

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 TARCHON INTERCONNECTOR PROJECT

By letter to the Secretary of State received on 28 February 2025, Tarchon Energy Limited (“the Applicant”) formally requested that the Secretary of State exercise their power vested in him under section 35(1) of the Planning Act 2008 to direct that the UK onshore elements for the Tarchon Interconnector Project, as set out in the Direction request, be treated as development for which development consent under the Planning Act 2008 is required. The Secretary of State requested supplementary information from the Applicant on 11 March 2025 to assist in deciding whether to give the Direction sought. Further information was received from the Applicant on 14 March 2025.

The Secretary of State notes that the Direction request of 28 February 2025 relates to—

- The UK onshore elements comprising the construction and operation of a converter station to convert electricity to and from the National Electricity Transmission System (“NETS”); High Voltage Alternating Current (“HVAC”) cabling from the converter station to the point of connection with the NETS; and High Voltage Direct Current (“HVDC”) cabling from the converter station to the UK landfall site comprising a transition joint bay where onshore cables transition into offshore cables, forms the development for which development consent should be required (“the Principal Development”); and
- Associated development, which may include the licensable activities including works to install cables within UK territorial sea and Renewable Energy Zone and provision of offshore cable protection; and other works to facilitate the connection of the Proposed Project to the NETS.

Together the elements for which development consent should be required and its associated development make up the “Proposed Project”. The Secretary of State concludes that the Proposed Project is an energy project within the scope of section 35 of the Planning Act 2008.

Noting the above, and further that Essex County Council, Tendring District Council, and the Marine Management Organisation all support the request, the Secretary of State is satisfied that—

- The Proposed Project sits within one of the 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 limit of the territorial sea or the Renewable Energy Zone (in relation to which the Scottish Ministers do not have functions);
- 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
- The Applicant’s request constitutes a “qualifying request” in accordance with section 35ZA(11) of the Planning Act 2008.

Having considered the details of the Applicant’s proposals as set out in their letter of 28 February 2025 the Secretary of State concludes that the Proposed Project is nationally significant, for the reasons set out in the Annex below.

The Secretary of State considers that if the details of the Proposed Project change before submitting an 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.

The Secretary of State has taken the decision within the conditions as required by section 35A of the Planning Act 2008, and issues this Direction accordingly under section 35(1) and 35ZA of the Planning Act 2008.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE DIRECTS that the Proposed Project is to be treated as development for which development consent is required.

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 Project.

Signed by

REDACTED

David Wagstaff OBE
Deputy Director - Energy Infrastructure Planning Delivery

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

7 April 2025

ANNEX

REASONS FOR THE DECISION TO ISSUE THE DIRECTION

The Secretary of State is of the opinion that the Direction should be issued because–

- The Proposed Project is of national significance, taking into account that it forms the critical part of a linear electricity transmission interconnector project with a capacity of 1.4 Gigawatts (GW) that will improve the security and diversity of the UK's electricity supply.
- The capacity of the Proposed Project is equivalent to the capacity of a generating station that would qualify to be considered under the Planning Act 2008 process as nationally significant as well as other electricity transmission interconnection projects that have been designated by the Secretary of State to be nationally significant.
- The Proposed Project could 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.
- Progressing the development through the Planning Act 2008 development consent process, to the extent that the Proposed Project is within that process, would provide the certainty of a single, unified consenting process and fixed timescales.