



**DIRECTION BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR ENERGY SECURITY AND NET ZERO (“THE SECRETARY OF STATE”) UNDER SECTION 35 OF THE PLANNING ACT 2008 RELATING TO THE EAST IRISH SEA TRANSMISSION PROJECT**

1. By email to the Secretary of State received on 20 September 2024 (“the Direction Request”), Moir Vannin Offshore Wind Farm Limited (“the Applicant”) formally requested that the Secretary of State exercise the power vested in him under section 35(1) of the Planning Act 2008 to direct that the East Irish Sea Transmission Project located in England, as set out in the Direction request, be treated as development for which development consent under the PA 2008 is required.

2. The Secretary of State notes that the Direction Request relates to

- a. An Onshore Substation (which may be a High Voltage Alternating Current (HVAC) system or High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) system) and Energy Balancing Infrastructure (which may include Battery Energy Storage System, Long Duration Energy Storage or conversion to other energy carriers such as P2X (e.g. hydrogen)), (the “Proposed Development”).

The Secretary of State notes that the final application to the Planning Inspectorate is likely to include elements of associated development as appropriate.

3. The Secretary of State concludes that the Proposed Project is an energy project within the scope of section 35 of the Planning Act 2008.

4. Noting the above, the Secretary of State is satisfied that:

- a) The Proposed Project sits within one of qualifying infrastructure fields listed in section 35(2)(a)(i) (energy) and that the Proposed Project will be wholly within England, waters adjacent to England up to the seaward limits of the territorial sea or the Renewable Energy Zone (in relation to which the Scottish Ministers do not have functions);
- b) The Proposed Project does not fall within the existing definition of a “nationally significant infrastructure project” and therefore it is appropriate to consider use of the power in section 35(1) of the Planning Act 2008; and
- c) The Applicant’s request constitutes a “qualifying request” in accordance with section 35ZA(11) of the Planning Act 2008.

5. Having considered the details of the Applicant's proposals as set out in the Direction Request, and noting the accompanying letters of support from the Marine Management Organisation, Blackpool Council, Chorley Council, Preston City Council, Sefton Council, South Ribble Borough Council and Wyre Council, the Secretary of State is of the view that the Proposed Development is nationally significant, for the reasons set out in the Annex below.
6. The Secretary of State considers that if the details of the Proposed Development change, before submitting any application to the Planning Inspectorate, the Applicant may wish to seek confirmation from the Secretary of State that the development that is the subject of the proposed application is the same as that for which the Direction is hereby given.
7. The Secretary of State has taken the decision within the primary deadline, as required by sections 35A(2) and (5) of the Planning Act 2008, and issues this Direction accordingly under sections 35(1) and 35ZA of the Planning Act 2008.
8. THE SECRETARY OF STATE DIRECTS that the Proposed Development is to be treated as development for which development consent is required.
9. This Direction is given without prejudice to the Secretary of State's consideration of any application for development consent which is made in relation to the Proposed Development.

Signed by

REDACTED

Head of Energy Infrastructure Planning Delivery

For and on behalf of the Secretary of State for the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero

17 October 2024

## **ANNEX**

### **REASONS FOR THE DECISION TO ISSUE THE DIRECTION**

The Secretary of State is of the opinion that the Proposed Development is of national significance and that the Direction should be issued because:

- The Proposed Development and the East Irish Sea Transmission Project of which it forms part are necessary for the connection to the National Grid of the generation assets of the Moor Vannin Offshore Wind Farm, of indicatively up to approximately 1.4GW of renewable electricity and to provide grid balancing services via Energy Balancing Infrastructure.
- The Proposed Development and the Project of which it forms part will play an important role in enabling an energy system that meets the UK's commitment to reduce carbon emissions and the Government's objectives to create a secure, reliable and affordable energy supply for consumers.
- By progressing the Proposed Development through the Planning Act 2008 development consent process, it would provide the certainty of a single, unified consenting process and fixed timescales.