

12(b). Are any part of the works located *within or likely to affect* a designated conservation site? (SAC, SPA, SSSI or Ramsar)

Yes ☒

No ☐

12(b)(i). If Yes, which designated site(s) may be affected?

- Liverpool Bay/ Bae Lerpwl SPA
- Y Fenai a Bae Conwy/ Menai Strait and Conwy Bay SAC
- Dee Estuary/Aber Dyfrdwy SAC
- River Dee and Bala Lake/Afon Dyfrdwy a Llyn Tegid SAC
- Ardal Cadwraeth Arbennig Bae Ceredigion/ Cardigan Bay SAC
- North Anglesey Marine/ Gogledd Môn Forol SAC
- Pen Llŷn a'r Sarnau/ Llyn Peninsula and the Sarnau SAC
- West Wales Marine SAC

The Liverpool Bay/Bae Lerpwl SPA has been screened in for potential Likely Significant Effect (LSE) for red-throated diver and common scoter on the basis of overlap of the proposed works with the SPA and the species sensitivity to disturbance.

Although there is overlap of the proposed survey with Fenai a Bae Conwy/ Menai Strait and Conwy Bay SAC, it is demonstrated within the HRA Screening Report completed for the Mona Offshore Wind Farm Application (Document Reference E1.4 F03) that there are no Annex I habitat features of the SAC present within the overlap with the Mona Offshore Export Cable Corridor or the extent of the proposed works. Therefore, given the limited spatial and temporal footprint, and the lack of overlap with designated features of the site, it is concluded that there is no potential for LSE on the designated features of the Menai Strait and Conwy Bay/Y Fenai a Bae Conwy SAC.

Consideration is given to the Dee Estuary/Aber Dyfrdwy SAC and River Dee and Bala Lake/Afon Dyfrdwy a Llyn Tegid SAC for LSE in-combination for river lamprey (*Lampetra fluviatilis*) and sea lamprey (*Petromyzon marinus*) only with respect to underwater sound. The nature and scale of the surveys (spatially and temporally limited), combined with the distance between the designated site and the proposed surveys, the lack of particular sensitivity to underwater sound, and the transient nature of both river and sea lamprey, results in a conclusion that there is no potential pathway for underwater sound generated by the two surveys to combine any significant effect on either species. Therefore, it is considered that there is no AEoI on either feature at this site from underwater sound in-combination.

Despite there being no overlap between the survey area and the Cardigan Bay SAC, due to the mobile nature of the coastal population of bottlenose dolphins found within the SAC, individuals may migrate through the survey area. Bottlenose dolphins often range much more extensively between November and April within the Irish sea: towards the northern coast of Anglesey, the mainland coast of North Wales, and further north up to the Isle of Man. Based on the start date of survey activities in December 2026 extending until October 2028, there may be overlap between the activity and presence of individuals from the Cardigan Bay population. Therefore, bottlenose dolphins from the SAC could be impacted by vessel disturbance and underwater noise related to the Proposed Activities and have therefore been screened in for potential LSE.

Despite there being no overlap between the survey area and the North Anglesey Marine SAC, due to the highly mobile nature of harbour porpoise, individuals may migrate through the survey area. Therefore, harbour porpoise from the SAC could be impacted by vessel disturbance and underwater noise related to the Proposed Activities and have therefore been screened in for potential LSE.

Despite there being no overlap between the survey area and the Llyn Peninsula and the Sarnau SAC, due to the highly mobile nature of bottlenose dolphin, individuals may migrate through the survey area. The typical foraging range of grey seals is within 100km (Carter et al., 2022). Therefore, it is possible that individuals from the SAC may be foraging within the survey area. Therefore, bottlenose from the SAC could be impacted by vessel disturbance and underwater noise related to the Proposed Activities and have therefore been screened in for potential LSE.

Despite there being no overlap between the survey area and the West Wales Marine SAC, due to the highly mobile nature of harbour porpoise, individuals may migrate through the survey area. Therefore, harbour porpoise from the SAC could be impacted by vessel disturbance and underwater noise related to the Proposed Activities and have therefore been screened in for potential LSE.

(c). Please provide a description of all mitigation measures proposed to avoid any impact on designated conservation sites.

The following mitigation measures and environmental best practice will be adhered to throughout the proposed works to minimise risk to the marine environment:

- Best practice vessel management measures to minimise disturbance to ornithology will be adhered to (these measures are further described in Measures to minimise disturbance to marine mammals and rafting birds from transiting vessels, document reference J17) including:
 - Adhering to the Wildlife Safe (WiSe) Scheme;
 - Use of regular vessel transit routes which follow, where possible, established shipping routes to minimise disturbance to ornithology;
 - Where it is necessary for vessels to go outside of established navigational routes during transit to/from port and working areas, routes will be pre-selected to avoid locations where birds are known to aggregate and visible aggregations of rafting birds (inside or outside of the Liverpool Bay/Bae Lerpŵl SPA) will be actively avoided within the limitations of vessel safety and manoeuvrability.
- The locations of the shallow sampling will be informed by geophysical data and environmental benthic data collected during the previous cable route survey campaign in 2022 and will also be screened by geophysical survey techniques prior to execution of geotechnical activities. Therefore, geotechnical locations will be sited to avoid sensitive habitats (such as potential Annex I habitat), potential archaeological features and other potential hazards such as UXOs.
- A project-specific FLO will develop and issue Notice to Mariners (NtM), Kingfisher notifications, and notices to relevant third parties, and the vessel will display the appropriate navigational signals at all times.
- All equipment associated with the works will be removed on completion of the works.
- Bunding, storage facilities and spill kits will be employed to contain and prevent the release of fuel, oils and chemicals associated with the equipment into the marine environment.
- Coatings and treatments will be suitable for use in the marine environment and are used in accordance with best environmental practice.
- All equipment, materials, machinery and PPE used will be in a clean condition prior to their arrival on site, and upon removal from site, to minimise risk of introducing non-native species into the marine environment. See Appendix B for more details.
- An archaeological method statement has been developed submitted to NRW alongside the ML variation submitted for the Mona Array Area Geotechnical Survey Marine Licence (RML2602). Agreement will be sought with the RCAHMMW prior to the commencement of surveys.
- Best practice measures to reduce the risk of introducing INNS will be implemented, including:
 - All equipment, materials, machinery and PPE used as part of the proposed works will be cleaned immediately prior to arrival at and subsequent departure from the area of the proposed works.
 - Large vessels will be stored in water except for defouling and dry-docking.
 - Maintenance records of Impressed Current Anti-Fouling Anodes and Biofouling Records inspected.
 - Vessel equipped with BWTS installed according to classification regulation. BWTS designed to meet IMO guidelines for approval of ballast water management system and DNV standards.
 - It is anticipated that the seabed frame will be covered by Cathodic Protection Anodes.