



Ossian Transmission Infrastructure

Programme Document

February 2025

Revision	Comments	Author	Checker	Approver
1.0	Prepared for Inception Meeting	EM	KE	PD
2.0	ETG and further detailed information added	SSC	PD	PD
3.0	Final for publication	SSC	PD	PD



Table of Contents

1	Introduction	1
1.1	Purpose of Document	1
2	Programme	2
2.1	Overview	2
2.2	Expert Topic Groups	4
2.3	Limitations and Risks	7
3	Potential Issues for Examination	7



1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of Document

Ossian Offshore Wind Farm Ltd (“the Applicant”) proposes to develop the Ossian Transmission Infrastructure (“the Proposed Development”) to connect the Ossian Offshore Wind Farm Array (located in Scottish waters and subject to application for consent under section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989) to the National Grid at onshore substations in Lincolnshire. The Proposed Development comprises the installation of high voltage direct current (HVDC) offshore export cables (to the extent that these are located in English waters), landfall structures, HVDC onshore export cables and onshore converter stations, and all other development integral to the construction, operation and maintenance of the Proposed Development, including access. It is proposed that the lifetime of the Proposed Development will be 35 years, at which point the Proposed Development will be decommissioned.

This document is the first version of the Project Programme document¹ and sets out the main steps that the Applicant is intending to take during the preparation of the Development Consent Order (DCO) application. The Applicant will keep the Project Programme under review and a public version of the document will be hosted on the project website (<https://www.ossiantransmission.com/>).

The Programme Document is not a statutory requirement and is not for consultation.

This document has been prepared in accordance with Government guidance on the pre-application stage for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects² which sets out how the Programme Document should contain:

- the date the Applicant intends to submit their application;
- a comprehensive timetable of the applicant’s pre-application process, the main events with dates and milestones demonstrating how the pre-application process will be completed (using the maximum target of 2 years as a benchmark);
- the Applicant’s view on the main issues for resolution and activities they will undertake to address those;
- the Applicant’s proposals for engaging with statutory consultees and local authorities during the pre-application period and any intended financial support agreements, such as Planning Performance Agreements;
- the Applicant’s identification of risks to achievement of the pre-application stage and the process by which these risks are tracked and managed; and
- cross references to the SoCC required by Section 47 of The Planning Act 2008.

As the project timeline progresses and milestones achieved, the document will be updated and revised to reflect all matters set out above.



¹ As defined in [Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: 2024 Pre-application Prospectus - GOV.UK](#)

² [Planning Act 2008: Pre-application stage for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects - GOV.UK](#)

2 Programme

2.1 Overview

This section of the Programme Document presents the main project milestones programme events for the Proposed Development. The programme is presented in tabular format. Table 2.1 details the main programme events/milestones undertaken to date. Table 2.2 presents the programmed events leading to and including the submission of the application. Please note as dates in 2026 are refined the document will be updated. These tables should not be considered exhaustive, rather provide an overview of the key steps to be taken by the Applicant to ensure the submitted application is robust and accords with the requirements of the Planning Act 2008.

Table 2.1 Completed milestone events

Activity	Date
S.35 direction issued confirming onshore transmission infrastructure is to be treated as development for which development consent is required under the Planning Act 2008	May 2024
<i>Submission of applications to MD-Lot for s.36 consent and marine licenses for the Ossian Array³</i>	June 2024
Project introductions and informal consultation with statutory consultees (including Natural England, Marine Management Organisation and local authorities and elected members) and developers of other NSIPs in Lincolnshire	July 2024 - ongoing
Landowner engagement	July 2024 - ongoing
S.35 direction issued confirming offshore transmission infrastructure in English waters is to be treated as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP)	September 2024
Informal consultation with public through Public Information Days, website and newspaper publications	October 2024
Inception meeting with Planning Inspectorate	December 2024
Establishment and first meeting of Evidence Plan Process Steering Group	January 2025

³ Included for context only

Table 2.2 Programmed milestone events

Activity	Date
Establishment of Expert Topic Groups for key EIA topics	February/March 2025
Ongoing pre-scoping consultation (including introduction, ETG and other consultee meetings)	November 2024 – February 2025
Submission of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping Report	February 2025
Non-statutory consultation	March/April 2025
Issue of EIA Scoping Opinion from the Planning Inspectorate	April 2025
Consultation on draft Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) (s.47(2) Planning Act 2008)	June/July 2025
Publication of SoCC (s.47(6) Planning Act 2008)	September 2025
Submission of Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR)	October 2025
Statutory consultation (s.42 Planning Act 2008)	October – November 2025
Adequacy of Consultation milestone	Q2 2026
Preparation of DCO application (including targeted consultation, as necessary)	September 2025 – Q3 2026
Submission of DCO application	Q3 2026

The Applicant notes that a programme of consultee (both statutory and non-statutory), public and wider stakeholder engagement will be in place commencing in the scoping stage and continuing through to application submission. Early engagement has taken place in order to introduce Ossian, and the Ossian Transmission Infrastructure proposals to the community and statutory stakeholders.

Two in person Project Information Days were held in Lincolnshire in October 2024, which were advertised locally and open to the public. The Project Information Days focussed on the Onshore Transmission Infrastructure, as these would be the works located in closest proximity to local communities. Details of the Project Information Day materials are provided on the Ossian Transmission Infrastructure website: <https://ossiantransmission.com/documents/>

The Applicant is in the process of formally notifying all key consultees (including relevant prescribed consultees) of the project with a view to establishing Expert Topic Groups (ETG) and other technical working groups for key EIA topics. It is proposed that these groups will meet throughout the application preparation stage to ensure a robust EIA, and as appropriate, shadow Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA), is submitted with the application. See section 2.2 for further information.

The Applicant has established regular contact with key consultees, including Natural England, the Marine Management Organisation, Lincolnshire County Council and the South- East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership, (representing Boston Borough Council, East Lindsey District Council and South Holland District Council). who are all aware of the project and the proposed programme.

The Applicant has entered into Planning Performance Agreements with the South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership (SELCP), which was signed in October 2024 and with Lincolnshire County Council (LCC), which was also signed in October 2024. This provides a structured approach to resourcing key activities throughout the pre-application stage. The Applicant has engaged with Natural England using its Design Advice Service. The Applicants will review the need for any other such mechanisms to support the pre-application stage of engagement.

It should be noted that the scope of the EIA to be prepared for the Proposed Development will include those parts of the Ossian Transmission Infrastructure located in Scottish waters and therefore the Applicant will consult and engage with the Marine Directorate and relevant consultees, in parallel with the milestones in Table 2.2, to discharge the relevant pre-application requirements.

2.2 Expert Topic Groups

The Applicant has set up an Evidence Plan Process (EPP) to provide a formal mechanism for applicants and consultees to agree what information and evidence should be submitted in support of an application. The EPP was created by the Major Infrastructure Environment Unit (MIEU) at Defra as a formal procedure for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) applicants and statutory bodies to agree on the information and evidence required to support an NSIP application. Initially designed for HRA, MIEU also suggests that broader EIA issues may be included upon the applicant's request.

The overall aim of an EPP is to seek agreement between all relevant parties on the amount, type and range of evidence that will be required to be collected and collated (in the case of desk studies) as part of the EIA, HRA and MCZ processes and highlight, address and agree any areas of concern as early in the process as feasible.

The process used to prepare the Evidence Plan aims to establish a non-legally binding agreement between applicants and the relevant statutory authorities on the following:

1. The issues to be covered in the EIA and HRA (scope);
2. The baseline data to support the assessments (evidence);
3. The methods used in the assessments (methodology); and
4. If possible, the results of the assessments and any requirements for further mitigation or monitoring (conclusions).

The Applicants have had an initial meeting with the EPP Steering Group, who will oversee and monitor the progress during the pre-application stage and is in the process of setting up Expert Topic Groups (ETGs). Indicative timelines for engaging with the Expert Topic Groups (ETGs) are outlined below, though these may change based on the project schedule and the availability of the Applicant, their representatives and stakeholders. ETGs are expected to take place:

- **March to April 2025** – During and post-Scoping meetings to introduce the project and provide a General overview.
- **May to June 2025** – Post Scoping engagement to inform on project changes or updates post reception of the Scoping Opinion.
- **July to August 2025** – Pre PEIR engagement to inform stakeholders of the initial report contents and project updates and get feedback on methodologies.
- **December 2025 to February 2026** – Post PEIR engagement following Section 42/44 feedback post PEIR submission and update stakeholders on any project updates or changes.

The structure of the EPP and topics to be considered within the ETG’s are outlined in Figure 2.1 and Table 2.3.

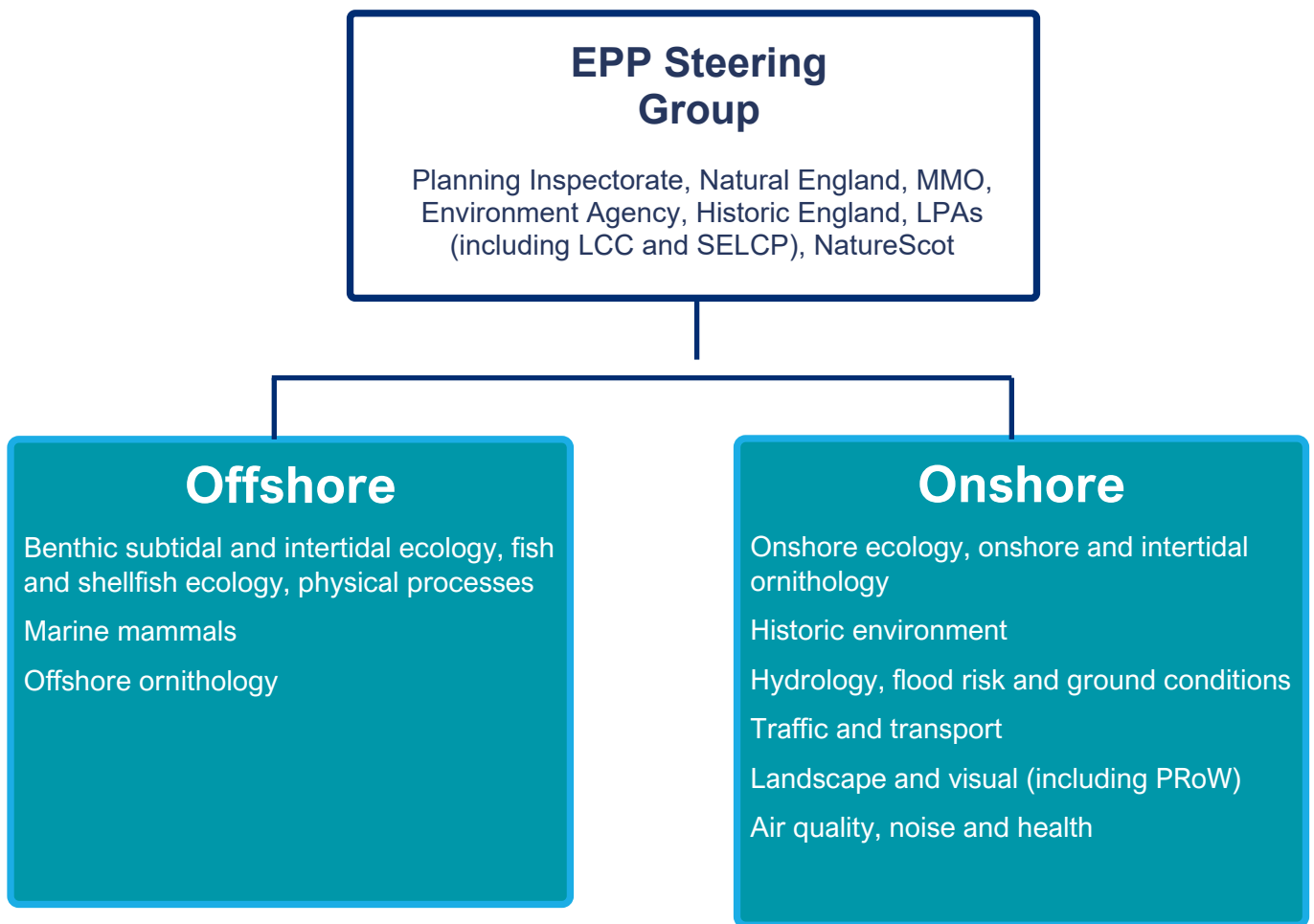


Figure 2.1 EPP Structure

As well as an overarching EPP Steering Group, 3 offshore and 6 onshore ETGs will be established to cover:

Offshore:

- Benthic ecology, fish and shellfish and physical processes;
- Marine mammals; and
- Offshore ornithology.

Onshore:

- Onshore ecology, onshore and intertidal ornithology;
- Historic environment;
- Hydrology, flood risk and ground conditions;
- Traffic and transport;
- Landscape and visual (including PRow); and
- Air quality, noise and health.

Stakeholders have been identified for each ETG as shown in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3 ETG topics and intended participating bodies

Offshore	
Benthic ecology, fish and shellfish ecology and physical processes	Natural England, JNCC, MMO (and the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas)), Environment Agency, Lincolnshire Wildlife Trusts, NatureScot.
Marine mammals	Natural England, MMO, The Wildlife Trusts, NatureScot.
Offshore ornithology	Natural England, MMO, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust, NatureScot.
Onshore	
Onshore ecology, onshore and intertidal ornithology	Natural England, Environment Agency, RSPB, Lincolnshire County Council (LCC), Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust. Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) (including SELCP)..
Historic environment	Historic England, LCC (County Archaeologist).
Hydrology, flood risk and ground conditions	Environment Agency, LCC, SELCP and relevant drainage boards (including Lindsey Marsh, Witham Forth District, Black Sluice, Welland and Deepings and South Holland Internal Drainage Boards).
Traffic and transport	National highways. LCC (highways authority).

Landscape and visual (including PRow)	Natural England, LPAs (including SELCP), LCCI (including rights of way officer), Lincolnshire Wolds Countryside Service.
Air quality, noise and health	LPAs (including SELCP) Environmental health teams, LPA Director of Public Health, UK Health Security Agency and Office of Health Improvement and Disparities.

2.3 Limitations and Risks

The progress of the pre-application stage, including adherence to the programme set out in this document, is dependent on several factors, some of which are beyond the control of the Applicant. The Applicant maintains a register of risks for the project and the project programme. The Applicant will keep the project programme under review based on these risks and will update this document (and inform the Planning Inspectorate) should the milestone dates in Table 2.2 change.

The below provides a high-level summary of the potential pre-application process risks and how the Applicant intends to manage them:

- Consultation – The Applicant is committed to robust consultation and has already undertaken early engagement. The Applicant will ensure feedback is taken into account and reflected in the scheme design and other commitments where appropriate but recognises this might not always be possible to the satisfaction of all consultees.
- Stakeholder Engagement - The Applicant has been (and will continue to be) proactive in engaging with stakeholders to facilitate the early discussions and aid in the identification of any specific requests of those stakeholders, so that the Applicant can seek to incorporate the necessary scope requirements and measures into its assessment work and ultimate application, as appropriate
- Landowner discussions – the Applicant is engaging with land agents to discuss with landowners and tenant farmers to ensure that any land access can be acquired as seamlessly as possible.
- Cumulative impacts and coordination – the Applicant is aware of other developments in the area and is liaising with other developers with a view of coordination where practicable and possible. The Applicant is unable to control what other developments are proposed in the nearby area although the Applicant is carrying out regular monitoring to identify other proposals and to allow the assessment to consider any potential cumulative impacts.

3 Potential Issues for Examination

The Applicant recognises some of the challenges for examination such as potential impacts on the marine environment, the onshore environment and local communities within Lincolnshire. We are at an early stage in the process and will identify what we consider to be the key issues following further discussions within the stakeholders,

in particular within the ETGs and provide further information on potential issues for examination in the next iteration of this live document.

Our EIA, PEIR and resulting Environmental Statement will consider the relevant potential impacts, their potential effects and seek to apply appropriate mitigation. The Environmental Statement will demonstrate our evaluation and consideration of the potential main issues for the Examination. We will also produce an Issues Tracker, which will ultimately be entered into the Examination as an application document, referred to as Potential Main Issues for Examination (PIME) document. This will contain a risk assessment for each main issue which will be allocated a 'RAG' status. The Applicant will work with stakeholders throughout the pre-application stage to review and resolve issues as far as possible with the aim of minimal residual issues at the point of examination. It is expected that the draft Issues Tracker will be made available for review by the Planning Inspectorate, the local authorities and the relevant statutory bodies in advance of the statutory consultation in 2025, or at their request.

The applicant is at an early stage of landowner engagement and therefore the requirements for CPO powers will be further developed. The applicant will provide regular updates to the Planning Inspectorate as necessary.



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