore components, in England. On this basis, the following Socio-economics Study Areas have been identified:

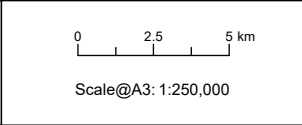
- the Socio-economics Local Study Area;
- England;
- Scotland;
- the UK.

3.4.2.5 In addition, a Socio-economics Tourism and Recreation Study Area has been identified within 2km of the MHPGC Project PEIR Red Line Boundary: Onshore and within 5km of the LSS Option Areas, which forms the basis for the assessment of tourism and recreation impacts. Socio-economics Tourism and Recreation Study Area is shown in **Figure 3.2**.



Project Name:
MORVEN HAWTHORN PIT GRID
CONNECTION PROJECT

Drawing Title:
FIGURE 3.1 SOCIO-ECONOMICS LOCAL STUDY AREA



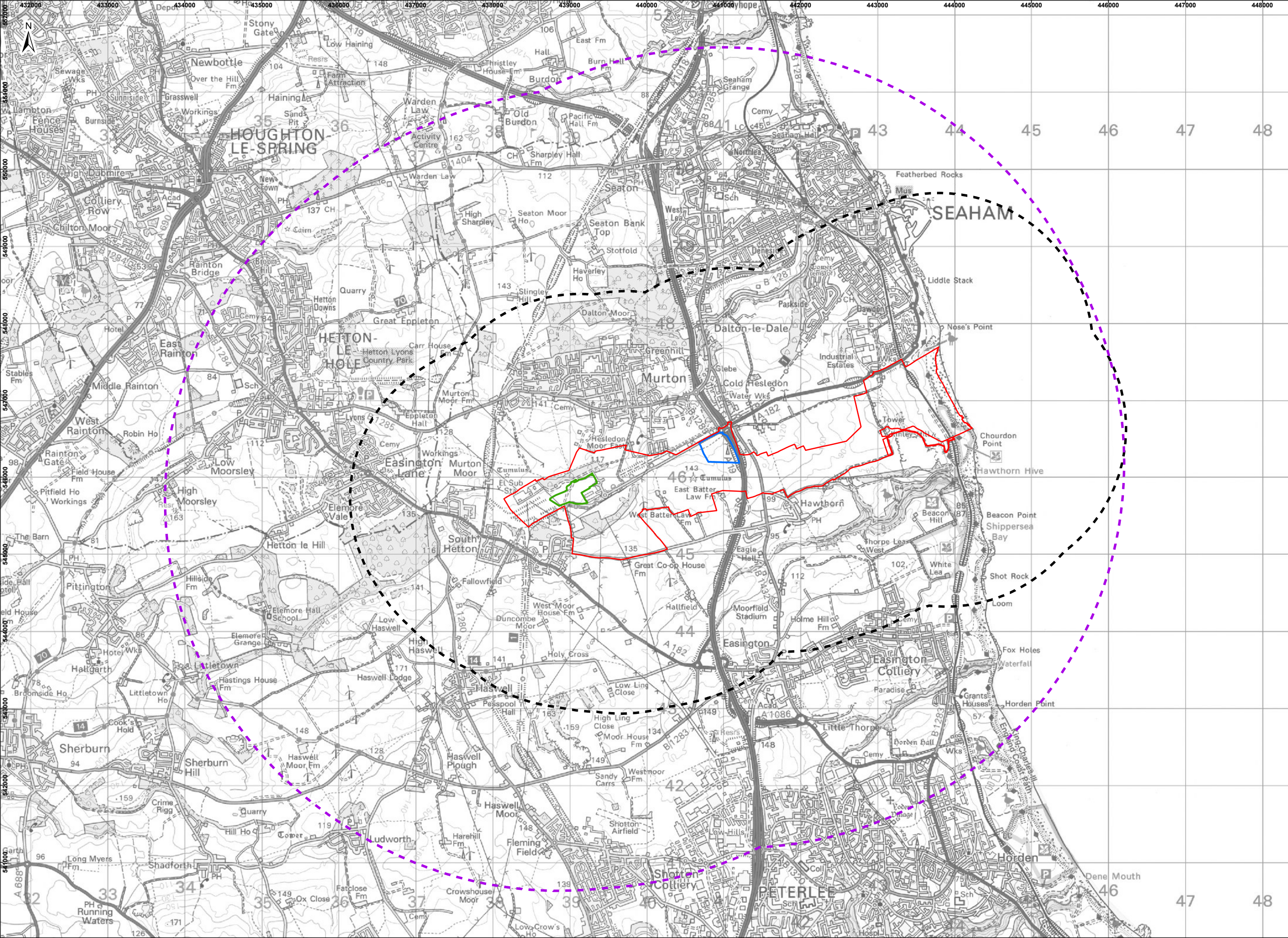
Geodetic Information:
Datum: OSGB 1936
Projection: British National Grid

Data Sources:
BP, Ordnance Survey, Historic England

Service Layer Credits:
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Light Gray Base: Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

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- LEGEND**
- MHPGC PEIR Red Line Boundary: Onshore
 - LSS Search Area (Green Option)
 - LSS Search Area (Blue Option)
 - Socio-economics, Tourism and Recreation Study Area
 - Socio-economics, Tourism and Recreation Study Area (LSS Options)

Project Name:
MORVEN HAWTHORN PIT GRID
CONNECTION PROJECT

Drawing Title:
FIGURE 3.2 SOCIO-ECONOMICS, TOURISM AND RECREATION STUDY AREA

0 0.5 1 km
Scale@A3: 1:45,000

Geodetic Information:
Datum: OSGB 1936
Projection: British National Grid

Data Sources:
BP, Ordnance Survey, Historic England

Service Layer Credits:
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Light Gray Base: Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

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3.4.3 Relevant guidance

3.4.3.1 The preliminary assessment has been carried out in accordance with the following guidance documents:

- General Advice for Offshore Socio-economic Impact Assessments (MAU, 2022);
- Defining 'local area' for assessing impact of offshore renewables and other marine developments: guidance principles (Marine Scotland, 2022);
- UK Offshore Wind Sector Deal (UK Government, 2020);
- The Green Book: Appraisal and Evaluation in Central Government (HM Treasury, 2024).

3.4.4 Receptors for Assessment

3.4.4.1 **Table 3.6** outlines the receptors for each impact taken forward to assessment, which includes socio-economic study areas identified in **Section 3.4.2** and impacts on visitor attractions within the Socio-economics Tourism and Recreation Study Area, which are discussed in more detail in **Section 3.4.6**.

3.4.4.2 As discussed in the Maximum Design Scenario (Table 3.30), commercial fisheries receptors have been identified based on significant effects identified in **Volume 2, Chapter 7: Commercial Fisheries, of the PEIR**.

Table 3.6: Receptors Taken Forward to Assessment

Impact	Receptors	Justification
Construction phase		
Increased employment and Gross Value Added (GVA)	Economies of the Socio-Economics Local Study Area, England, Scotland and the UK	Potential significant impacts on the economies of the Socio-Economics Local Study Area, England, Scotland and the UK
Impacts on visitor behaviour	Tourism economy of the Socio-Economics Local Study Area	Potential significant impacts on the tourism economy of the Socio-Economics Local Study Area
Economic impacts from changes to commercial fisheries	Receptors identified in Volume 2, Chapter 7: Commercial Fisheries, of the PEIR (if applicable)	Potential significant impacts on commercial fisheries receptors will be based on the assessment in Volume 2, Chapter 7: Commercial Fisheries, of the PEIR .
O&M phase		
Increased employment and GVA	Economies of the Socio-Economics Local Study Area, England, Scotland and the UK	Potential significant impacts on the economies of the Socio-Economics Local Study Area, England, Scotland and the UK
Impacts on visitor behaviour	Tourism economy of the Socio-Economics Local Study Area	Potential significant impacts on the tourism economy of the Socio-Economics Local Study Area
Economic impacts from changes to commercial fisheries	Receptors identified in Volume 2, Chapter 7: Commercial Fisheries, of the PEIR (if applicable)	Potential significant impacts on commercial fisheries receptors will be based on the assessment in Volume 2, Chapter 7: Commercial Fisheries, of the PEIR .
Decommissioning phase		
Increased employment and GVA	Economies of the Socio-Economics Local Study Area, England, Scotland and the UK	Potential significant impacts on the economies of the Socio-Economics Local Study Area, England, Scotland and the UK
Impacts on visitor behaviour	Tourism economy of the Socio-Economics Local Study Area	Potential significant impacts on the tourism economy of the Socio-Economics Local Study Area

Impact	Receptors	Justification
Economic impacts from changes to commercial fisheries	Receptors identified in Volume 2, Chapter 7: Commercial Fisheries, of the PEIR (if applicable)	Potential significant impacts on commercial fisheries receptors will be based on the assessment in Volume 2, Chapter 7: Commercial Fisheries, of the PEIR .

3.4.5 Baseline data sources

Desk study

- 3.4.5.1 Information on socio-economics within each of the study areas was collected through a detailed and comprehensive review of existing studies and datasets.
- 3.4.5.2 Both literature review of other relevant reports and existing data has been used to characterise the baseline.
- 3.4.5.3 **Table 3.7** sets out the data sources used to inform the assessment.

Table 3.7: Summary of data sources

Title	Source	Year of Publication	Author
Business Register and Employment Survey	Office for National Statistics (ONS), 2025a	2025	ONS
Annual Population Survey, Jan-Dec 2024	ONS, 2025b	2025	ONS
Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings - resident analysis 2024	ONS, 2025c	2025	ONS
Subnational Population projections for England: 2022-based	ONS, 2025d	2025	ONS
Population estimates – local authority based by single year of age	ONS, 2026	2026	ONS
Business Register and Employment Survey	Northern Ireland Statistics Research Agency (NISRA), 2025a	2025	NISRA
Projected Population of Scotland: 2022-based	National Records of Scotland (NRS), 2025	2025	NRS
2022-based Population Projections for Northern Ireland	NISRA, 2025b	2025	NISRA
Population Projections by Year and Age: 2022-based	Welsh Government, 2025	2025	Welsh Government
Walking the Coast	Durham Heritage Coast, 2025	2025	Durham Heritage Coast
King Charles III England Coast Path – North East and East Coast Map Information	National Trail, 2025	2025	National Trail
Hiking: Durham Heritage Coast Walk	OSMaps, 2026	2026	OSMaps
Durham County Council: Public Rights of Way	Durham County Council, 2026	2026	Durham County Council
Visit Sunderland	MySunderland, 2026	2026	MySunderland
England Visitor Attractions	VisitBritain, 2025	2025	VisitBritain
Top Attractions	This is Durham, 2026	2026	This is Durham

Title	Source	Year of Publication	Author
Great Britain Day Visitor Survey 2019	Kantar TNS, 2020	2020	Kantar TNS
Great Britain Tourism Survey 2019	Kantar TNS, 2020	2020	Kantar TNS
International Passenger Survey 2019	ONS, 2020	2020	ONS

Site specific surveys

- 3.4.5.4 No site-specific surveys have been undertaken to inform the EIA process for socio-economics.

Data limitations and assumptions

- 3.4.5.5 One limitation of this assessment is the reliance on population data from 2024. More up to date data will be presented in the ES, subject to availability. Data on tourist visits and expenditure is averaged across the years 2017-2019 and more recent consistent data published for all study areas is not yet available. Should more up to date data be available it will be incorporated into the baseline for the ES.

3.4.6 Overview of baseline environment

Economy

Population

- 3.4.6.1 In 2024, the Socio-economics Local Study Area (which includes the local authority areas of Durham County Council and Sunderland County Council) had a total population of 826,617, representing 1.4% of the total population of England (ONS, 2026).
- 3.4.6.2 As shown in **Table 3.8**, approximately 61.8% of people living in the Socio-economics Local Study Area are of working age (16-64), a lower share than is accounted for by this age group across both England (62.9%) and the UK as a whole (62.8%).
- 3.4.6.3 Across Scotland, approximately 63.3% of the population are of working age, slightly above average compared to the UK as a whole.

Table 3.8: Population estimates for the Socio-economics Study Areas, 2024

Significance classification	Socio-economics Local Study Area	England	Scotland	UK
Total Population	826,617	58,620,101	5,546,900	69,281,437
% aged under 16	16.7%	18.4%	16.2%	18.2%
% aged 16-64	61.8%	62.9%	63.3%	62.8%
% aged 65 and over	21.5%	18.7%	20.5%	19.0%

Industrial structure

Socio-Economics Local Study Area

- 3.4.6.4 The relative distribution of employment by sector provides an indication of the Socio-economic Study Areas' dependence on particular types of economic activity (ONS, 2025a). It also offers insight into the area's capacity to support and retain economic activity associated with the construction, O&M, and decommissioning phases of the MHPGC Project.
- 3.4.6.5 As shown in **Table 3.9**, in the Socio-economics Local Study Area, the largest share of the workforce were employed in human health and social work activities (14.6%), above average compared to both England (13.3%) and the UK (13.7%) (NISRA, 2025a). Employment in the manufacturing sector is also significantly above average, accounting for 14.3% of employment in the Socio-economics Local

Study Area, and 6.7% and 7.5% of employment in England and the UK, respectively. Over a quarter (28.4%) of manufacturing employment in the Socio-economics Local Study Area was associated with the manufacture of motor vehicles, trailers and semi-trailers. The manufacture of fabricated metal products and machinery and equipment was also significant, accounting for 15.3% and 8.5% of total manufacturing employment in the Socio-economics Local Study Area, respectively.

3.4.6.6 Construction employment is above average in the Socio-economics Local Study Area. The sector accounts for 5.7% of total employment, above average compared to 5.1% of employment in England and 4.9% of employment in the UK.

3.4.6.7 Accommodation and food services, generally associated with the tourism sector, represents a below average share of employment in the Socio-economics Local Study Area. Employment in the sector is equivalent to 6.7% of all employment in the Socio-economics Local Study Area, in comparison to 7.8% in England and 7.9% across the UK as a whole.

Scotland

3.4.6.8 In Scotland, human health and social work activities is also the most significant employer, accounting for 15.6% of employment in 2023. Employment in construction is slightly above average (5.1%) compared to the UK as a whole (4.9%), while employment in manufacturing (6.7%) and professional, scientific and technical activities (7.2%) is below average compared to the UK (7.5% and 9.2%, respectively).

Table 3.9: Employment by sector in the Socio-economics Study Areas, 2023

Sector	Socio-economics Local Study Area	England	Scotland	UK
Human health and social work activities	14.6%	13.3%	15.6%	13.7%
Manufacturing	14.3%	7.3%	6.7%	7.5%
Wholesale and retail trade	11.7%	13.7%	13.2%	13.7%
Education	10.6%	8.3%	8.2%	8.4%
Public administration and defence	7.5%	4.2%	6.2%	4.6%
Accommodation and food service activities	6.7%	7.8%	8.6%	7.9%
Transportation and storage	6.0%	5.1%	4.5%	4.9%
Construction	5.7%	4.8%	5.1%	4.9%
Administrative and support service activities	5.7%	8.8%	6.8%	8.5%
Professional, scientific and technical activities	3.8%	9.7%	7.2%	9.2%
Arts, entertainment and recreation	2.7%	2.6%	2.7%	2.6%
Real estate activities	2.0%	2.1%	1.5%	2.0%
Other service activities	1.9%	2.0%	1.7%	2.0%
Information and communication	1.9%	4.7%	3.1%	4.4%
Financial and insurance activities	1.7%	3.4%	3.2%	3.3%
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	1.4%	1.2%	3.4%	1.4%
Water supply	1.2%	0.7%	0.8%	0.7%
Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	0.6%	0.3%	0.7%	0.4%

Sector	Socio-economics Local Study Area	England	Scotland	UK
Mining and quarrying	0.1%	0.1%	0.9%	0.1%
Total Jobs	307,830	28,248,000	2,655,000	33,082,504

Economic activity

- 3.4.6.9 As shown in **Table 3.10**, in 2024, the economic activity rate (which is the share of working age adults who are active in the labour market, either in employment or looking for employment) in the Socio-economics Local Study Area was 75.7%, lower than both England (78.9%) and the UK as a whole (78.5%) (ONS, 2025b), while, at 8.3%, the unemployment rate in the Socio-economics Local Study Area was higher than the English average (3.9%) and UK average (3.8%).
- 3.4.6.10 In terms of earnings, residents of the Socio-economics Local Study Area had a median annual gross income of £28,343. This is below average compared to England (£31,840) and the UK (£31,602) (ONS, 2025c).
- 3.4.6.11 The economic activity rate of Scotland (77.0%) and the unemployment rate (3.2%) were slightly below average for the UK. Median annual gross income in Scotland was above average at £31,891.

Table 3.10: Economic activity in the Socio-economics Study Areas, 2024

Sector	Socio-economics Local Study Area	England	Scotland	UK
Economic Activity Rate	75.7%	78.9%	77.0%	78.5%
Unemployment Rate	8.3%	3.9%	3.2%	3.8%
Median Annual Gross Income (residents)	£28,343	£31,840	£31,891	£31,602

Education and skills

- 3.4.6.12 In the Socio-economics Local Study Area, 35.8% of people aged 16 to 64 have attained a qualification at Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) Level 4, equivalent to the first year of a Bachelor's degree or above (ONS, 2025b), which is below the average for both England (47.1%) and the UK (47.4%). Similarly, 61.9% have reached at least RQF Level 3 (equivalent to an A-level), also lower than the attainment qualifications at this level across England (67.6%) and the UK (67.8%). This is shown in **Table 3.11**. Qualifications at RQF2+ (equivalent to GCSEs at A*-C) and RQF1+ (equivalent to GCSE at D-G) are broadly similar across the study areas.
- 3.4.6.13 In the Socio-economics Local Study Area 2.5% of the population has other qualifications, lower than for the UK (4.2%). This includes foreign qualifications, some professional/vocational qualifications and others that can't be determined
- 3.4.6.14 An above average share of people aged 16 to 64 in Scotland have achieved a qualification equivalent to RQF Level 4 (54.5%) and qualifications equivalent to RQF Level 3 (72.5%).

Table 3.11: Qualifications in the Socio-economics Study Areas, 2024

Sector	Socio-economics Local Study Area	England	Scotland	UK
% with RQF4+	35.8%	47.1%	54.5%	47.4%
% with RQF3+	61.9%	67.6%	72.5%	67.8%
% with RQF2+	86.3%	86.7%	87.4%	86.6%
% with RQF1+	89.1%	89.2%	88.6%	89.0%

Sector	Socio-economics Local Study Area	England	Scotland	UK
% with other qualifications	2.5%	4.3%	3.4%	4.2%
% with no qualifications	8.5%	6.4%	8.0%	6.8%

Tourism

3.4.6.15 This section considers the tourism economy of the Socio-economics Local Study Area, which the MHPGC Project is located in, as well as the visitor attractions that are located within the Socio-economics Tourism and Recreation Study Area (i.e. the vicinity of the MHPC Project). This places the Socio-economics Tourism and Recreation Study Area within the appropriate context to assess its contribution to the wider tourism economy.

Durham Destination Management Plan 2023-2030

3.4.6.16 The Durham Destination Management Plan (Visit County Durham, 2023) serves as the strategic framework for the county's tourism economy. Developed through extensive consultation with local businesses, residents, and industry stakeholders, the plan seeks to utilise the region's cultural and natural assets to drive sustainable economic growth. To achieve this, the plan sets out three overarching visions for tourism in County Durham:

- **Economy:** Our vision is to create the conditions for our residents, businesses, and the environment to benefit from sustainable growth in our visitor economy. By supporting and marketing our distinctive heritage, landscapes, and warm welcome we will grow both day and overnight visits and make County Durham a compelling visitor destination;
- **Social:** Our vision for sustainable tourism in County Durham over the next 10 years is to create a destination that harmoniously balances the needs of visitors, businesses, communities, and the environment. We envision a thriving industry that enhances the visitor experience, supports local businesses, empowers communities, is equitable and inclusive and preserves the natural and cultural heritage of the region;
- **Environment:** County Durham will encourage a regenerative approach to visitor economy development that focuses on restoring, renewing, and revitalising the natural and cultural resources of County Durham through sustainable practices. We will create positive impacts on the environment, local communities, and economies while providing authentic and meaningful experiences for visitors.

Tourism economy

3.4.6.17 Data available on visitor numbers and spend have been collated from the Great Britain Day Visitors Survey (GBDVS) (Kantar TNS, 2020a), Great Britain Tourism Survey (GBTS) (Kantar TNS, 2020b), and the International Passenger Survey Statistics (ONS, 2020).

3.4.6.18 The GBDVS presents data on visitor numbers and spend for each region in England and the survey used covers activity between 2017 and 2019. As shown in **Table 3.12**, on average, there were 6.4 million day visitors to the Socio-economics Local Study Area, spending a total £188.6 million. This is equivalent to approximately 0.5% of day visitor spending across Great Britain. Average spend per visit for day visitors to the Socio-economics Local Study Area was £29, below average when compared to both England (£41) and the UK as a whole (£41).

3.4.6.19 The Socio-economics Local Study Area received an average 0.7 million domestic overnight visitors, with an average annual spend of £127.2 million, equivalent to 0.4% of domestic overnight visitor expenditure across Great Britain. This group of tourists spent an average £179 per trip in the Socio-economics Local Study Area, below the average spend per trip of domestic overnight visitors in England (£251) and the UK (£244).

3.4.6.20 Between 2016 and 2018, on average 0.1 million international overnight visitors stayed in the Socio-economics Local Study Area. The total average annual spend in the area was £65.2 million, equivalent to 0.2% of expenditure by international overnight visitors across Great Britain. The average

spend per trip for this group was £655 in the Socio-economics Local Study Area, compared to £679 in England and £672 across Great Britain.

Table 3.12: Number and spend of visitors to the Socio-economics Study Areas, 2017-2019

Parameter	Socio-economics Local Study Area	England	Scotland	Great Britain
Visits (million)				
Day Visitors	6.4	842.3	94.2	945.5
Domestic Overnight Visitors	0.7	98.3	12.4	120.7
International Overnight Visitors	0.1	35.8	3.5	40.8
Spend (£ million)				
Day Visitors	188.6	34,439.3	3,275.8	38,308.1
Domestic Overnight Visitors	127.2	24,646.5	2,989.3	29,463.8
International Overnight Visitors	65.2	24,281.6	2,458.6	27,413.2

Major visitor attractions in the Socio-economics Local Study Area

- 3.4.6.21 Through an online search of This is Durham (This is Durham, 2026), MySunderland (MySunderland, 2026) and VisitBritain (VisitBritain, 2025), fifteen major visitor attractions in the Socio-economics Local Study Area were identified and have been detailed in **Table 3.13**. Proximity was calculated based on the distance between the attraction and the LSS Option Areas, unless otherwise stated.
- 3.4.6.22 The visitor attractions identified all contribute to the attractiveness of the tourism and recreation offering of the Socio-economics Local Study Area to visitors, either directly through their location within this area, or indirectly by bringing tourism to nearby areas which has spill-over impacts on the economy.
- 3.4.6.23 As can be seen in **Table 3.13**, all the identified attractions are located over 5km from the LSS Option Areas. This suggests that tourism activity is not strongly concentrated around the MHPGC Project.

Table 3.13: Visitor attractions in the Socio-Economics Local Study Area

Attraction	Distance from Blue LSS Option Area (km)	Distance from Green LSS Option Area (km)	Distance from MHPGC Project PEIR Red Line Boundary: Onshore (km)
Sunderland Museum, Winter Gardens	10	11	10
WWT Washington	12	12	12
Crook Hall	12	13	11
Durham Botanic Gardens	14	12	12
Durham Cathedral	14	12	11
Museum of Archaeology	14	12	11
Sunderland Marine Activities Centre and Adventure Sunderland	12	13	11

Attraction	Distance from Blue LSS Option Area (km)	Distance from Green LSS Option Area (km)	Distance from MHPGC Project PEIR Red Line Boundary: Onshore (km)
National Trust - Washington Old Hall	14	13	13
North East Land, Sea and Air Museums	14	14	14
Oriental Museum	14	13	12
Ushaw Historic House, Chapels & Gardens	19	17	16
Beamish - The Living Museum of the North	20	19	18
The Auckland Project	25	23	23
Aycliffe Nature Park	26	25	25
Locomotion	26	25	25
Forestry England Hamsterley	36	34	34
Raby Castle, Park and Gardens	37	35	35
The Bowes Museum	46	44	44
Barnard Castle	46	45	44

Tourism employment proximate to the LSS Option Areas and MHPGC Project PEIR Red Line Boundary: Onshore

3.4.6.24 In 2024, total employment in tourism (as defined by sectors considered sustainable tourism by the Scottish Government (Scottish Government, 2018)) in the defined geographies covering the Socio-Economics Tourism and Recreation Study Area (including the electoral wards Dalton & Dawdon, Easington & Shotton, Murton, and Hetton) was 795 (ONS, 2025a). This represents 3.7% of total employment in the area. This is below average compared to the wider Socio-Economics Local Study Area (6.5%), England (7.9%), Scotland (9.1%), and Great Britain (8.0%) (**Table 3.14**).

Table 3.14: Tourism Employment by Area, 2024

Measure	Socio-Economics Tourism and Recreation Study Area	Socio-Economics Local Study Area	England	Scotland	Great Britain
Total Tourism Employment	795	20,500	2,250,500	239,000	2,602,500
Share of Employment Accounted for by Tourism	3.7%	6.5%	7.9%	9.1%	8.0%

Visitor attractions proximate to the LSS Option Areas and MHPGC Project PEIR Red Line Boundary: Onshore

3.4.6.25 Thirteen visitor attractions were identified within 5km of the LSS Option Areas and within 2km of the MHPGC Project PEIR Red Line Boundary: Onshore (the Socio-economics Tourism and Recreation Study Area) from online searches, This is Durham (This is Durham, 2026) and MySunderland

(MySunderland, 2026). These are detailed in **Table 3.15** and shown in . Local visitor attractions contribute to the attractiveness of the Socio-economics Local Study Area and support the local economy.

Table 3.15: Visitor attractions within the Socio-economics Tourism and Recreation Study Area

Attraction	Description	Distance from Blue LSS Option Area (km)	Distance from Green LSS Option Area (km)	Distance from MHPGC Project PEIR Red Line Boundary: Onshore (km)
The Hole In Wand, Dalton Park	Magic-themed indoor mini golf course	0.6	1.6	0.4
Elmore Park	135 acre park where visitors can view local wildlife and a garden	4.7	3.2	2.6
Hetton Lyons Country Park	Country park where visitors can walk and take part in recreational activities such as football and fishing	4.5	3.3	2.9
Hawthorn Dene Nature Reserve	Coastal reserve where visitors can view local woodland, limestone hay meadows, and the local wildlife	1.4	3.8	0.1
Kinley Hill Pumpkin Patch	Seasonal attraction where visitors can visit a working farm and pick pumpkins	1.6	4.0	Within MHPGC Project PEIR Red Line Boundary: Onshore
Sharpley Golf	18 hole parkland golf course	4.4	4.6	5.6
Seaham Golf Club	18-hole golf course founded in 1911	2.5	4.6	1.1
East Durham Divers	Diving club and centre where qualified scuba divers can join dives to wrecks and reefs	2.7	4.7	1.4
Houghton-Le-Spring Golf Club	Parkland golf course which offers coaching sessions	5.6	4.8	4.5
Blast Beach	Beach known for its industrial past where visitors can collect sea glass, view wildflowers, and take part in fishing	2.8	5.1	Within MHPGC Project PEIR Red Line Boundary: Onshore
Chemical Beach	Beach named after past chemical works where visitors can collect sea glass and view an old jetty	3.1	5.3	0.5
East Durham Heritage and Lifeboat Centre	Centre where visitors can learn about local maritime, industrial and social history	3.7	5.8	1.9
Seaham Harbour Marina	Marina where visitors can take part in water sports such as kayaking, boating and paddleboarding	4.0	5.8	1.9
Seaham Beach	Beach featuring extensive rock pools and a promenade where visitors can collect sea glass	4.0	5.7	2.7
Easington Beach	Beach popular with walkers where visitors can collect sea glass	2.4	4.0	2.6

Accommodation providers

- 3.4.6.26 Online searches, including of Google Maps, Booking.com, This is Durham (This is Durham, 2026) and MySunderland (MySunderland, 2026), revealed a total of 17 accommodation providers in the Socio-economics Tourism and Recreation Study Area. A breakdown of accommodation type and proximity to the LSS Option Areas is detailed in **Table 3.16**. Accommodation providers that are within 5km of both option areas have been included under each, but have not been double counted in the total. There were no accommodation providers identified within 2km of the MHPGC Project PEIR Red Line Boundary: Onshore that were not also within 5km of either of the LSS Option Areas.

Table 3.16: Accommodation by type within the Socio-economics Tourism and Recreation Study Area

Accommodation type	Number within 5km of Blue LSS Option Area	Number within 5km of Green LSS Option Area	Total (excluding double counting)
Hotels	4	3	5
Self-Catered	6	5	7
B&Bs	2	1	2
Campsites	2	3	3
Total	14	12	17

Recreational activities

- 3.4.6.27 Durham County Council details Public Rights of Way (PRoW) in the area, including those within 5km of the LSS Option Areas and within 2km of the MHPGC Project PEIR Red Line Boundary: Onshore (the Socio-economics Tourism and Recreation Study Area) (Durham County Council, 2026). These include:
- Restricted byways;
 - Byways;
 - Bridleways;
 - Footpaths.
- 3.4.6.28 The National Cycle Network (NCN) Route 1, which forms a part of a long-distance route, passes within the MHPGC Project PEIR Red Line Boundary: Onshore and NCN Route 14 passes within 3km of the MHPGC Project PEIR Red Line Boundary: Onshore.
- 3.4.6.29 PRoWs which cross the MHPGC Project PEIR Red Line Boundary: Onshore., are adjacent to the MHPGC Project PEIR Red Line Boundary: Onshore., or pass within 500m, were identified in **Appendix E of Chapter 8: Land Use, Tourism and Recreation, of the PEIR, which outlines**. This includes:
- 0540000005 (Hawthorn Footpath);
 - 0540000016 (Hawthorn);
 - 0540000006 (Hawthorn);
 - 0540000009 (Easington Colliery);
 - 0540000014 (Hawthorn);
 - 0320000006 (Easington Colliery);
 - 0320000007 (Easington Colliery);
 - 0320000011 (Easington Colliery);
 - 0880000030 (Murton);
 - 0880000027 (Murton);
 - 0880000028 (Murton);
 - 0540000011 (Hawthorn);
 - 0880000026 (Murton);
 - 0880000029 (Murton);
 - 0880000025 (Murton);
 - 1140000027 (South Hetton);
 - 0880000018 (Murton);
 - 0540000015 (Hawthorn);
 - 0330000001 (Easington Village);
 - 0540000002 (Hawthorn);
 - 0540000001 (Hawthorn);
 - 0540000003 (Hawthorn);
 - 1040000016 (Seaham);
 - 0300000001 (Dalton le Dale);
 - 0540000016 (Easington Colliery);
 - 0320000002 (Easington Colliery);
 - 0880000009 (Murton);
 - 0880000016 (Murton);
 - 1140000024 (South Hetton);
 - 1140000018 (South Hetton); and
 - 1140000017 (South Hetton).
- 3.4.6.30 Upon reviewing Durham Heritage Coast (Durham Heritage Coast, 2025), National Trail (National Trail, 2025), Heritage 100 Walks (Heritage 100 Walks, 2026), GPS Routes (GPS Routes, 2026) and OSMaps (OSMaps, 2026), the following routes were identified:
- King Charles III England Coast Path;
 - Nose's Point Route;

-
- Durham Heritage Coast Walk;
 - Shotton, Haswell and South Hetton;
 - Hawthorn Dene;
 - Haswell to Hart Cycle and Walk;
 - Seaham Green Route;
 - Seaham Yellow Route;
 - Seaham Red Route;
 - Hawthorn Green Route;
 - Hawthorn Yellow Route;
 - Hawthorn Red Route;
 - Easington Light Green Route;
 - Easington Dark Green Route;
 - Easington Yellow Route;
 - Easington Red Route.

Factors driving tourism activity

- 3.4.6.31 Based on existing evidence on tourism and the tourism economy, activity is mostly driven by the following factors:
- the ability and willingness of tourists to travel;
 - economic performance (and so whether tourists have disposable income available for leisure trips);
 - exchange rates;
 - the quality of the overall tourism product;
 - the effectiveness of destination marketing;
 - the quality and value for money of the services offered by tourism businesses.
- 3.4.6.32 There exists no relationship between most of these factors and the existence of an offshore wind development or the presence of its onshore components. Where a potential relationship does exist, between offshore wind or its transmission assets and the perceived quality of the tourism product and the quality and value for money of the services offered by tourism businesses, the potential impacts are assessed in this chapter.
- 3.4.6.33 In case any evidence was found on changes affecting the existing environment, for a change in tourism activity to happen, the following conditions would need to be met:
- the construction and/or presence of the onshore components has some impact(s) on the area;
 - visitors, or potential visitors are aware of such impact(s);
 - visitors, or potential visitors, react by changing their behaviour. for example, by changing the length of stay, where they chose to visit or the activities that they undertake;
 - the change in behaviour results in a change in their level of spending;
 - these changes in visitor spending result in a change in performance of the tourism sector, for example, a change in employment.

Main Drivers of Tourism

- 3.4.6.34 While this chapter considers potential impacts on individual tourism assets, these are composite parts of the overall tourism economy of the Socio-Economics Tourism and Recreation Study Area, which is underpinned by key drivers of activity which do not depend on any one individual asset. The assessment therefore considers the overarching impact of the MHPGC Project on drivers of tourism in the Socio-Economics Tourism and Recreation Study Area, and consequently the tourism economy of the study area as a whole.
- 3.4.6.35 Key drivers of tourism in the Socio-Economics Tourism and Recreation Study Area include coastal activities, local industrial history, and both onshore and offshore recreation.

Coast and Local History

- 3.4.6.36 A major driver of tourism to the Socio-Economics Tourism and Recreation Study Area is the coast, where visitors can walk and take part in water sports, including recreational fishing, boating, kayaking and paddleboarding, at attractions such as Seaham Harbour Marina and the various local beaches. The coast also attracts visitors through its connection to the area's industrial history, with tourists able to collect sea glass left behind by previous industrial works. The East Durham Heritage and Lifeboat Centre further emphasises this motivation to visit the area, offering tourists the ability to learn about the region's maritime, industrial and social history.

Recreation

- 3.4.6.37 The Socio-Economics Tourism and Recreation Study Area also features a number of recreational activities which are likely to attract visitors. The area features a number of dedicated routes, including long distance trails which pass through it, such as the King Charles III England Coast Path, Durham Heritage Coast Walk, and the Nose's Point Route, as well as PROWs, including restricted byways, byways, bridleways, and footpaths. Recreation is also offered by a number of parks in the area and a nature reserve.
- 3.4.6.38 In addition, visitors seeking recreational activities are catered to by local golf attractions, including three golf clubs and one mini golf course.

Offshore Recreation

- 3.4.6.39 In addition to onshore recreation, the Socio-Economics Tourism and Recreation Study Area also attracts visitors interested in taking part in offshore recreational activities such as boating and scuba diving. Seaham Harbour Marina allows visitors to take part in recreational boat trips out to sea to view the Durham coastline. There is also a scuba diving club located in the area, offering visits to local wrecks and reefs.

Tourism baseline summary

- 3.4.6.40 There are a small number of accommodation providers, visitor attractions, and recreational activities proximate to the MHPGC Project. The Socio-economics Local Study Area has relatively low employment in accommodation and food services, generally associated with the tourism industry. Visits to the Socio-economics Local Study Area represent a small share of total visits to Great Britain, and expenditure per trip by visitors to the Socio-economics Local Study Area was lower than average across day visitors, domestic overnight visitors, and international overnight visitors. Of the tourism activity in the Socio-economics Local Tourism and Recreation Study Area, the main drivers are the coast, the local industrial history, and access to recreational activities such as walking and golfing.

Commercial Fisheries Baseline

- 3.4.6.41 Blyth and North Shields are two fishing ports in the North East of England, which collectively landed fish with a value of £7.3 million in 2024 (MMO, 2026). The most important species were nephrops (also known as langoustine), which had a value of £5.5 million (75% of the total), followed by lobster (£0.9 million, or 13% of the total).
- 3.4.6.42 The sea is divided into statistical areas called International Council for the Exploration of the Seas Statistical Areas (ICES). The most important ICES area for nephrops landed in Blyth and South Shields is 38E9 (57% of the total), followed by 38E8 (17% of the total).
- 3.4.6.43 **Table 3.17** and **Table 3.18** show the value of landings into Blyth Port and North Shields Port by type and ICES Rectangle.

Table 3.17: Value of Landings into Blyth Port by ICES Rectangle 2024, £ Thousands

Species	38E8	38E9	39E9	Other	Total
Nephrops	8	1,058	93	219	1,378
Lobsters	11	729	<1	24	765
Brown crab	10	236	-	4	249
Squid	-	7	1	2	9
Demersal	-	47	7	15	69
Pelagic	-	1	-	-	1
Other Shellfish	<1	8	<1	1	9
Total	29	2,085	101	265	2,480

Table 3.18: Value of Landings into North Shields Port by ICES Rectangle 2024, £ Thousands

Species	38E8	38E9	39E9	Other	Total
Nephrops	953	2,072	428	692	4,145
Lobsters	82	67	3	15	167
Brown crab	25	16	5	22	67
Squid	4	17	4	16	40
Demersal	67	158	48	116	389
Pelagic	1	2	1	<1	3

Species	38E8	38E9	39E9	Other	Total
Other Shellfish	1	7	1	35	44
Total	1,132	2,338	490	896	4,856

3.4.7 Future baseline conditions

- 3.4.7.1 During the 35 year operational lifetime of the MHPGC Project, the Socio-Economics baseline can be expected to evolve both on a natural basis and in response to global trends such as climate change and other anthropogenic activities. The Infrastructure Planning (EIA) Regulations 2017, the Marine Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2007 and the Marine Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 require that "an outline of the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the development as far as natural changes from the baseline scenario can be assessed with reasonable effort on the basis of the availability of environmental information and scientific knowledge" is included. Therefore, an assessment of future baseline conditions, in the absence of the MHPGC Project, has been undertaken and is described within this section.
- 3.4.7.2 **Table 3.19** provides an overview of the forecast demographic change from 2024 to 2043 across the Socio-economics Local Study Area, Scotland, England and the UK. In the Socio-economics Local Study Area, the population is projected to increase by 1.2% (ONS, 2025d), a slower increase than both England (10.0%) and the UK as a whole (9.1%) (ONS, 2025d) (Welsh Government, 2025) (NRS, 2025) (NISRA, 2025b). The area is also expected to undergo a demographic shift, with a decreasing proportion of working-age residents (from 61.8% to 58.4%). This represents a reduction of 4.4%, equivalent to the working age population falling by 22,466. During the same period, the working age population is expected to increase overall (despite a reduction in the share accounted for by this demographic), by 9.2% in England and 8.0% across the UK.
- 3.4.7.3 In Scotland, the population is projected to increase by 4.0% between 2024 and 2043, from 5.5 million to 5.8 million. Over this period, the share accounted for by the working age population is projected to fall from 63.3% to 61.1%, however the absolute working age population is expected to increase slightly (0.4%).
- 3.4.7.4 Ensuring that the Socio-economics Local Study Area, England, Scotland, and the UK overall can attract and retain a skilled workforce will remain important to support economic growth. The expansion of sectors offering high-quality employment opportunities will play a key role in shaping the long-term economic demographic trajectory.

Table 3.19: Population projections in the Socio-economics Study Areas, 2024-2043

	Socio-economics Local Study Area		England		Scotland		UK	
	2024	2043	2024	2043	2024	2043	2024	2043
Population (Millions)	0.8	0.8	58.6	64.5	5.5	5.8	69.3	75.6
Aged 0-15	16.7%	16.1%	18.4%	15.4%	16.2%	14.1%	18.2%	15.2%
Aged 16-64	61.8%	58.4%	62.9%	62.5%	63.3%	61.1%	62.8%	62.2%
Aged 65+	21.5%	25.6%	18.7%	22.2%	20.5%	24.8%	19.0%	22.6%

3.5 Impact assessment methodology

3.5.1 Overview

3.5.1.1 **Volume 1, Chapter 4: Approach to Environmental Impact Assessment, of the PEIR** sets out the overarching approach that has been used in developing the preliminary environmental information. This section describes the technical methods used to determine the sensitivity of the receptors and magnitude of effects and sets out the significance criteria that have been used for the preliminary socio-economics assessment. The methodologies for assessing sensitivity, magnitude and significance for socio-economics are described in more detail below.

3.5.2 Receptor sensitivity

3.5.2.1 When defining sensitivity, reference has been made to the criteria levels set out in **Volume 1, Chapter 4: Approach to Environmental Impact Assessment, of the PEIR**. To determine sensitivity of the receptor, a range of criteria were used.

Economic impacts

3.5.2.2 The sensitivity of an economy is linked to how it absorbs change. To consider the sensitivity of an economy, or a sector within that economy, it is necessary to consider both the resilience and agility of the economy. There are several factors that contribute to an assessment of resilience and agility; these include:

- the scale of the economy;
- the diversity of sectors in the economy;
- the level of economic activity;
- the level of skills and education;
- the level of economic potential from utilising capital (natural, human, social, economic).

3.5.2.3 The criteria for defining sensitivity in this chapter are outlined in **Table 3.20**.

Table 3.20: Definition of terms relating to the sensitivity of the receptor – economics

Sensitivity	Definition
Very high	An economy that has a very high sensitivity would be one that cannot absorb changes without fundamentally altering its character, and which has all of the following attributes: • the economy is particularly reliant on a single sector; • the number of jobs in the economy has been declining over multiple years; • the share of people with no qualifications is significantly above the average for the wider economy.
High	A highly sensitive economy will not be able to absorb changes without fundamentally altering its present character or value. Economies that have one or two of the following characteristics would be considered of high sensitivity: • the economy is particularly reliant on a single sector; • the number of jobs in the economy has been declining over multiple years; • the share of people with no qualifications is significantly above the average for the wider economy.
Medium	An economy with medium sensitivity has a moderate capacity to absorb changes without fundamentally altering its present character or value, however it would be less resilient than the wider economy. Factors that would contribute to an economy being considered of medium sensitivity include: • the economy is particularly reliant on a small number of sectors; • the number of jobs in the economy has grown less than the wider economy; • the share of people with no qualifications is above the average for the wider economy.

Sensitivity	Definition
Low	A low sensitive economy is tolerant of changes without fundamentally altering its present character or value. Factors that would contribute to an economy being considered of low sensitivity include: • most sectors of the economy are well represented; • the number of jobs in the economy has grown in line with the wider economy; • the level of educational attainment is in line with the wider economy.
Negligible	An economy with negligible sensitivity is very agile and will be able to accommodate changes without affecting its character or overall value. Factors that would contribute to an economy having negligible sensitivity include: • the economy is well balanced between sectors; • the number of jobs in the economy has grown at a quicker rate than the wider UK economy; • the share of people with no qualifications is below average for the wider economy.

Tourism impacts

- 3.5.2.4 The sensitivity of a tourism or recreation asset is determined by how reactive visitors, or users, of this asset are to a change in the environment. The sensitivity may change depending on which environmental factor is being considered. For example, an asset may be highly sensitive to changes in noise and vibration but have negligible sensitivity to seascape and visual impacts.
- 3.5.2.5 The sensitivity of these assets will also depend on the ability of the asset to react to any change. Assets that provide a fixed offering, such as a monument or nature-based attraction, will be, other things remaining equal, more sensitive to change (**Table 3.21**).

Table 3.21: Definition of terms relating to the sensitivity of the receptor – tourism

Sensitivity	Definition
Very high	A tourism or recreational asset with a very high sensitivity will not be able to tolerate or adapt to impacts as these will result in a fundamental change in visitor behaviour. Factors that will contribute to a tourism or recreational asset being considered of very high sensitivity include: • Being dependent on a single environmental condition to attract or accommodate visitors and users; • Being unable to adapt or adjust in response to changes in visitor or user behaviour.
High	A tourism or recreational asset with a high sensitivity will have very limited capacity to adapt to impacts without a substantial change in visitor behaviour. Factors that will contribute to a tourism or recreational asset being considered of high sensitivity include: • Being dependent on one or more environmental condition to attract or accommodate visitors and users; • Having very limited ability to adapt or adjust in response to changes in visitor or user behaviour.
Medium	A tourism or recreational asset with a medium sensitivity will have limited capacity to tolerate or adapt to impacts as these will result in a moderate change in visitor behaviour. Factors that will contribute to a tourism or recreational asset being considered of medium sensitivity include: • Being influenced by a single environmental condition to attract or accommodate visitors and users; • Have a limited ability to adapt or adjust in response to changes in visitor or user behaviour.

Sensitivity	Definition
Low	A tourism or recreational asset with a low sensitivity will have the ability to tolerate or adapt to impacts as these will result in an incidental change in visitor behaviour. Factors that will contribute to a tourism or recreational asset being considered of low sensitivity include: - Environmental conditions have a minor influence on the ability of the asset to attract or accommodate visitors and users; - Being able to adapt or adjust the asset in response to changes in visitor or user behaviour.
Negligible	A tourism or recreational asset with a negligible sensitivity will be resistant to changes in environmental factors. Factors that will contribute to a tourism or recreational asset being considered of negligible sensitivity include: - Environmental conditions have a negligible influence on the ability of the asset to attract or accommodate visitors and users; - Having substantial ability to adapt or adjust the asset in response to changes in visitor or user behaviour.

Sector Specific impacts

3.5.2.6 The sensitivity of a sectoral receptor is linked to how well it is able to absorb change, which related to its resilience and agility. Factors that affect this include the scale of the sector and the diversity of income sources within it (**Table 3.22**).

Table 3.22: Definition of terms relating to the sensitivity of the receptor – Economic Sectors

Sensitivity	Definition
Very high	A sector with very high sensitivity will not be able to absorb changes without entirely altering its present character or value.
High	A sector with high sensitivity will not be able to absorb changes without fundamentally altering its present character or value.
Medium	A sector with medium sensitivity had moderate capacity to absorb changes without fundamentally altering its present character or value.
Low	A low sensitive sector is tolerant of changes without fundamentally altering its present character or value.
Negligible	A sector with negligible sensitivity is very agile and will be able to accommodate changes without affecting its character or overall value.

3.5.3 Magnitude of impact

3.5.3.1 The magnitude of an impact that could affect socio-economics is influenced by several key factors, including the scale of the change, the spatial extent the impact is likely to occur and the duration and frequency of the impact. When defining the magnitude of the impact, criteria detailed in **Volume 1, Chapter 4: Approach to Environmental Impact Assessment, of the PEIR**.

Economic impacts

3.5.3.2 The criteria for defining economic impact magnitude in this chapter are outlined in **Table 3.23**.

3.5.3.3 Between 2000 and 2023, the average level of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita growth in the UK was 1% per annum (International Monetary Fund (IMF), 2025). Similarly, between 2000 and 2023 the number of jobs increased by 1% per annum. The magnitude of any change in an economy should be considered within this context and in relation to changes in the levels of economic activity.

3.5.3.4 In addition to the change in the overall impact in the Gross Value Added (GVA) or employment of an area, consideration can also be made for the sectors of the economy which are considered to contribute to the potential for the local firms to secure contracts. For example, in the context of offshore wind, the construction, manufacturing and professional services sectors present in an area

are likely to contribute towards it securing contracts, since the presence of potential suppliers is likely to increase the value of contracts secured in the study area.

Table 3.23: Definition of terms relating to the magnitude of economic impacts

Magnitude	Definition
High	An impact would be considered to have a high magnitude if it was equivalent to all of the typical economic growth per capita. Specifically, for a sector in the socio-economics study areas: Peak employment supported is greater than, or equal to, 1% of the total number of jobs in that area or sector.
Medium	An impact would be considered to have a medium magnitude if it was equivalent to half of the typical economic growth per capita. Specifically: Peak employment supported is greater than, or equal to, 0.5% of the total number of jobs in that area or sector
Low	An impact would be considered to have a low magnitude if it was equivalent to a quarter of the typical economic growth per capita. Specifically, for each study area: Peak employment supported is greater than, or equal to, 0.25% of the total number of jobs in that area or sector.
Negligible	An impact would be considered to have a negligible magnitude if it was equivalent to less than a quarter of the typical economic growth per capita. Therefore, for each study area: Peak employment supported is less than 0.25% of the total number of jobs in that area or sector.
No change	An impact that results in no change to the economy.

Tourism and recreation impacts

3.5.3.5 The impacts considered in relation to tourism and recreation are changes to visitor or user behaviour and outcomes. Any environmental impact on these receptors will therefore be assessed against how it will change behaviour compared to the current baseline of visitor or user behaviour of the receptor (**Table 3.24**).

Table 3.24: Definition of terms relating to the magnitude of tourism impacts

Magnitude	Definition
High	Major loss/improvement to key elements/features of the baseline conditions such that post development character/composition of baseline condition will be fundamentally changed. For example, a substantial change to tourism spend.
Medium	Loss/improvement to one or more key elements/features of the baseline conditions such that post development character/composition of the baseline condition will be noticeably changed. For example, a moderate change to tourism spend.
Low	Changes arising from the alteration will be detectable but not material; the underlying composition of the baseline condition will be similar to the pre-development situation. For example, a small change in tourism spend.
Negligible	Changes arising from the alteration will be hard to detect; the underlying composition of the baseline condition will be similar to the pre-development situation. For example, a very small change in tourism spend.
No change	An impact that results in no change to tourism.

Sector specific impacts

3.5.3.6 Between 2000 and 2024, the average level of GDP per capita growth in the UK was 1% per annum (IMF, 2025). Similarly, between 2000 and 2023, the number of jobs increase by 1% per annum (ONS, 2025). The magnitude of any change to a receptor (such as a specific economic sector) should be considered within this context and in relation to the levels of economic activity associated with a receptor (**Table 3.25**).

Table 3.25: Definition of terms relating to the magnitude of impacts – Economic Sectors

Magnitude	Definition
High	An impact would be considered to have a high magnitude if it was equivalent to all the economic growth per capita. For each receptor employment supported is greater than, or equal to, 1% of total employment.
Medium	An impact would be considered to have a medium magnitude if it was equivalent to half of the typical economic growth per capita. For each receptor employment supported is greater than 0.5% of total employment.
Low	An impact would be considered to have a low magnitude if it was equivalent to a quarter of the typical economic growth per capita. For each receptor employment supported is greater than 0.25% of total employment.
Negligible	An impact would be considered to have a negligible magnitude if it was equivalent to less than a quarter of the typical economic growth per capita. For each receptor employment supported is less than 0.25% of total employment.
No change	An impact that results in no change to the economy.

3.5.4 Significance of effect

- 3.5.4.1 The significance of the effect upon socio-economics is determined by correlating the magnitude of the impact and the sensitivity of the receptor. The method employed for this assessment is presented in **Table 3.26**.
- 3.5.4.2 Following the classification of an effect using this methodology, a clear statement will then be made as to whether that effect is significant or not significant. Major and moderate effects are considered to be significant, whilst minor and negligible effects are considered to be not significant. However, professional judgement will also be applied in reaching conclusions as to the significance of effects. Typical definitions for the classification of effects are shown in **Table 3.26**.

Table 3.26: Matrix used for the assessment of the significance of the effect

Sensitivity of receptor	Magnitude of impact			
	Negligible	Low	Medium	High
Negligible	Negligible	Negligible or minor	Negligible or minor	Minor
Low	Negligible or minor	Negligible or minor	Minor	Minor or moderate
Medium	Negligible or minor	Minor	Moderate	Moderate or major
High	Minor	Minor or moderate	Moderate or major	Major
Very high	Minor	Moderate or major	Major	Major

Table 3.27: Significance definitions

Significance classification	Definition	Significant effect
Major	A large and detrimental change to a valuable/sensitive receptor, likely exceeding an accepted threshold. A large and beneficial change, resulting in enhancements in baseline conditions, or making a major contribution to national goals	Significant

Significance classification	Definition	Significant effect
Moderate	A medium scale change that, although not beyond an accepted threshold, is still considered to be generally unacceptable, unless offset by significant positive benefits of the project. If adverse, these effects are likely to be important at a regional or local scale and on their own could influence on decision making. A positive moderate effect is a medium scale change that improves baseline conditions sufficiently to contribute to guideline targets.	Significant
Minor	A minor adverse change that remains within legal and planning policy limits. A minor positive change that is unlikely to significantly impact the overall balance of considerations. These effects might be raised as local issues and could be relevant to the detailed design of a project, but they are unlikely to be critical in the decision-making process.	Not significant
Negligible	A very small change that is so inconsequential it can be considered acceptable to disregard. These effects fall below perceptible limits, lie within normal variations, or fall within the margin of forecasting error. They are unlikely to influence decision-making.	Not significant

3.5.5 Assumptions and limitations of the assessment

3.5.5.1 The socio-economics assessment undertaken has been based on the Supply Chain Development Statement (SCDS), which sets out what the Applicant expects to spend on the Morven Programme, broken down by development, manufacturing and fabrication, installation and operation as well as by different study areas (Scotland, the UK, Europe and the rest of the world). However, the economic impact will depend on supply chains capabilities and the contracts awarded at the time of construction.

3.6 Key parameters for assessment

3.6.1 Scope of the assessment

- 3.6.1.1 The approach to assessment was presented in the MHPGC Project Scoping Report and has been refined in consultation with relevant statutory and non-statutory consultees as detailed in **Section 3.3** and through the MHPGC Project Scoping Opinions received from the PINS and MD-LOT.
- 3.6.1.2 Effects that are not considered likely to be of moderate/major significance been scoped out of the assessment, with no objections during scoping, and these impacts will not be considered further. **Table 3.28** summarises the impacts considered as part of the assessment. while a summary of the effects scoped out of the assessment is presented in **Table 3.29**.

Table 3.28: Impacts scoped into the assessment

Impact	Potential effects scoped into the assessment
Construction phase	
Increased employment and GVA in the economy	The activity required to manufacture and install the infrastructure will generate economic impacts in both Scotland and England, as well as in the Socio-economics Local Study Area.

Impact	Potential effects scoped into the assessment
Economic impacts on the tourism economy from changes in visitor behaviour	Onshore construction works may affect visitor attractions and accommodation providers, resulting in a change to the visitor economy.
Economic impacts from changes to commercial fisheries	Impacts on commercial fisheries could have socio-economic implications if they were of a scale and nature that would result in a noticeable change in the economic contribution of commercial fisheries, e.g. a reduction in employment.
O&M phase	
Increased employment and GVA in the economy	The activity required to operate and maintain the infrastructure will generate economic impacts in both Scotland and England, as well as in the Socio-economics Local Study Area.
Economic impacts on the tourism economy from changes in visitor behaviour	The onshore components of the MHPGC Project may affect visitor attractions and accommodation providers, resulting in a change to the visitor economy.
Economic impacts from changes to commercial fisheries	Impacts on commercial fisheries could have socio-economic implications if they were of a scale and nature that would result in a noticeable change in the economic contribution of commercial fisheries, e.g. a reduction in employment.
Decommissioning phase	
Increased employment and GVA in the economy	The activity required to decommission the infrastructure will generate economic impacts in England, as well as in the Socio-economics Local Study Area.
Economic impacts on the tourism economy from changes in visitor behaviour	Decommissioning works may affect visitor attractions and accommodation providers, resulting in a change to the visitor economy.
Economic impacts from changes to commercial fisheries	Impacts on commercial fisheries could have socio-economic implications if they were of a scale and nature that would result in a noticeable change in the economic contribution of commercial fisheries, e.g. a reduction in employment.

Table 3.29: Impacts scoped out of the assessment

Impact	Justification for scoping out of the assessment
Construction phase	
Social impacts, e.g. demographics	Given the scale of the proposed MHPGC Project and contracts secured in the supply chain, the economic impacts are not expected to lead to significant impacts on social impacts, such as demographics or community cohesion.
Economic impacts on shipping and navigation	No significant effects have been identified in Volume 2, Chapter 8: Shipping and Navigation, of the PEIR and therefore socio-economic effects from shipping and navigation have been scoped out.
O&M phase	
Social impacts, e.g. demographics	Given the scale of the proposed MHPGC Project and contracts secured in the supply chain, the economic impacts are not expected to lead to significant impacts on social impacts, such as demographics or community cohesion.
Economic impacts on shipping and navigation	No significant effects have been identified in Volume 2, Chapter 8: Shipping and Navigation, of the PEIR and therefore socio-economic effects from shipping and navigation have been scoped out.

Decommissioning phase	
Social impacts, e.g. demographics	Given the scale of the proposed MHPGC Project and contracts secured in the supply chain, the economic impacts are not expected to lead to significant impacts on social impacts, such as demographics or community cohesion.
Economic impacts on shipping and navigation	No significant effects have been identified in Volume 2, Chapter 8: Shipping and Navigation, of the PEIR and therefore socio-economic effects from shipping and navigation have been scoped out.

3.6.2 Maximum design scenario

- 3.6.2.1 The maximum design scenario (MDS) for each impact identified in **Section 3.6.1** has been selected as those having the potential to result in the greatest effect on an identified receptor or receptor group. The MDS presented in **Table 3.30** have been selected from the parameters provided in **Volume 1, Chapter 2: Project Description, of the PEIR** and methodology outlined in **Volume 1, Chapter 4: Approach to Environmental Impact Assessment, of the PEIR**.

Table 3.30: MDS relevant for the assessment of potential impacts on socio-economics

Impact	Phase			MDS	Explanation
	C	O&M	D		
Increase in employment and Gross Value Added	✓	✓	✓	Construction Phase/O&M Phase The employment and GVA impacts have been estimated based on the share of the Morven Programme's total costs. This is the most conservative potential spending in Scotland and the UK, and therefore the lowest expected level of economic impacts. Decommissioning Phase The scale and duration of decommissioning activity is uncertain. Therefore, the lowest feasible level of UK supply chain content has been assumed. This is expected to be a scenario where cables and other equipment are left in-situ, and the majority of the contracts are focused on removing the substation. For the decommissioning phase, it is not yet known the extent to which employment and GVA impacts will be generated, since it will depend on procurement practices and the structure of the economy at the time.	The MHPGC will generate employment and economic activity in Scotland and the UK, and the level of spending considered represents the lowest level of potential economic impact.
Economic impacts on the tourism economy from changes in visitor behaviour	✓	✓	✓	Construction Phase There is potential for the construction of the onshore transmission infrastructure to affect tourism assets, and therefore the MDS is where the greatest area is used for the export cables and LSS. The construction period is 3.5 years for the offshore and onshore export cables and 4.5 years for the LSS. The assessment of impacts on tourism and recreation will build on impacts identified in other chapters, including: • Volume 2, Chapter 10: Infrastructure and Other Sea Users, of the PEIR; • Volume 3, Chapter 5: Traffic and Transport, of the PEIR; • Volume 3, Chapter 6: Onshore Noise and Vibration, of the PEIR; • Volume 3, Chapter 7: Onshore Air Quality, of the PEIR; • Volume 3, Chapter 8: Land Use, Tourism and Recreation, of the PEIR; • Volume 4, Chapter 1: Landscape and Visual Amenity, of the PEIR. O&M Phase The O&M phase is expected to be up to 35 years. The assessment of impacts on tourism and recreation will build on impacts identified in other chapters, including: • Volume 2, Chapter 10: Infrastructure and Other Sea Users, of the PEIR; • Volume 3, Chapter 5: Traffic and Transport, of the PEIR;	Construction Phase The main potential impact on the tourism economy is expected to relate to disruption to tourism assets. Therefore, the MDS is associated with the largest area affected and the longest construction timeline. O&M Phase The main potential impact on the tourism economy is expected to relate to disruption to tourism assets. There are expected to be limited impacts associated with O&M. Decommissioning Phase The main potential impact on the tourism economy is expected to relate to disruption to tourism assets. Therefore, the MDS is associated with the largest area affected and the longest decommissioning timeline.

Impact	Phase			MDS	Explanation
	C	O&M	D		
				- Volume 3, Chapter 6: Onshore Noise and Vibration, of the PEIR; - Volume 3, Chapter 7: Onshore Air Quality, of the PEIR; - Volume 3, Chapter 8: Land Use, Tourism and Recreation, of the PEIR; and - Volume 4, Chapter 1: Landscape and Visual Amenity, of the PEIR. Decommissioning Phase The decommissioning impacts are expected to be no greater than the construction impacts, with the potential for temporary disruption. The greatest potential for disruption is associated with a larger area used for decommissioning and longer timescales, though the impacts are likely to be much smaller in magnitude than for construction. The assessment of impacts on tourism and recreation will build on impacts identified in other chapters, including: - Volume 2, Chapter 10: Infrastructure and Other Sea Users, of the PEIR; - Volume 3, Chapter 5: Traffic and Transport, of the PEIR; - Volume 3, Chapter 6: Onshore Noise and Vibration, of the PEIR; - Volume 3, Chapter 7: Onshore Air Quality, of the PEIR; - Volume 3, Chapter 8: Land Use, Tourism and Recreation, of the PEIR; and - Volume 4, Chapter 1: Landscape and Visual Amenity, of the PEIR.	
Commercial Fishing	✓	✓	✓	Installation of up to four offshore cables (two conductors and two fibre optic) in up to two trenches within a corridor of maximum width 1km Construction duration: up to four years, commencing with seabed preparation Advisory safe passing distances around cable installation vessels: 500m Sandwave clearance: - Sandwave clearance activities undertaken using Mass Flow Excavation (MFE) over an approximate four month duration; - Sediment disturbance rate is 1000kg/s; - Surface width of up to 28m per trench and base width of up to 20m per trench; <u>Per trench = 1,484,000m²</u>	The worst case scenario for commercial fishing is based on the approach outlined in Volume 2, Chapter 7: Commercial Fisheries, of the PEIR. The assessment identified significant effects on nephrops fisheries during construction and decommissioning.

Impact	Phase			MDS	Explanation
	C	O&M	D		
				- Scottish waters: 31km length × 28m width = 868,000m² - English waters: 22km length × 28m width = 616,000m² <u>Total (up to two trenches) = 2,968,000m²</u> - Scottish waters: 1,736,000m² - English waters: 1,232,000m² Cable installation (trenching): Installation via trenching of up to 324.67km of cable, with a trench width of up to 2.1m and a depth of up to 3m; Trenching rate is 400m/hr. <u>Per trench = 2,045,421m³</u> - Scottish waters: 98 km length × 2.1m width × 3m depth = 617,400m² - English waters: 226.67km length × 2.1m width × 3m depth = 1,428,021m² <u>Total (up to two trenches) = 4,090,842m³</u> - Scottish waters: 1,234,800m³ - English waters: 2,856,042m³	

3.7 Commitments adopted as part of the MHPGC Project

- 3.7.1.1 As set out in **Volume 1, Chapter 4: Approach to Environmental Impact Assessment, of the PEIR** and **Volume 1, Annex 4.1: Draft Commitments Register, of the PEIR**, several measures have been adopted as part of the MHPGC Project to reduce the potential for impacts on socio-economics.
- 3.7.1.2 Embedded mitigation includes the following measures as identified in the Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals (ISEP), formerly Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) Guide to Shaping Quality Development (IEMA, 2015):
- Primary mitigation - measures included as part of the project design. ISEP (formerly IEMA) describes these as “modifications to the location or design of the development made during the pre-application phase that are an inherent part of the project and do not require additional action to be taken”. This includes modifications arising through the iterative design process. These measures will be secured through the consent itself through the description of the project and the parameters secured in the DCO and marine licence, or both;
 - Tertiary mitigation - ISEP (formerly IEMA) describes these as “actions that would occur with or without input from the EIA feeding into the design process. These include actions that will be undertaken to meet other existing legislative requirements, or actions that are considered to be standard practices used to manage commonly occurring environmental effects”.
- 3.7.1.3 Embedded mitigation measures that will form part of the final design (and are established legislative requirements/good practice, or both) have been taken into account as part of the initial assessment presented in **Section 3.8** (i.e., the initial determination of impact magnitude and significance of effects assumes implementation of these measures). This ensures that the measures that the Applicant is committed to are considered in the assessment of effects.
- 3.7.1.4 Where an assessment identifies likely significant adverse effects, secondary mitigation measures may be applied. These are measures that could further prevent, reduce and, where possible, offset these effects. They are defined by IEMA as “actions that will require further activity to achieve the anticipated outcome” and may be imposed as part of the planning consent, or through inclusion in the ES. These include measures required to reduce the significance of environmental effects and may be secured through an environmental management plan.
- 3.7.1.5 The measures relevant to socio-economics are outlined in **Table 3.31**. As there is a secured commitment to implementing these measures, they are considered inherently part of the design of the MHPGC Project and have therefore been considered in the assessment presented in **Section 3.8**.

Table 3.31: Embedded commitments relevant to socio-economics implemented as part of the MHPGC Project

Commitment number	Measure adopted	How the measure will be secured
CoT04	Advance warning will be provided via Notice to Mariners to ensure that the appropriate authorities are informed of offshore construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning activities. Copies of all notices must be provided to the MMO, MCA and UKHO as well as other interested parties, as appropriate. Early notification will allow appropriate marking of all installed infrastructure on UKHO Admiralty/nautical charts.	Will be secured via dML condition and/or condition of Scottish Marine Licence(s)
CoT08	An Outline Offshore Cable Specification and Installation Plan (CSIP) will be prepared and submitted with the application for development consent and as part of the marine licence application(s) to the Scottish Ministers. It will include cable burial to be the preferred option for cable protection, where practicable. A Detailed CSIP will be developed prior to construction that will be substantially in accordance with the Outline CSIP. The Outline CSIP will include (but is not limited to): • a Cable Burial Risk Assessment (CBRA), which will define burial depths and safeguards, based on seabed conditions and external aggression and climate change hazards, to keep the offshore export cables protected and compliant through all project phases while upholding navigational and environmental safety; • the implementation, management and monitoring of cable protection; • details on the development of the cable installation and protection design within the Farn Deep's Nephrops ground, which will seek to maximise cable burial and minimise the requirement for external cable protection, where technically feasible, taking account of cable stability, integrity and other engineering requirements.	Will be secured via DCO Schedule &/or Requirement.
CoT18	An Outline Code of Construction Practice (CoCP) will be prepared and submitted with the application for development consent. A Detailed CoCP will be developed in accordance with the Outline CoCP. The Outline CoCP will include (but is not limited to) measures to maintain and address: • Flood protection and control measures; • Water environment and drainage; • Noise and vibration management measures; • Air quality and dust management; • Pollution prevention and management; • Geology and ground conditions; • Soil and materials management; • Land use, tourism and recreational assets; • Waste management.	Will be secured via DCO Schedule &/or Requirement.

Commitment number	Measure adopted	How the measure will be secured
CoT19	Ongoing liaison with the fishing industry through the appointment of a Company Fisheries Liaison Officer(s) (CFLO)(s) and adherence to good practice guidance with regards to fisheries liaison (e.g. Fishing Liaison with Offshore Wind and Wet Renewables Group FLOWW (2025) guidance for English Waters).	Will be secured via dML condition and/or condition of Scottish Marine Licence(s)
CoT20	An Outline Fisheries Liaison and Coexistence Plan (FLCP) will be produced in relation to English Waters and will be submitted with the application for development consent. It will include details of the measures which are proposed to be implemented to reduce impacts on commercial fishing, the approach to monitoring fisheries activity and the approach to fisheries liaison and procedures to manage interactions between the MHPGC Project and the fishing industry. A Detailed FLCP will be developed post-consent substantially accordance with the Outline FLCP.	Will be secured via dML condition and/or condition of Scottish Marine Licence(s)
CoT26	An Outline Construction Noise and Vibration Management Plan will form part of the Outline Code of Construction Practice (CoCP), which will be prepared and submitted as part of the application for development consent. It will include measures to mitigate noise from construction activities associated with the MHPGC Project. A Detailed Construction Noise and Vibration Management Plan will be developed in accordance with the Outline Construction Noise and Vibration Management Plan. Bespoke method statement(s) will be developed, where required, to ensure suitable noise limits can be met on specific sensitive noise receptors.	Will be secured via DCO Schedule &/or Requirement.
CoT27	The onshore export cables and the AC connection cables will be completely buried underground for the entire length. No overhead pylons will be installed as part of the MHPGC Project.	Will be secured via DCO Schedule &/or Requirement.
CoT35	An Outline Public Rights of Way (PRoW) Management Plan will form part of the Outline Code of Construction Practice (CoCP), which will be prepared and submitted for development consent. A Detailed PRoW Management Plan will be developed in accordance with the Outline PRoW Management Plan. The Outline PRoW Management Plan will: • set out the measures needed to keep PRoWs safe and usable during construction, such as clear signage, pre and post-work condition surveys; • commit to reopening or reinstating any affected route as soon as reasonably practicable, thereby minimising the duration of closures; • specify that, where full closure cannot be avoided, a temporary diversion or gated crossing will be provided unless demonstrably impracticable.	Will be secured via DCO Schedule &/or Requirement.

Commitment number	Measure adopted	How the measure will be secured
CoT41	An Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) will be prepared and submitted with the application for development consent. A Detailed CTMP will be developed in accordance with the Outline CTMP prior to construction. The Detailed CTMP will set out measures to include (but not limited to): - managing the numbers, timing and routeing of HGVs during the construction phase; - managing the movement of construction worker traffic during the construction phase; - details of any traffic management measures necessary to ensure the safe passage of construction traffic via the local highway network; - details of localised road improvements if and where these may be necessary to facilitate safe use of the existing road network.	Will be secured via DCO Schedule &/or Requirement.
CoT51	An Onshore Crossing Schedule will be submitted with the application for development consent based on the refined design for the application. The following features will be crossed using trenchless techniques: - A, B and Classified unnumbered roads (known as C roads) (including the A19 and B1432); - all railway lines (including the section of railway line which runs between Seaham and Horden); - the Durham Coast SSSI and SAC; - Hesledon Moor East SSSI.	Will be secured via DCO Schedule &/or Requirement.
CoT55	A draft Fisheries Management and Mitigation Coexistence Plan (FMMCP) will be produced in relation to Scottish Waters and submitted as part of the marine licence application(s) to the Scottish Ministers. The draft FMMCP will detail measures which are proposed to be implemented to reduce impacts on commercial fishing, the approach to monitoring fisheries activity and the approach to fisheries liaison and procedures to manage interactions between the MHPGC Project and the fishing industry in Scottish Waters. Updates to the FMMCP will be developed post-consent in accordance with the draft FMMCP if required.	Will be secured via Scottish Marine licence condition

3.8 Assessment of impacts

3.8.1 Overview

- 3.8.1.1 This section includes the assessment of the potential impacts to socio-economics arising from the construction, O&M and decommissioning phases of the MHPGC Project. A summary of the effects is presented in **Table 3.45**.

3.8.2 Construction phase

Increased employment and GVA in the economy

Receptor sensitivity

- 3.8.2.1 The sensitivity of an economy is based on its ability to absorb change. Some of the factors which determine an economy's sensitivity include its size, its relative diversity (more diverse economies are less sensitive), and its growth trajectory (for example, if the number of jobs are increasing or decreasing), as outlined in **Table 3.20** for the criteria on assessing sensitivity.
- 3.8.2.2 The Scottish economy, which employs 2.7 million people, is large and diverse, which means that it will be tolerant to changes without fundamentally altering its present character or value. Therefore, its sensitivity is considered to be **low**.
- 3.8.2.3 Given the size and diversity of the English economy, which employs 28.2 million people, its sensitivity is considered to be **negligible**. Similarly, the UK economy, which employs 33.1 million people, is large and diverse and therefore the sensitivity is considered to be **negligible**.
- 3.8.2.4 The economy of the Socio-economics Local Study Area employs 307,800 people. It has a broadly similar employment composition as the UK economy (i.e. sectors by employment), though unemployment is higher and average wages are lower. It also has a lower share of the population who have degree level qualifications and a lower proportion who have no qualifications. On this basis, its sensitivity is considered to be **medium**.

Magnitude of impact

- 3.8.2.5 It is estimated that expenditure associated with the MHPGC Project would be £740 million, of which approximately £40 million in contracts could be secured by companies in Scotland, £28 million in the Socio-economics Local Study Area, £60 million in England (including the Socio-economics Local Study Area), and £101 million in the UK (including Scotland and England). The remaining expenditure will be secured by companies based outside of the UK.
- 3.8.2.6 This expenditure includes development spending, which is mainly expected to take place in the UK, as well as spending on equipment such as High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) cables, which may be sourced from outside of the UK. The main opportunities for the Socio-economics Local Study Area will relate to the installation of the onshore export cable, the AC connection cables and the construction of the LSS.
- 3.8.2.7 Taking into account direct, supply chain and staff spending impacts, which includes applying sector-specific economic ratios of turnover/GVA and turnover per employee as well as economic multipliers, the economic impact in Scotland was estimated to be £31 million GVA and 430 years of employment (peaking at 70 jobs), while the economic impact in the Socio-economics Local Study Area was estimated to be £15 million GVA and 190 years of employment (80 jobs), the economic impact in England (including the Socio-economics Local Study Area) was estimated to be £77 million GVA and 250 years of employment (320 jobs), and the economic impact in the UK (including Scotland and England) was estimated to be £111 million GVA and 1,450 years of employment (410 jobs), as shown in **Table 3.32**.
- 3.8.2.8 More detail on the economic impact methodology and findings is presented in **Volume 4, Chapter 3.1: Economic Impact Technical Report, of the PEIR**.

Table 3.32: Construction of the MHPGC Project: Employment and Gross Value Added impacts

	Scotland	Socio-economics Local Study Area	England (including Socio-economics Local Study Area)	UK
Total expenditure (£m)	40	28	60	101
Total GVA (£m)	31	15	77	111
Total employment (years of employment)	430	190	970	1,450
Peak employment	70	80	320	410

Note, totals may not sum due to rounding

- 3.8.2.9 Given employment in Scotland's construction sector of 136,000 jobs (**Table 3.9**), the peak employment (70 jobs) would account for less than 0.1% of total construction employment. On this basis, the magnitude of impact in Scotland would be **negligible**.
- 3.8.2.10 Given employment in the Socio-economics Local Study Area's construction sector of 17,500 jobs (**Table 3.9**), the peak employment (80 jobs) would account for around 0.5% of total construction employment. This falls just under the threshold for medium impact (0.5%) and therefore the magnitude of impact in the Socio-economics Local Study Area would be **low**.
- 3.8.2.11 Given employment in England's construction sector of 1.4 million jobs (**Table 3.9**), the peak employment (320 jobs) would account for less than 0.1% of total construction employment. On this basis, the magnitude of impact in England and would be **negligible**.
- 3.8.2.12 Given employment in the UK construction sector of 1.6 million jobs (**Table 3.9**), the peak employment (410 jobs) would account for less than 0.1% of total construction employment. On this basis, the magnitude of impact in the UK would be **negligible**.

Significance of effect

- 3.8.2.13 Overall, it is considered that the sensitivity of Scotland is **low** and the magnitude of the increase in employment and GVA is **negligible**. Therefore, the effect during the construction phase, is considered to be temporary **negligible** beneficial which is not significant in EIA terms.
- 3.8.2.14 Overall, it is considered that the sensitivity of the Socio-economics Local Study Area's is **medium** and the magnitude of the increase in employment and GVA is **low**. Therefore, the effect during the construction phase, is considered to be temporary **minor** beneficial which is not significant in EIA terms.
- 3.8.2.15 Overall, it is considered that the sensitivity of England is **negligible** and the magnitude of the increase in employment and GVA is **negligible**. Therefore, the effect during the construction phase, is considered to be temporary **negligible** beneficial which is not significant in EIA terms.
- 3.8.2.16 Overall, it is considered that the sensitivity of the UK is **negligible** and the magnitude of the increase in employment and GVA is **negligible**. Therefore, the effect during the construction phase, is considered to be temporary **negligible** beneficial which is not significant in EIA terms.

Economic impacts on the tourism economy from changes in visitor behaviour

- 3.8.2.17 **Volume 2, Chapter 10: Infrastructure and Other Sea Users, of the PEIR, Volume 3, Chapter 5: Traffic and Transport, of the PEIR, Volume 3, Chapter 6: Onshore Noise and Vibration, of the PEIR, Volume 3, Chapter 7: Onshore Air Quality, of the PEIR, Volume 3, Chapter 8: Land Use, Tourism and Recreation, of the PEIR and 4, Chapter 1: Landscape and Visual Amenity, of the PEIR, have considered likely significant effects which may influence visitor behaviour at specific tourism assets, therefore influencing the tourism economy. There were no significant residual effects identified in Volume 2, Chapter 10: Infrastructure and Other Sea Users, of the PEIR, Volume 3, Chapter 5: Traffic and Transport, of the PEIR or Volume 3, Chapter 7: Onshore Air Quality, of the PEIR.**

3.8.2.18 Tourism assets which may be affected by impacts identified in these chapters are outlined in **Table 3.33**, where ✓ denotes a significant impact was identified by the chapter.

Table 3.33 Tourism Assets with Potential Significant Impacts Identified by Other Chapters

Asset	Onshore Noise and Vibration	Land Use	Landscape and Visual Amenity
The Hole In Wand, Dalton Park	X	X	X
Elemore Park	X	X	X
Hetton Lyons Country Park	X	X	X
Hawthorn Dene Nature Reserve	✓	X	X
Kinley Hill Pumpkin Patch	X	X	X
Sharpley Golf	X	X	X
Seaham Golf Club	X	X	X
Houghton-Le-Spring Golf Club	X	X	X
Blast Beach	X	X	✓
Chemical Beach	X	X	✓
East Durham Heritage and Lifeboat Centre	X	X	X
Seaham Harbour Marina	X	X	X
Seaham Beach	X	X	X
Easington Beach	X	X	X
NCN Route 1	✓	✓	✓
NCN Route 14	X	X	X
King Charles III England Coast Path	X	✓	✓
Nose's Point Route	X	X	✓
Durham Heritage Coast Walk	X	X	✓
Shotton, Haswell and South Hetton	✓	X	X
Hawthorn Dene	✓	X	X
Haswell to Hart Cycle and Walk	X	X	X
Seaham Green Route	X	X	X
Seaham Yellow Route	X	X	X
Seaham Red Route	X	X	X
Hawthorn Green Route	✓	X	X
Hawthorn Yellow Route	✓	X	X
Hawthorn Red Route	✓	X	X
Easington Light Green Route	X	X	X
Easington Dark Green Route	X	X	X
Easington Yellow Route	X	X	X
Easington Red Route	X	X	X

Sensitivity of the receptor

- 3.8.2.19 In line with the definitions of sensitivity outlined in **Table 3.20**, the sensitivity to changes in visitor behaviour of tourism and recreation assets for which significant impacts were identified by other chapters are outlined in **Table 3.34**.
- 3.8.2.20 In 2024, share of total employment accounted for by tourism in the Socio-Economics Tourism and Recreation Study Area was below average. It is considered that the main drivers of tourism (the coast, the local industrial history, and access to recreational activities such as walking and golfing) will be tolerant to changes in environmental factors without fundamentally altering the present character or value of the area's tourism offering. Therefore, the sensitivity of the tourism economy of the Socio-Economics Tourism and Recreation Study Area is considered to be **Low**.

Table 3.34 Sensitivities of Tourism and Recreation Assets

Asset	Sensitivity	Justification
Hawthorn Dene Nature Reserve	Low	Environmental conditions have a minor influence on motivations to visit attraction.
Blast Beach	Medium	Motivations to visit is influenced by environmental conditions to attract and accommodate visitors.
Chemical Beach	Medium	Motivations to visit is influenced by environmental conditions to attract and accommodate visitors.
NCN Route 1	Medium	Motivations to visit are influenced by an environmental condition to attract and accommodate visitors.
King Charles III England Coast Path	Medium	Motivations to visit are influenced by an environmental condition to attract and accommodate visitors.
Nose's Point Route	Medium	Motivations to visit are influenced by an environmental condition to attract and accommodate visitors.
Durham Heritage Coast Walk	Medium	Motivations to visit are influenced by an environmental condition to attract and accommodate visitors.
Shotton, Haswell and South Hetton	Low	Environmental conditions have a minor influence on motivations to visit attraction.
Hawthorn Dene	Low	Environmental conditions have a minor influence on motivations to visit attraction.
Hawthorn Green Route	Low	Environmental conditions have a minor influence on motivations to visit attraction.
Hawthorn Yellow Route	Low	Environmental conditions have a minor influence on motivations to visit attraction.
Hawthorn Red Route	Low	Environmental conditions have a minor influence on motivations to visit attraction.

Magnitude of impact

- 3.8.2.21 It is expected that Hawthorn Dene Nature Reserve could experience significant noise impacts. The main motivation to visit the reserve, to view local woodland, limestone hay meadows and wildlife would not be impacted by the MHPGC Project. It is therefore not expected that it would experience a change in visitor activity and the magnitude of the impact is assessed as **negligible**.
- 3.8.2.22 Both Blast Beach and Chemical Beach are at or proximate to landfall, and are therefore expected to experience visual impacts. The motivations to visit these attractions, primarily to take part in collecting sea glass and seeing coastal views, as well as taking part in fishing from the coast, would not be impacted by the MHPGC Project. It is therefore not expected that they will experience changes in visitor activity and the magnitude of the impact is assessed as **negligible**.

- 3.8.2.23 Both the King Charles III England Coast Path and NCN Route 1 are expected to be experience visual impacts, as identified in **Volume 4, Chapter 1: Landscape and Visual Amenity, of the PEIR**. NCN Route 1 is also expected to be effected by significant impacts identified in **Volume 3, Chapter 6: Onshore Noise and Vibration, of the PEIR** and **Volume 3, Chapter 8: Land Use, Tourism and Recreation, of the PEIR** also identifies potential significant impacts on both these routes. Mitigation outlined in **Volume 3, Chapter 8: Land Use, Tourism and Recreation, of the PEIR** includes the production of a Public Right of Way Management Plan (see **Table 3.31**), which will include measures such as a commitment to reopen or reinstate any affected routes as soon as practicable, and ensuring that temporary diversions or gated crossings will be provided where a closure cannot be avoided. As these routes will not be closed in the long-term, and form smaller sections of long distance routes, it is not expected that the MHPGC Project will impact overall activity on them, and the impact is assessed as **negligible**.
- 3.8.2.24 It is expected that the walking route Shotton, Haswell and South Hetton has the potential to experience significant noise impacts. The main motivations to take the route, to view local wildlife, follow an old railway line, and walk across farmland, would not be impacted by the MHPGC Project. Potential noise and vibration impacts are also expected at a relatively short stretch of the route over 11km. It is therefore not expected to have an impact on overall visitor activity on the route and the impact is assessed as **negligible**.
- 3.8.2.25 Nose's Point Route and the Durham Heritage Coast Walk are also expected to be experience visual impacts during the construction of the MHPGC Project. The main reason to take these routes, to see coastal views and local wildlife and habitats, would not be impacted by the MHPGC Project. It is therefore not expected that they will experience changes in visitor activity and the impact is assessed as **negligible**.
- 3.8.2.26 Additional walking routes which are expected to experience noise impacts include Hawthorn Green Route, Hawthorn Yellow Route, and Hawthorn Red Route. These walks benefit from their location from the village of Hawthorn, their routes through woodland, and the coastal views they provide. As these motivations to take the routes would not be impacted by the MHPGC Project, it is not expected that they will experience changes in activity and the impact is assessed as **negligible**.
- 3.8.2.27 As no significant adverse effects on visitor behaviour at specific tourism assets have been assessed, it is expected that any changes to the tourism economy caused by the MHPGC Project will be difficult to detect and that the underlying composition of the baseline condition will be similar to its pre-development situation. The magnitude of impact on the tourism economy of the Socio-Economics Tourism and Recreation study area is therefore assessed as **negligible**.

Significance of effect

- 3.8.2.28 The sensitivities, magnitude of impact, and significance of effects on tourism and recreation assets are outlined below (**Table 3.35**).
- 3.8.2.29 Overall, it is considered that the sensitivity of the tourism economy of the Socio-Economics Tourism and Recreation Study Area is **low** and the magnitude of changes in visitor behaviour is **negligible**. Therefore, the effect during the construction phase is considered to be **negligible** which is not significant in EIA terms.

Table 3.35 Significance of Effects on Visitor Behaviour at Tourism and Recreation Assets

Asset	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Impact
Hawthorn Dene Nature Reserve	Low	Negligible	Negligible
Blast Beach	Medium	Negligible	Minor
Chemical Beach	Medium	Negligible	Minor
NCN Route 1	Medium	Negligible	Minor
King Charles III England Coast Path	Medium	Negligible	Minor

Asset	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Impact
Nose's Point Route	Medium	Negligible	Minor
Durham Heritage Coast Walk	Medium	Negligible	Minor
Shotton, Haswell and South Hetton	Low	Negligible	Negligible
Hawthorn Dene	Low	Negligible	Negligible
Hawthorn Green Route	Low	Negligible	Negligible
Hawthorn Yellow Route	Low	Negligible	Negligible
Hawthorn Red Route	Low	Negligible	Negligible

Economic impacts from changes to commercial fisheries

- 3.8.2.30 **Volume 2, Chapter 7: Commercial Fisheries, of the PEIR** has considered the likely significant effects on commercial fishing during the construction, O&M, and decommissioning phases. Such effects could have socio-economic consequences if activities associated with installation of offshore export cables reduce the value of fish and shellfish caught by commercial fisheries, with impacts on fishing fleets and potential downstream impacts, for example on fish processors.
- 3.8.2.31 The assessment presented in **Volume 2, Chapter 7: Commercial Fisheries, of the PEIR** considers a range of impacts, including loss or restricted access to fishing grounds, displacement of fishing activity to other places, interference with fishing activity, increasing steaming time, loss or damage to fishing gear, and impacts on commercially exploited species. This was assessed for a range of receptors, including dredge fishery, demersal otter trawl (haddock/whitefish and nephrops), potting fishery, demersal seine fishery and pelagic trawl fishery.
- 3.8.2.32 Within English waters, the MHPGC Project PEIR Red Line Boundary overlaps the intensively fished and high-value Farn Deep Nephrops ground, where construction activities, including seabed clearance, trenching and offshore export cable installation, would occur intermittently over the up to four-year construction period. The Outline CSIP [CoT08] will include details on cable installation and cable protection requirements and design along the whole route, including within the Farn Deep Nephrops ground, which will seek to maximise cable burial and minimise the requirement for external cable protection, where technically feasible.
- 3.8.2.33 Although individual construction activities are temporary and linear in nature, they are expected to result in a partial loss of fishing opportunity, and therefore a moderate adverse impact on demersal otter trawl (nephrops) has been identified. As discussed in **Volume 2, Chapter 7: Commercial Fisheries, of the PEIR**, the Outline FLCP and draft FMMCP will focus on measures to minimise the duration and extent of construction-related disruption. A package of secondary mitigation is still being developed through ongoing engagement with the fishery industry, and the ES will present a final package of measures and assess the residual effect as appropriate.
- 3.8.2.34 Given mitigation is yet to be finalised, the socio-economic impact assessment will be updated based on the commercial fisheries assessment in the ES. While the assessment of commercial fisheries is focused on specific fisheries, the economic impact assessment is focused on the fleets that use the areas and the ports they operate from. An economic impact would occur if there was a reduction in the catch, resulting in a reduction in employment.

3.8.3 O&M phase

Increased employment and GVA in the economy

Receptor sensitivity

- 3.8.3.1 As stated in **Section 3.8.2**, the sensitivity of the Socio-economics Local Study Area is considered to be **medium**, while the sensitivity of the Scottish economy is considered to be **low**, and the sensitivity of the English and UK economies are considered to be **negligible**.

Magnitude of impact

- 3.8.3.2 Based on information from the Applicant and industry reports (BP/EnBW, 2023) (BVG Associates, 2021), it is anticipated that there will be O&M spending worth £2 million (mainly balance of plant). Of this, it was estimated that £1 million could be secured in the UK and England, with less than £1 million secured in Scotland and the Socio-economics Local Study Area.
- 3.8.3.3 Therefore, as shown in **Table 3.36**, it was estimated that the annual economic impact would be less than £1 million GVA and less than 10 jobs in both Scotland and the Socio-economics Local Study Area, £1 million GVA and 10 jobs in England and £2 million GVA and 20 jobs in the UK.
- 3.8.3.4 More detail on the economic impact methodology and findings is presented in **Volume 4, Chapter 3.1: Economic Impact Technical Report, of the PEIR**.

Table 3.36: Operation and maintenance of the MHPGC Project: Employment and Gross Value Added impacts

	Scotland	Socio-economics Local Study Area	England (including Socio-economics Local Study Area)	UK
Total expenditure (£m)	<1	<1	1	1
Total GVA (£m)	<1	<1	1	2
Total employment	<10	<10	10	20

- 3.8.3.5 Given employment in the Scotland's construction sector of 136,000 jobs (**Table 3.9**), the employment impact (<10 jobs) would account for less than 0.1% of total construction employment. On this basis, the magnitude of impact in the Scotland would be **negligible**.
- 3.8.3.6 Given employment in the Socio-economics Local Study Area's construction sector of 17,500 jobs (**Table 3.9**), the employment impact (<10 jobs) would account for less than 0.1% of total construction employment. On this basis, the magnitude of impact in the Socio-economics Local Study Area would be **negligible**.
- 3.8.3.7 Given employment in England's construction sector of 1.4 million jobs (**Table 3.9**), the employment impact (10 jobs) would account for less than 0.1% of total construction employment. On this basis, the magnitude of impact in England would be **negligible**.
- 3.8.3.8 Given employment in the UK construction sector of 1.6 million jobs (**Table 3.9**), the employment impact (10 jobs) would account for less than 0.1% of total construction employment. On this basis, the magnitude of impact in the UK would be **negligible**.

Significance of effect

- 3.8.3.9 Overall, it is considered that the sensitivity of Scotland is **low** and the magnitude of the increase in employment and GVA is **negligible**. Therefore, the effect during the O&M phase, is considered to be temporary **negligible** beneficial which is not significant in EIA terms.
- 3.8.3.10 Overall, it is considered that the sensitivity of the Socio-economics Local Study Area is **medium** and the magnitude of the increase in employment and GVA is **low**. Therefore, the effect during the O&M phase, is considered to be temporary **minor** beneficial which is not significant in EIA terms.
- 3.8.3.11 Overall, it is considered that the sensitivity of England is **negligible** and the magnitude of the increase in employment and GVA is **negligible**. Therefore, the effect during the O&M phase, is considered to be temporary **negligible** beneficial which is not significant in EIA terms.
- 3.8.3.12 Overall, it is considered that the sensitivity of the UK is **negligible** and the magnitude of the increase in employment and GVA is **negligible**. Therefore, the effect during the O&M phase, is considered to be temporary **negligible** beneficial which is not significant in EIA terms.

Economic impacts on the tourism economy from changes in visitor behaviour

- 3.8.3.13 **Volume 2, Chapter 10: Infrastructure and Other Sea Users, of the PEIR, Volume 3, Chapter 5: Traffic and Transport, of the PEIR, Volume 3, Chapter 6: Onshore Noise and Vibration, of the PEIR, Volume 3, Chapter 7: Onshore Air Quality, of the PEIR, Chapter 8: Land Use, Tourism and Recreation, of the PEIR and Volume 4, Chapter 1: Landscape and Visual Amenity, of the PEIR** have considered likely significant effects which may influence visitor behaviour at specific tourism assets, therefore influencing the tourism economy.
- 3.8.3.14 No significant residual effects were identified during the operational phase which would impact tourism assets by **Volume 2, Chapter 10: Infrastructure and Other Sea Users, of the PEIR, Volume 3, Chapter 5: Traffic and Transport, of the PEIR, Volume 3, Chapter 6: Onshore Noise and Vibration, of the PEIR, Volume 3, Chapter 7: Onshore Air Quality, of the PEIR, or Chapter 8: Land Use, Tourism and Recreation, of the PEIR.**
- 3.8.3.15 **Volume 4, Chapter 1: Landscape and Visual Amenity, of the PEIR** identifies visual impacts which are likely to impact NCN Route 1.
- Sensitivity of the receptor
- 3.8.3.16 As considered in **Table 3.34**, in line with the definitions of sensitivity outlined in **Table 3.20**, the sensitivity of NCN Route 1 is considered to be **Medium**.
- 3.8.3.17 It is considered that the main drivers of tourism will be tolerant to changes in environmental factors without fundamentally altering the present character or value of the area's tourism offering. Therefore, the sensitivity of the tourism economy of the Socio-Economics Tourism and Recreation Study Area is considered to be **Low**.
- Magnitude of impact
- 3.8.3.18 NCN Route 1 is expected to experience visual impacts, as identified in **Volume 4, Chapter 1: Landscape and Visual Amenity, of the PEIR** during the O&M phase of the MHPGC Project. However, as NCN Route 1 is a long-distance cycling route over 2,000km, expected to already feature various views of industrial operations at various points, with the MHPGC Project expected to be visible for a relatively short distance, it is not expected that it will experience a change in tourism activity. Therefore the impact is assessed as **negligible**.
- 3.8.3.19 As no significant adverse effects on visitor behaviour at specific tourism assets have been assessed, it is expected that any changes to the tourism economy caused by the MHPGC Project will be difficult to detect and that the underlying composition of the baseline condition will be similar to its pre-development situation. The magnitude of impact on the tourism economy of the Socio-Economics Tourism and Recreation study area is therefore assessed as **negligible**.
- Significance of effect
- 3.8.3.20 Overall, it is considered that the sensitivity of the tourism economy of the Socio-Economics Tourism and Recreation Study Area is **low** and the magnitude of changes in visitor behaviour is **negligible**. Therefore, the effect during the O&M phase is considered to be **negligible** which is not significant in EIA terms.

Economic impacts from changes to commercial fisheries

- 3.8.3.21 The assessment presented in **Volume 2, Chapter 7: Commercial Fisheries, of the PEIR** considered a range of impacts on a number of receptors.
- 3.8.3.22 No significant residual effects were identified during the operational phase. Therefore, no socio-economic effects from changes to commercial fisheries are expected to occur due to the MHPGC Project.

3.8.4 Decommissioning phase

Increased employment and GVA in the economy

Receptor sensitivity

- 3.8.4.1 As stated in **Section 3.8.2** and **Section 3.8.3**, the sensitivity of the Socio-economics Local Study Area is considered to be **medium**, while the sensitivity of the Scottish economy is considered to be **low**, and the sensitivity of the English and UK economies are considered to be **negligible**.

Magnitude of impact

- 3.8.4.2 Based on industry reports (BVG Associates, 2021), it is anticipated that the cost of decommissioning the MHPGC Project would be £47 million. The largest costs are expected to relate to decommissioning the LSS. It was assumed that £14 million could be secured in England and the UK, with £7 million secured in the Socio-economics Local Study Area (included as part of the England and UK impact).
- 3.8.4.3 Therefore, it was estimated that the total economic impact would be £3 million GVA and less than 40 years of employment in the Socio-economics Local Study Area, and £11 million GVA and 130 years of employment in England, and £11 million GVA and 140 years of employment the UK. No impacts are expected in Scotland (**Table 3.37**).
- 3.8.4.4 More detail on the economic impact methodology and findings is presented in **Volume 4, Chapter 3.1: Economic Impact Technical Report, of the PEIR**.

Table 3.37: Decommissioning of the MHPGC Project: Employment and Gross Value Added impacts

	Scotland	Socio-economics Local Study Area	England (including Socio-economics Local Study Area)	UK
Total expenditure (£m)	-	7	14	14
Total GVA (£m)	-	3	11	11
Total employment (years of employment)	-	40	130	140

Note, peak employment is not included in this table as was the case for construction, since decommissioning is too far into the future for the detailed programme of work and therefore employment patterns to be known.

- 3.8.4.5 Given employment in the Socio-economics Local Study Area's construction sector of 17,500 jobs (**Table 3.9**), the employment impact (40 years of employment) would account for 0.2% of total construction employment. On this basis, the magnitude of impact in the Socio-economics Local Study Area would be **negligible**.
- 3.8.4.6 Given employment in England's construction sector of 1.4 million jobs (**Table 3.9**), the peak employment (130 years of employment) would account for less than 0.1% of total construction employment. On this basis, the magnitude of impact in England would be **negligible**.
- 3.8.4.7 Given employment in the UK construction sector of 1.6 million jobs (**Table 3.9**), the peak employment (140 years of employment) would account for less than 0.1% of total construction employment. On this basis, the magnitude of impact in the UK would be **negligible**.

Significance of effect

- 3.8.4.8 Overall, it is considered that the sensitivity of the Socio-economics Local Study Area is **medium** and the magnitude of the increase in employment and GVA is **negligible**, leading to an assessment of negligible/minor significance. Given the employment impact (0.2% of construction employment is marginally below the threshold (0.25%) the effect during the decommissioning phase is considered to be temporary **minor** beneficial which is not significant in EIA terms.

- 3.8.4.9 Overall, it is considered that the sensitivity of England is **negligible** and the magnitude of the increase in employment and GVA is **negligible**. Therefore, the effect during the decommissioning phase, is considered to be temporary **negligible** beneficial which is not significant in EIA terms.
- 3.8.4.10 Overall, it is considered that the sensitivity of the UK is **negligible** and the magnitude of the increase in employment and GVA is **negligible**. Therefore, the effect during the decommissioning phase, is considered to be temporary **negligible** beneficial which is not significant in EIA terms.

Economic impacts on the tourism economy from changes in visitor behaviour

- 3.8.4.11 **Volume 2, Chapter 10: Infrastructure and Other Sea Users, of the PEIR, Volume 3, Chapter 5: Traffic and Transport, of the PEIR, Volume 3, Chapter 6: Onshore Noise and Vibration, of the PEIR, Volume 3, Chapter 7: Onshore Air Quality, of the PEIR, Volume 3, Chapter 8: Land Use, Tourism and Recreation, of the PEIR and Volume 4, Chapter 1: Landscape and Visual Amenity, of the PEIR** have considered likely significant effects which may influence visitor behaviour at specific tourism assets, therefore influencing the tourism economy.
- 3.8.4.12 No significant residual effects were identified during the decommissioning phase by **Volume 2, Chapter 10: Infrastructure and Other Sea Users, of the PEIR, Volume 3, Chapter 5: Traffic and Transport, of the PEIR, Volume 3, Chapter 6: Onshore Noise and Vibration, of the PEIR, Volume 3, Chapter 7: Onshore Air Quality, of the PEIR, or Volume 4, Chapter 1: Landscape and Visual Amenity, of the PEIR. Chapter 8: Land Use, Tourism and Recreation, of the PEIR** identifies no residual effects expected to be more significant than those during construction (assessed in **Section 3.8.2**). Therefore, no secondary socio-economic effects on the tourism economy from changes in visitor behaviour are expected to occur due to the MHPGC Project during decommissioning.

Economic impacts from changes to commercial fisheries

- 3.8.4.13 The assessment presented in **Volume 2, Chapter 7: Commercial Fisheries, of the PEIR** considered a range of impacts on a number of receptors. As with the construction phase, while moderate adverse effects were identified on demersal otter trawl of nephrops from loss or restricted access to fishing grounds and displacement of fishing activity to other areas, the package of secondary mitigation is still being developed.
- 3.8.4.14 It is expected that an updated assessment will be presented in the ES and therefore the assessment of economic impacts associated with changes to commercial fisheries will be assessed in the ES. While the assessment of commercial fisheries is focused on specific fisheries, the economic impact assessment is focused on the fleets that use the areas and the ports they operate from. An economic impact would occur if there was a reduction in the catch, resulting in a reduction in employment.

3.9 Cumulative effects

3.9.1 Cumulative effects assessment methodology

- 3.9.1.1 The following assessment scenarios have been considered to identify the potential impacts in combination with other projects or plans on the same receptor [see **Table 3.38**].
- Whole project assessment: to identify the potential impacts associated with MHPGC Project together with either Morven North or Morven South in turn, (Scenario 1: Morven North and Scenario 2: Morven South), each of which would comprise a "Whole Project".
 - Morven Programme assessment: to identify potential impacts associated with all four components of the Morven Programme (Scenario 3);
 - Cumulative effects assessment (CEA): to identify the potential impacts associated with MHPGC Project and with relevant third-party projects, plans and activities, using a tiered approach (including Morven North, Morven South and the Morven Branxton Area Grid Connection (MBAGC) Project).

Table 3.38: Scenarios to be considered in the MHPGC Project whole project assessment, Morven Programme assessment and cumulative effects assessment for socio-economics

Whole project assessment		Morven Programme assessment	CEA
Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3	Scenario 4
MHPGC Project and Morven North	MHPGC Project and Morven South	MHPGC Project, Morven North, Morven South and Morven Branxton Area Grid Connection Project (hereafter 'MBAGC Project')	MHPGC Project, and Tier 1 (including Morven North and Morven South), Tier 2 and Tier 3 (including MBAGC Project) projects and plans screened in

- 3.9.1.2 The whole project assessment, Morven Programme assessment and CEA have been undertaken in accordance with the methodology described in **Volume 1, Chapter 4: Approach to EIA, of the PEIR**.
- 3.9.1.3 The projects and plans selected as relevant are based upon the results of a screening exercise (see **Volume 1, Annex 4.3: Cumulative Screening and Location Plan, of the PEIR**). Each project or plan has been considered on a case-by-case basis for screening in or out of the CEA for socio-economics, based upon data confidence, effect-receptor pathways and the spatial/temporal scales involved.
- 3.9.1.4 Tiers have been allocated reflecting the current stage of the other projects and plans within the planning and development process. This tiered approach is adopted to provide a clear assessment of the MHPGC Project alongside other projects and plans:
- Tier 1 includes projects, plans and activities at the following stages:
 - Under construction;
 - Permitted application;
 - Submitted application;
 - Those currently operational that were not operational when baseline data were collected, and/or those that are operational but have an on-going impact.
 - Tier 2 includes projects, plans and activities at the following stage:
 - Scoping report has been submitted and is in the public domain.
 - Tier 3 includes projects, plans and activities at the following stages:
 - Scoping report has not been submitted and is not in the public domain;
 - Identified in the relevant Development Plan;
 - Identified in other plans and programmes.
- 3.9.1.5 The specific projects and plans screened into the socio-economics CEA are outlined in **Table 3.39**.

Table 3.39: Projects and plans screened in to socio-economics CEA

Project / Plan name	Type	Tier and status	Approximate distance from MHPGC Project (km)	Construction timeframe
Bowdun Offshore Wind Farm (OWF)	OWF	Tier 1	10	2031-2034
Buchan OWF	OWF	Tier 1	149	2030-2033
Ossian OWF	OWF	Tier 1	6	2031-2033
Bellrock OWF	OWF	Tier 1	35	2029-2033
Muir Mhòr OWF	OWF	Tier 1	58	2029-2033
Marram OWF	OWF	Tier 1	125	2028-2035

Project / Plan name	Type	Tier and status	Approximate distance from MHPGC Project (km)	Construction timeframe
Arven OWF	OWF	Tier 2	362	2030-2033
Broadshore OWF	OWF	Tier 2	141	2030-2033
Stromar OWF	OWF	Tier 2	175	2028-2033
Bowdun Export Cable Corridor (ECC)	ECC	Tier 1	20	2031-2034
Bellrock ECC	ECC	Tier 1	25	2029-2033
Ossian ECC	ECC	Tier 1	34	2031-2034
Seagreen Phase 1A Offshore ECC	ECC	Tier 1	48	2029-2033
Muir Mhòr ECC	ECC	Tier 1	61	2029-2033
SCC14 – Hastings Hill Farm	Battery System (BESS)	Energy Storage	9	Not available
SCC21 – Foxcover Road	BESS	Tier 1	10	Not available
DCC10 – Carrs Farm	BESS	Tier 1	0	Not available
DCC120 – Wheatley Hill	BESS	Tier 1	4	Not available
DCC14 – Hallfield Farm	BESS	Tier 3	0	Not available
DCC5 – Croup Hill	Solar Farm	Tier 1	0	Not available
DCC15 – South Sharpley	Solar Farm/BESS	Tier 1	2	Not available
DCC115 – Harehill Farm	Solar Farm/BESS	Tier 1	3	Not available
DCC123 – Seaham Grange	Solar Farm	Tier 1	6	Not available
DCC145 – Hulam Farm	Solar Farm	Tier 1	9	Not available
SCC28 – Salters Lane Slingley Hill	Solar Farm/BESS	Tier 1	4	Not available
DCC114 – Hackworth Road	Solar Farm/BESS	Tier 1	2	Not available
DCC116 – East of Stockton	Solar Farm	Tier 1	4	Not available
DCC140 – Benridge Farm	Solar Farm	Tier 1	9	Not available
DCC141 – Low Raisby Farm	Solar Farm	Tier 1	9	Not available
DCC119 – Seaham Substation	Grid Infrastructure	Tier 1	4	Not available
SCC7 – 5 dwellings at Hetton-le-Hole North Road	Housing	Tier 1	3	Not available
SCC10 – 19 dwellings at Silksworth Lane	Housing	Tier 1	7	Not available
SCC17 – 16 dwellings in Hendon Sunderland	Housing	Tier 1	9	Not available
DCC2 – 50 dwellings west of Elemore View South Hetton	Housing	Tier 1	1	Not available
DCC12 – 81 dwellings in Hendon Sunderland	Housing	Tier 1	0	Not available
DCC13 – 149 dwellings east of Seaham Garden Village	Housing	Tier 1	0	Not available
DCC16 – 135 dwellings in Houghton-le-Spring	Housing	Tier 1	2	Not available

Project / Plan name	Type	Tier and status	Approximate distance from MHPGC Project (km)	Construction timeframe
DCC26 – 9 dwellings at Ashley House, Deaf Hill	Housing	Tier 1	8	Not available
DCC117 – 70 dwellings in Peterlee	Housing	Tier 1	4	Not available
DCC118 – 282 dwellings in Peterlee	Housing	Tier 1	4	Not available
DCC124 – 20 dwellings in West Rainton	Housing	Tier 1	6	Not available
DCC126 – 173 dwellings near Sherburn	Housing	Tier 1	7	Not available
DCC129 – 215 dwellings south of the Philadelphia Complex, Houghton-le-Spring	Housing	Tier 1	8	Not available
DCC130 – 57 dwellings south west of Springfield Cottage Station Town	Housing	Tier 1	8	Not available
DCC131 – 29 dwellings in Houghton-le-Spring	Housing	Tier 1	8	Not available
DCC133 – 93 dwellings in Great Lumley	Housing	Tier 1	9	Not available
DCC136 – 9 dwellings south west of Newholme Estate	Housing	Tier 1	9	Not available
DCC139 – 800 dwellings in Bournmoor	Housing	Tier 1	9	Not available
DCC145 – 200 dwellings in Bournmoor	Housing	Tier 1	9	Not available

- 3.9.1.6 The impacts considered as part of the whole project, the Morven Programme or cumulative effects assessments are a subset of those considered for the MHPGC Project alone. This is a result of the impacts identified and assessed for the MHPGC Project alone are considered highly localised, temporary in nature or have been assessed as negligible significance. These impacts have limited or no potential to interact with similar changes associated with the whole project, the Morven Programme or other plans or projects. These have therefore been scoped out of further assessment.
- 3.9.1.7 Some of the impacts considered within the MHPGC Project alone assessment are also specific to a phase of development (e.g. construction, O&M or decommissioning). Where cumulative effects only have the potential to occur where there is spatial or temporal overlap during certain phases of the development, impacts associated with these phases may be omitted from further consideration.
- 3.9.1.8 The impacts scoped out of further consideration include:
- Economic impacts on the tourism economy from changes in visitor behaviour - no significant socio-economic effects have been identified;
- 3.9.1.9 In line with wider assessment, the economic impact of changes to commercial fisheries are expected to be assessed as part of the ES.

3.9.2 Maximum design scenario – cumulative effects assessment

- 3.9.2.1 The cumulative MDSs identified in **Table 3.40** have been selected as those having the potential to result in the greatest potential effect on socio-economics receptors or receptor groups. The cumulative MDSs have been based upon the MHPGC Project alone assessment MDS [see **Table 3.30**] as well as publicly available information on other projects or plans that have been screened into the CEA [see **Table 3.39**].
- 3.9.2.2 Where applicable to the CEA, information regarding Morven North and Morven South is based upon the Project Descriptions provided in the their EIAs and publicly available information regarding the MBAGC Project (EnBW, 2025).

Table 3.40: MDS considered for the whole project, Morven Programme and cumulative effects assessments on socio-economics

Potential Cumulative Effect	Phase			Maximum Design Scenario	Justification
	C	O&M	D		
Increased employment and GVA in the economy	✓	✓	✓	Scenario 1 MDS as described for MHPGC Project [see Table 3.30], assessed cumulatively with Morven North. Scenario 2 MDS as described for MHPGC Project [see Table 3.30], assessed cumulatively with Morven South. Scenario 3 MDS as described for MHPGC Project [see Table 3.30], assessed cumulatively with Morven North, Morven South and MBAGC Project. Scenario 4 MDS as described for MHPGC Project [see Table 3.30], assessed cumulatively with Tier 1 (including Morven North and Morven South), Tier 2 and Tier 3 (including MBAGC Project) projects and plans.	The economic impacts include the overall impacts of each scenario, including from offshore and onshore transmission works. In addition to the economic impacts generated by the expenditure associated with the MHPGC Project, it may have cumulative effects associated with its interactions with other projects, such as increasing the critical mass of the offshore wind sector (e.g. attracting manufacturers etc.), and increasing competition for limited resources, which may delay construction of other projects and/or increase capacity and efficiency in the sector.
Economic impacts on the tourism economy from changes in visitor behaviour	X	X	X	Not assessed as no significant impacts identified from the MHPGC Project alone.	Not assessed.
Commercial fisheries	✓	✓	✓	The MDS is as set out in Volume 2, Chapter 7: Commercial Fisheries, of the PEIR.	As mitigation has not yet been determined, this will be considered at the ES stage.

C= Construction, O&M= Operations and maintenance, D= Decommissioning phases

"✓" is used to denote the phase the potential impact can occur, "X" outlines there is no impact

3.9.3 Whole project assessment, Morven Programme assessment and cumulative effects assessment

3.9.3.1 A description of the significance of the whole project, Morven Programme and cumulative effects assessment upon socio-economics receptors for each identified impact is provided below.

Increase in employment and GVA in the economy

3.9.3.2 The summary of the whole project assessment and Morven Programme assessment and cumulative effects assessment for increase in employment and Gross Value Added are presented in **Table 3.41**, **Table 3.42**. In addition the potential economic impact from supply chain investment is presented in **Table 3.43** and the reduced impact from competition for resources is presented in **Table 3.44**.

Table 3.41: Whole project assessment for increased employment and Gross Value Added

Whole project assessment	
	Scenario 1: MHPGC Project and Morven North Scenario 2: MHPGC Project and Morven South
Construction phase	
Receptor sensitivity	As with the assessment in Section 3.8, the sensitivity of the Scottish economy is considered to be low, and the sensitivity of the English and UK economies are considered to be negligible. No cumulative impacts are anticipated on the Socio-economics Local Study Area.
Magnitude of impact	The whole project assessment for Scenario 1 considers MHPGC Project together with Morven North. This is identical to Scenario 2, which considers the MHPGC Project together with Morven South. Based on analysis of the SCDS, it is anticipated that during the construction phase Scotland could secure contracts worth £478 million, while England could secure £280 million and the UK (including Scotland and England) could secure £758 million. More detail can be found in Volume 4, Chapter 3.1: Economic Impact Technical Report, of the PEIR. On this basis, it is anticipated that this will generate economic impacts of £334 million GVA and 4,730 years of employment (peaking at 1,440 jobs) in Scotland, £480 million GVA and 7,020 years of employment (peaking at 2,070 jobs) in England, and £814 million GVA and 11,750 years of employment in the UK (including Scotland and England, peaking at 3,030 jobs). Employment in relevant Scottish sectors, which includes construction, offshore energy extraction, water transport and engineering, is equal to 228,000. Given the peak employment (1,440 jobs) would account for 0.6% of this employment the magnitude of impact in Scotland would be medium. Given employment in relevant English sectors of 1.9 million, the peak employment (2,070 jobs) would account for 0.1% of this employment. On this basis, the magnitude of impact in England and would be negligible. Given employment in relevant UK sectors of 2.3 million, the peak employment (3,030 jobs) would account for 0.1% of this employment. On this basis, the magnitude of impact in the UK would be negligible.
Significance of effect	Overall, it is considered that the sensitivity of Scotland is low and the magnitude of the increase in employment and GVA is medium. The whole project effect will therefore be of temporary minor beneficial significance which is not significant in EIA terms. Overall, it is considered that the sensitivity of England is negligible and the magnitude of the increase in employment and GVA is negligible. The whole project effect will therefore be of temporary negligible beneficial significance which is not significant in EIA terms. Overall, it is considered that the sensitivity of the UK is negligible and the magnitude of the increase in employment and GVA is negligible. The whole project effect will therefore be of temporary negligible beneficial significance which is not significant in EIA terms.
O&M phase	
Receptor sensitivity	As with the assessment in Section 3.8, the sensitivity of the Scottish economy is considered to be low, and the sensitivity of the English and UK economies are considered to be negligible. No cumulative impacts are anticipated on the Socio-economics Local Study Area.

Whole project assessment	
Scenario 1: MHPGC Project and Morven North	
Scenario 2: MHPGC Project and Morven South	
Magnitude of impact	The whole project assessment for Scenario 1 considers MHPGC Project together with Morven North. This is identical to Scenario 2, which considers the MHPGC Project together with Morven South. Based on analysis of the SCDS, it is anticipated that during the O&M phase Scotland could secure contracts worth £10 million, while England could secure £10 million and the UK (including Scotland and England) could secure £20 million. On this basis, it is anticipated that this will generate annual economic impacts of £7 million GVA and 90 jobs in Scotland, £12 million GVA and 150 jobs in England and £19 million GVA and 240 jobs in the UK (including Scotland and England). Given employment in Scotland's relevant sectors 228,000, the employment impact (90 jobs) would account for less than 0.1% of this employment. On this basis, the magnitude of impact in Scotland would be negligible. Given employment in England's relevant sectors of 1.9 million, the employment impact (150 jobs) would account for less than 0.1% of this employment. On this basis, the magnitude of impact in England would be negligible. Given employment in the UK construction sector of 2.3 million, the employment impact (240 jobs) would account for less than 0.1% of this employment. On this basis, the magnitude of impact in the UK would be negligible.
Significance of effect	Overall, it is considered that the sensitivity of Scotland is low and the magnitude of the increase in employment and GVA is negligible. The whole project effect will therefore be of negligible beneficial significance which is not significant in EIA terms. Overall, it is considered that the sensitivity of England is negligible and the magnitude of the increase in employment and GVA is negligible. The whole project effect will therefore be of negligible beneficial significance which is not significant in EIA terms. Overall, it is considered that the sensitivity of the UK is negligible and the magnitude of the increase in employment and GVA is negligible. The whole project effect will therefore be of negligible beneficial significance which is not significant in EIA terms.
Decommissioning phase	
Receptor sensitivity	As with the assessment in Section 3.8, the sensitivity of the Scottish economy is considered to be low, and the sensitivity of the English and UK economies are considered to be negligible. No cumulative impacts are anticipated on the Socio-economics Local Study Area.
Magnitude of impact	The whole project assessment for Scenario 1 considers MHPGC Project together with Morven North. This is identical to Scenario 2, which considers the MHPGC Project together with Morven South. Based on industry reports (BVG Associates, 2021), it is anticipated that the cost of decommissioning would be £276 million. Of this, it was assumed that Scotland could secure £69 million, England could secure £14 million and the UK could secure £83 million (including Scotland and England). On this basis, it is anticipated that this will generate economic impacts of £36 million GVA and 440 years of employment in Scotland, £31 million GVA and 360 years of employment in England and £67 million GVA and 800 years of employment in the UK (including Scotland and England). Given employment in Scotland's relevant sectors of 228,000 the employment impact (440 years of employment) would account for 0.1% of total construction employment. On this basis, the magnitude of impact in Scotland would be negligible.

Whole project assessment	
	Scenario 1: MHPGC Project and Morven North Scenario 2: MHPGC Project and Morven South
	Given employment in England's relevant sectors of 1.9 million, the employment impact (360 years of employment) would account for less than 0.1% of this employment. On this basis, the magnitude of impact in England and would be negligible. Given employment in the UK construction sector of 2.3 million, the employment impact (800 years of employment) would account for less than 0.1% of this employment. On this basis, the magnitude of impact in the UK would be negligible.
Significance of effect	Overall, it is considered that the sensitivity of Scotland is low and the magnitude of the increase in employment and GVA is negligible. The whole project effect will therefore be of temporary negligible beneficial significance which is not significant in EIA terms. Overall, it is considered that the sensitivity of England is negligible and the magnitude of the increase in employment and GVA is negligible. The whole project effect will therefore be of temporary negligible beneficial significance which is not significant in EIA terms. Overall, it is considered that the sensitivity of the UK is negligible and the magnitude of the increase in employment and GVA is negligible. The whole project effect will therefore be of temporary negligible beneficial significance which is not significant in EIA terms.

Table 3.42: Morven Programme assessment for increased employment and Gross Value Added

Morven Programme assessment	
Scenario 3: The Morven Programme (Morven North + Morven South + MHPGC Project + MBAGC Project)	
Construction phase	
Receptor sensitivity	As with the assessment in Section 3.8, the sensitivity of the Scottish economy is considered to be low, and the sensitivity of the English and UK economies are considered to be negligible. No cumulative impacts are anticipated on the Socio-economics Local Study Area.
Magnitude of impact	The cumulative effects assessment for Scenario 3 considers the Morven Programme (MHPGC Project, Morven North, Morven South and MBAGC Project). Based on analysis of the SCDS, it is anticipated that during the construction phase Scotland could secure contracts worth £995 million, while England could secure £510 million and the UK (including Scotland and England) could secure £1.5 billion. More detail can be found in Volume 4, Chapter 3.1: Economic Impact Technical Report, of the PEIR. On this basis, it is anticipated that this will generate economic impacts of £690 million GVA and 9,680 years of employment (peaking at 1,460 jobs), £925 million GVA and 13,650 years of employment in England (peaking at 2,230 jobs) and £1.6 billion GVA and 23,330 years of employment in the UK (including Scotland and England, peaking at 3,390 jobs). Employment in relevant Scottish sectors, which includes construction, offshore energy extraction, water transport and engineering, is equal to 228,000. Given the peak employment (1,460 jobs) would account for 0.6% of this employment the magnitude of impact in Scotland would be medium. Given employment in relevant English sectors of 1.9 million, the peak employment (2,230 jobs) would account for 0.1% of this employment. On this basis, the magnitude of impact in England and would be negligible. Given employment in relevant UK sectors of 2.3 million, the peak employment (3,390 jobs) would account for 0.1% of this employment. On this basis, the magnitude of impact in the UK would be negligible.
Significance of effect	Overall, it is considered that the sensitivity of Scotland is low and the magnitude of the increase in employment and GVA is medium. The Morven programme effect will therefore be of temporary minor beneficial significance which is not significant in EIA terms. Overall, it is considered that the sensitivity of England is negligible and the magnitude of the increase in employment and GVA is negligible. The Morven programme effect will therefore be of temporary negligible beneficial significance which is not significant in EIA terms. Overall, it is considered that the sensitivity of the UK is negligible and the magnitude of the increase in employment and GVA is negligible. The Morven Programme effect will therefore be of temporary negligible beneficial significance which is not significant in EIA terms.
O&M phase	
Receptor sensitivity	As with the assessment in Section 3.8, the sensitivity of the Scottish economy is considered to be low, and the sensitivity of the English and UK economies are considered to be negligible. No cumulative impacts are anticipated on the Socio-economics Local Study Area.

Morven Programme assessment	
Scenario 3: The Morven Programme (Morven North + Morven South + MHPGC Project + MBAGC Project)	
Magnitude of impact	The cumulative effects assessment for Scenario 3 considers the Morven Programme (MHPGC Project, Morven North, Morven South and MBAGC Project). Based on analysis of the SCDS, it is anticipated that during the O&M phase Scotland could secure contracts worth £21 million, while England could secure £19 million and the UK (including Scotland and England) could secure £40 million. On this basis, it is anticipated that this will generate annual economic impacts of £12 million GVA and 160 jobs in Scotland, £25 million GVA and 320 jobs in England and £37 million GVA and 480 jobs in the UK (including Scotland and England). Given employment in Scotland's relevant sectors 228,000, the employment impact (160 jobs) would account for less than 0.1% of this employment. On this basis, the magnitude of impact in Scotland would be negligible. Given employment in England's relevant sectors of 1.9 million, the employment impact (320 jobs) would account for less than 0.1% of this employment. On this basis, the magnitude of impact in England would be negligible. Given employment in the UK construction sector of 2.3 million, the employment impact (480 jobs) would account for less than 0.1% of this employment. On this basis, the magnitude of impact in the UK would be negligible.
Significance of effect	Overall, it is considered that the sensitivity of Scotland is low and the magnitude of the increase in employment and GVA is negligible. The Morven programme effect will therefore be of negligible beneficial significance which is not significant in EIA terms. Overall, it is considered that the sensitivity of England is negligible and the magnitude of the increase in employment and GVA is negligible. The Morven programme effect will therefore be of negligible beneficial significance which is not significant in EIA terms. Overall, it is considered that the sensitivity of the UK is negligible and the magnitude of the increase in employment and GVA is negligible. The Morven programme effect will therefore be of negligible beneficial significance which is not significant in EIA terms.
Decommissioning phase	
Receptor sensitivity	As with the assessment in Section 3.8, the sensitivity of the Scottish economy is considered to be low, and the sensitivity of the English and UK economies are considered to be negligible. No cumulative impacts are anticipated on the Socio-economics Local Study Area.
Magnitude of impact	The cumulative effects assessment for Scenario 3 considers the Morven Programme (MHPGC Project, Morven North, Morven South and MBAGC Project). Based on industry reports (BVG Associates, 2021) it is anticipated that the cost of decommissioning the MHPGC Project would be £551 million. Of this, it was assumed that Scotland could secure £151 million, England could secure £14 million and the UK (including Scotland and England) could secure £165 million. On this basis, it is anticipated that this will generate economic impacts of £80 million GVA and 970 years of employment, £53 million GVA and 640 years of employment in England and £133 million GVA and 1,610 years of employment in the UK (including Scotland and England). Given employment in Scotland's relevant sectors of 228,000 the employment impact (970 years of employment) would account for 0.2% of total construction employment. On this basis, the magnitude of impact in Scotland would be negligible.

Morven Programme assessment	
	Scenario 3: The Morven Programme (Morven North + Morven South + MHPGC Project + MBAGC Project)
	Given employment in England's relevant sectors of 1.9 million, the employment impact (640 years of employment) would account for less than 0.1% of this employment. On this basis, the magnitude of impact in England and would be negligible. Given employment in the UK construction sector of 2.3 million, the employment impact (1,610 years of employment) would account for less than 0.1% of this employment. On this basis, the magnitude of impact in the UK would be negligible.
Significance of effect	Overall, it is considered that the sensitivity of Scotland is low and the magnitude of the increase in employment and GVA is negligible. The Morven programme effect will therefore be of temporary negligible beneficial significance which is not significant in EIA terms. Overall, it is considered that the sensitivity of England is negligible and the magnitude of the increase in employment and GVA is negligible. The Morven programme effect will therefore be of temporary negligible beneficial significance which is not significant in EIA terms. Overall, it is considered that the sensitivity of the UK is negligible and the magnitude of the increase in employment and GVA is negligible. The Morven programme effect will therefore be of temporary negligible beneficial significance which is not significant in EIA terms.

Table 3.43: CEA for increased supply chain

CEA	
Scenario 4: MHPGC Project and Tier 1 (including Morven North and Morven South), Tier 2 and Tier 3 (including MBAGC Project) projects and plans screened in	
Construction phase	
Receptor sensitivity	As with the assessment in Section 3.8 , the sensitivity of the Socio-economics Local Study Area has been assessed as medium , the Scottish economy is considered to be low , and the sensitivity of the English and UK economies are considered to be negligible .
Magnitude of impact	The projects considered, including offshore wind farms and export cable corridors, have the potential to generate economic impacts across Scotland, England and the UK. BESS and solar farm projects may require similar skills as the MHPGC Project and therefore there may be a contribution to the capacity of the Socio-economics Local Study Area. The MHPGC may contribute to a growing renewable energy sector within the Socio-Economics Local Study Area. While it will depend on the response of companies in the region, this would be expected to result in increase experience and may lead to a higher share of spending being secured in the Socio-economics Local Study Area, resulting in winning contracts elsewhere in the UK. As it is not possible to predict the increased turnover and employment in the Socio-Economics Local Study Area it has been assumed that there would be no increase, and therefore the impact would be negligible. In Scotland, early projects focused on the manufacture of subsea HVDC cables have included a factory in the Highlands, which is being built by Sumitomo and expected to create 150 jobs directly, and a factory proposed for Ayrshire and is expected to employ up to 900 people. Further projects may be announced in addition to this, and these are associated with the large number of offshore wind projects (such as the MHPGC Project) that requires HVDC cables. Given the Scottish manufacturing sector employs 178,000 people these investments would represent 0.65% of the sector's employment and be considered an impact of medium significance. At the English and UK level this impact would be of negligible magnitude
Significance of effect	Overall, it is considered that the sensitivity of the Socio-economics Local Study Area is medium and the magnitude of the increase in employment and GVA is negligible. The cumulative effect will therefore be of negligible beneficial significance which is not significant in EIA terms. Overall, it is considered that the sensitivity of Scotland is low and the magnitude of the increase in employment and GVA is medium. The cumulative effect will therefore be of temporary minor beneficial significance which is not significant in EIA terms. Overall, it is considered that the sensitivity of England is negligible and the magnitude of the increase in employment and GVA is negligible. The cumulative effect will therefore be of temporary negligible beneficial significance which is not significant in EIA terms. Overall, it is considered that the sensitivity of the UK is negligible and the magnitude of the increase in employment and GVA is negligible. The cumulative effect will therefore be of temporary negligible beneficial significance which is not significant in EIA terms.

Table 3.44: CEA for increased competition for resource

CEA	
Scenario 4: MHPGC Project and Tier 1 (including Morven North and Morven South), Tier 2 and Tier 3 (including MBAGC Project) projects and plans screened in	
Construction phase	
Receptor sensitivity	As with the assessment in Section 3.8 , the sensitivity of the Socio-economics Local Study Area has been assessed as medium , the Scottish economy is considered to be low , and the sensitivity of the English and UK economies are considered to be negligible .
Magnitude of impact	Offshore wind and other projects have the potential to generate competition for resources, such as workers. Without coordination between developers and suppliers, competitive pressure on resources may lead to delays and a lower share of contracts being secured by companies in each of the socio-economics study areas. In the Socio-economics Local Study Area, competition for workers would be expected to lower the share of contracts secured locally and decrease the economic impact. As the MHPGC Project is expected to generate a beneficial economic impact, a cumulative effect would reduce the scale of that beneficial impact and has therefore been assessed as negligible. At the level of Scotland, England and the UK, it may lead to a slower build out of projects, though the economic impact would be the same. Therefore, the effect has been assessed as negligible.
Significance of effect	Overall, it is considered that the sensitivity of the Socio-economics Local Study Area is medium and the magnitude of the change in employment and GVA is negligible. The cumulative effect will therefore be of negligible beneficial significance which is not significant in EIA terms. Overall, it is considered that the sensitivity of Scotland is low and the magnitude of the change in employment and GVA is medium. The cumulative effect will therefore be of temporary minor beneficial significance which is not significant in EIA terms. Overall, it is considered that the sensitivity of England is negligible and the magnitude of the change in employment and GVA is negligible. The cumulative effect will therefore be of temporary negligible beneficial significance which is not significant in EIA terms. Overall, it is considered that the sensitivity of the UK is negligible and the magnitude of the change in employment and GVA is negligible. The cumulative effect will therefore be of temporary negligible beneficial significance which is not significant in EIA terms.

3.10 Transboundary effects

- 3.10.1.1 A screening of transboundary impacts has been carried out and any likely significant transboundary effects with regard to socio-economics from the construction, O&M and decommissioning phases of the MHPGC Project upon interests of other states has been assessed as part of the PEIR.
- 3.10.1.2 The potential transboundary impacts are screened within **Volume 1, Annex 4.2: Transboundary Screening, of the PEIR** and are summarised below:
- Beneficial economic impacts in the European Union (EU) arising from the sourcing of some supplies of goods and services from outside the UK during the construction, operation and decommissioning phases.

3.10.2 Increase in employment and Gross Value Added

Construction phase

- 3.10.2.1 In addition to the £101 million expenditure in the UK, the MHPGC Project is expected to spend £639 million outside the UK.
- 3.10.2.2 This is expected to lead to beneficial socio-economic effects, generating economic activity and supporting employment outside of the UK.
- 3.10.2.3 While there are likely to be beneficial transboundary effects associated with the MHPGC Project, given the size of the EU economy it is unlikely that these effects will be significant.

O&M phase

- 3.10.2.4 The majority of the £2 million expenditure associated with the MHPGC Project is expected to be spent within the UK with around £0.7 million secured outside of the UK.
- 3.10.2.5 This is expected to lead to beneficial socio-economic effects, generating economic activity and supporting employment outside of the UK.
- 3.10.2.6 While there are likely to be beneficial transboundary effects associated with the MHPGC Project, given the size of the EU economy it is unlikely that these effects will be significant.

Decommissioning phase

- 3.10.2.7 In addition to the £38 million expenditure in the UK, the MHPGC Project is expected to spend £9 million outside the UK.
- 3.10.2.8 This is expected to lead to beneficial socio-economic effects, generating economic activity and supporting employment outside of the UK.
- 3.10.2.9 While there are likely to be beneficial transboundary effects associated with the MHPGC Project, given the size of the EU economy it is unlikely that these effects will be significant.

3.11 Inter-related effects

- 3.11.1.1 Inter-related effects are the combined impact of multiple aspects of the MHPGC Project on a single receptor. These are as follows:
- **Project lifetime effects:** Assessment of the scope for effects that occur throughout more than one phase of the MHPGC Project (construction, O&M and decommissioning), to interact to potentially create a more significant effect on a receptor than if just assessed in isolation in these three phases;
 - **Receptor led effects:** Assessment of the scope for all effects (including inter-relationships between environmental topics) to interact, spatially and temporally, to create inter-related effects on a receptor.

3.11.1.2 Inter-related effects are assessed within **Volume 4, Chapter 5: Inter-related Effects** and for socio-economics these have been considered within the assessment. Effects identified in the following chapters have been considered as part of the assessment:

- **Volume 2, Chapter 7: Commercial Fisheries, of the PEIR;**
- **Volume 2, Chapter 8: Shipping and Navigation, of the PEIR;**
- **Volume 2, Chapter 10: Infrastructure and Other Sea Users, of the PEIR,**
- **Volume 3, Chapter 5: Traffic and Transport, of the PEIR;**
- **Volume 3, Chapter 6: Onshore Noise and Vibration, of the PEIR;**
- **Volume 3, Chapter 7: Onshore Air Quality, of the PEIR;**
- **Volume 3, Chapter 8: Land Use, Tourism and Recreation, of the PEIR;**
- **Volume 4, Chapter 1: Landscape and Visual Amenity, of the PEIR.**

3.12 Summary

3.12.1 Summary of effects

3.12.1.1 This chapter has assessed the potential impacts on socio-economics from the construction, O&M and decommissioning phases of the MHPGC Project.

3.12.1.2 **Table 3.45** presents a summary of impacts and confirms the residual effects. The impacts assessed include:

- Increased employment and GVA;
- Impacts on visitor behaviour.

3.12.1.3 No significant effects on socio-economics arising from the MHPGC Project have been identified. Economic impacts from changes to commercial fisheries will be assessed in the ES.

3.12.2 Summary of secondary mitigation and monitoring

3.12.2.1 No secondary mitigation and monitoring is proposed.

Table 3.45: Summary of potential impacts and residual effects

Impact	Sensitivity of receptor	Magnitude of impact	Significance of effect	Secondary mitigation and monitoring	Residual effect
Construction phase					
Increased employment and GVA: Scotland	Low	Negligible	Negligible	n/a	Negligible
Increased employment and GVA: Socio-economics Local Study Area	Medium	Low	Minor	n/a	Minor
Increased employment and GVA: England	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	n/a	Negligible
Increased employment and GVA: UK	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	n/a	Negligible
Economic Impacts on tourism economy from changes in visitor behaviour	Low	Negligible	Negligible	n/a	Negligible
O&M phase					
Increased employment and GVA: Scotland	Low	Negligible	Negligible	n/a	Negligible
Increased employment and GVA: Socio-economics Local Study Area	Medium	Negligible	Negligible	n/a	Negligible
Increased employment and GVA: England	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	n/a	Negligible
Increased employment and GVA: UK	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	n/a	Negligible
Economic Impacts on tourism economy from changes in visitor behaviour	Low	Negligible	Negligible	n/a	Negligible
Decommissioning phase					
Increased employment and GVA: Socio-economics Local Study Area	Medium	Negligible	Negligible	n/a	Negligible

Impact	Sensitivity of receptor	Magnitude of impact	Significance of effect	Secondary mitigation and monitoring	Residual effect
Increased employment and GVA: England	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	n/a	Negligible
Increased employment and GVA: UK	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	n/a	Negligible
Economic Impacts on tourism economy from changes in visitor behaviour	Low	Negligible	Negligible (not significant)	n/a	Negligible

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