



North Sea
Transition
Authority

Announcement of United Kingdom Out of Round Carbon Dioxide Appraisal and Storage Licensing Process

UK Continental Shelf. The Energy Act 2008

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Notification of Out of Round Carbon Dioxide Appraisal and Storage Licensing Process

Introduction

- 1 The Oil and Gas Authority ('**OGA**') operates under the name North Sea Transition Authority ('**NSTA**'). The OGA remains the legal name of the company. References to the NSTA should be interpreted as the OGA.
- 2 The NSTA invites interested persons to apply for Carbon Dioxide Appraisal and Storage Licences ('**CS Licence**') pursuant to Chapter 3 of the Energy Act 2008 (the '**Act**') in respect of certain acreage on the United Kingdom Continental Shelf Territorial Seas.
- 3 The NSTA is the licensing authority for offshore carbon dioxide storage in an offshore UK controlled place or English controlled place (as set out in the Act), approving and issuing CS Licences and storage permits, where appropriate.
- 4 A CS Licence grants exclusive rights for the exploration and appraisal of potential storage sites, and storage (if a storage permit is granted in respect of a storage site) of carbon dioxide and the establishment or maintenance of installations for those purposes.
- 5 The NSTA has discretion to decide whether to issue a CS Licence. The general terms and conditions that will normally be set out in a CS Licence ("**CS Licence Clauses**"), can be found on the NSTA's website.
- 6 While the CS Licence Clauses show the general terms and conditions on which the NSTA is likely to award a CS Licence, pursuant to section 20 of the Act, the NSTA may grant a CS Licence on such terms and conditions as it considers appropriate and in accordance with The Storage of Carbon Dioxide (Licensing etc.) Regulations 2010 and other applicable law.
- 7 **The NSTA accepts no liability for any costs incurred by the applicant in considering or making its application.**

Licensing Offer

- 8 The area available for application ('**Area**') is defined in Appendix 1 to this notice, with an illustrative map in Appendix 2.
- 9 Full details of the offer, including guidance about licences, the terms which those licences will likely include, and how to apply, are available on the NSTA website (<https://www.nstauthority.co.uk/regulatory-information/licensing-and-consents/licensing/>).

Guidance, Deadlines & Fees

- 10 The NSTA's guidance ('**Guidance**') for companies wishing to apply for a CS Licence is available here: <https://www.nstauthority.co.uk/media/8146/cs-licence-guidance-final-29-april-2022.pdf>. This includes the evaluation criteria on which applications will be assessed, including a technical marking scheme. **Please read the Guidance in full. The information contained in this notice is a summary only.**
- 11 Any persons wishing to make an application for a CS Licence in respect of all or part of the Area must notify the NSTA at Offshore.Exploration@nstauthority.co.uk of their intention to do so by **17:00 BST on Tuesday 14 May 2024 ('Deadline')** and subsequently submit their completed application to the NSTA by **17:00 BST on Wednesday 5th June 2024** (the '**Closing Date**'). **If you have not given notice to the NSTA on or before the Deadline, you will not subsequently be able to submit an application for the Area unless informed otherwise.**
- 12 All applications for a CS Licence are to be submitted using the NSTA's Secure File Transfer Portal ('**SFTP**') site (<https://sftp.nstauthority.co.uk/login>). Details on how to request a SFTP account are available in the Guidance, and potential applicants should ensure that accounts are requested before **Friday 10th May 2024**.
- 13 The fee for making an application for a CS Licence is **£19,710**. This fee covers the cost of the NSTA services as outlined in the following Guidance Note and in line with the regulations referred to therein: <https://www.nstauthority.co.uk/regulatory-information/regulatory-framework/legislative-context/charging-regime-and-fees/>. Once an application has been received, the NSTA's Accounts team will issue an invoice for the fee, with instructions on how this should be paid. The NSTA will not consider an application until the application fee is paid. Note that separate applications should be submitted for each non-contiguous area, and each will be subject to a separate fee.
- 14 An application may be made by one or more companies ('**Applicant**'). Each Applicant must satisfy the NSTA that they have a place of business in the UK. This means at least one of the following: (a) having a staffed presence in the UK; (b) being registered at Companies House as a UK company; or (c) having a UK branch of a foreign company registered at Companies House.
- 15 Following the Closing Date, the NSTA will contact Applicants to schedule a review meeting in order to seek clarifications on the application content.
- 16 Any questions on the submission of applications should be sent to: Offshore.Exploration@nstauthority.co.uk

Requirement for a Crown Lease

- 17 In addition to a CS Licence, a Crown Lease from The Crown Estate ('**TCE**') is also required to undertake carbon dioxide storage activities within offshore areas. Applicants should contact TCE at the earliest opportunity.

Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Regulations

- 18 Offshore Petroleum Regulator for Environment and Decommissioning (**'OPRED'**)¹ has advised that where the Secretary of State (**'SoS'**) considers that anything that might be done or any activity which might be carried on under a CS Licence is likely to have a significant effect on a relevant site (whether individually or in combination with any other plan or project), the SoS shall make an appropriate assessment (**'AA'**) of the implications for the relevant site in view of the site's conservation objectives. For the Area, OPRED has advised that there are a number of Marine Protected Areas (Special Areas of Conservation (**'SAC'**), Special Protected Areas (**'SPA'**) and Marine Conservation Zones (**'MCZ'**)) that are either within, overlap with or are adjacent to the Area. Potential applicants are therefore advised that, subject to any AA, there may be some areas where activity is either precluded or where mitigation or compensatory measures may need to be put in place as part of development activities. A list of these protected areas is provided in the Appendix 3 to this notice.
- 19 For further information on the AA process, Applicants should contact OPRED at opred@energysecurity.gov.uk

Ministry of Defence Interests

- 20 In order to safeguard the interests of the Ministry of Defence (**'MOD'**) in the Area, particularly with regard to established Danger Areas and Exercise areas, there are a number of MOD conditions that will be applied to any CS Licence(s) granted in the Area. These conditions are defined with reference to the corresponding petroleum block numbering for the Area and are detailed in Appendix 4 to this notice. The conditions may include, amongst other things, requirements to give appropriate notice of planned activities, seek approval of activities in consultation with the MOD, modify the timing/location/type of activities, monitor and regulate acoustic emissions through an agreed plan, and to restrict or prohibit certain operational activities.
- 

¹ The Offshore Petroleum Regulator for Environment and Decommissioning, part of the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero.

Appendix 1 – the Area

Please note that part(s) of the Area may be subject to operational restrictions.

English Channel Area

A polygon, the boundary of which is defined by parallels of Latitude and Meridians joining the following points, as defined on European Datum First Adjustment 1950.

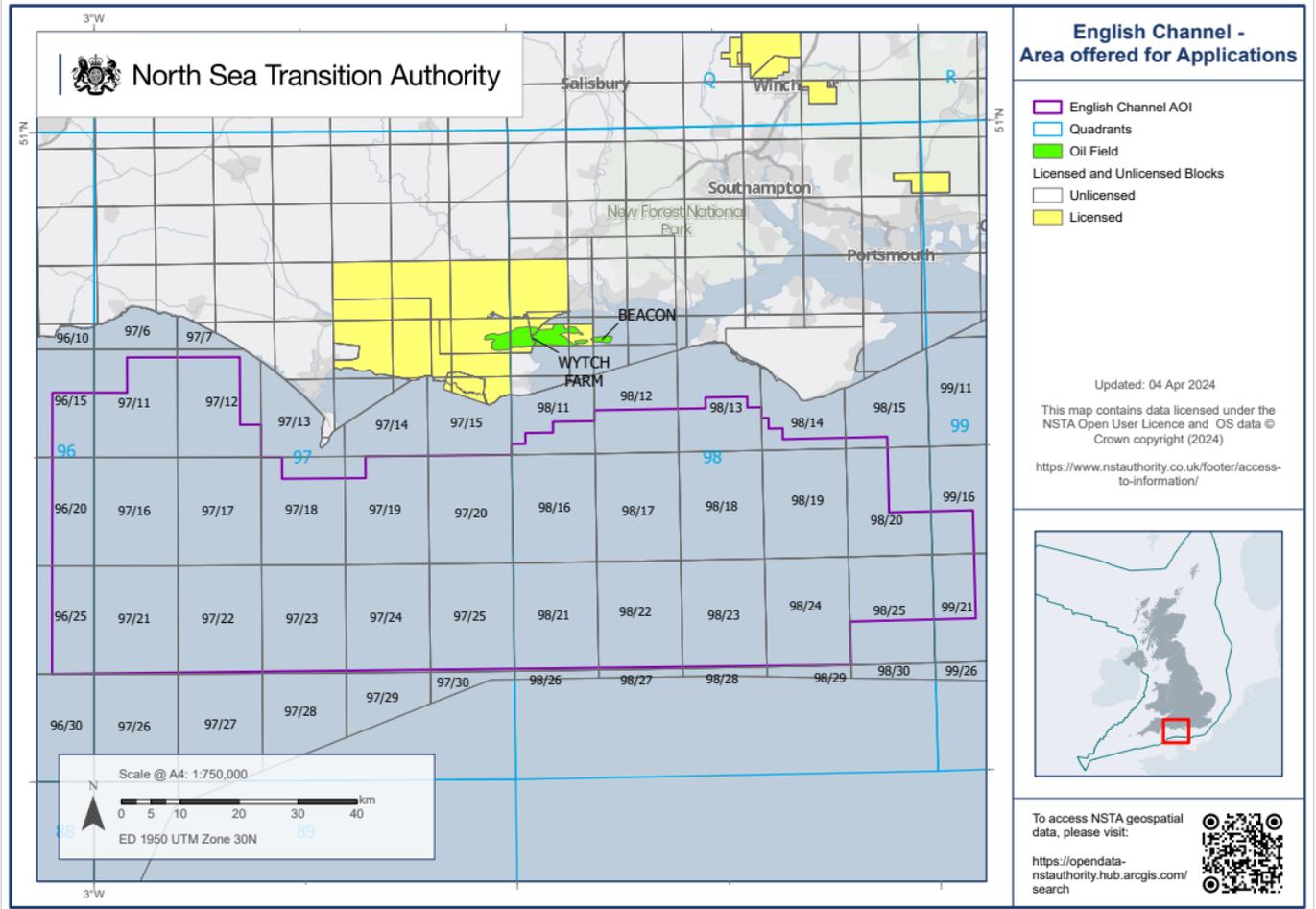
A map of the Area is attached, for illustrative purposes only, at Appendix 2

start

001° 32' 00" W	50° 34' 00" N
001° 32' 00" W	50° 35' 00" N
001° 26' 00" W	50° 35' 00" N
001° 26' 00" W	50° 34' 00" N
001° 24' 00" W	50° 34' 00" N
001° 24' 00" W	50° 33' 00" N
001° 23' 00" W	50° 33' 00" N
001° 23' 00" W	50° 32' 00" N
001° 21' 00" W	50° 32' 00" N
001° 21' 00" W	50° 31' 00" N
001° 06' 00" W	50° 31' 00" N
001° 06' 00" W	50° 24' 00" N
000° 54' 00" W	50° 24' 00" N
000° 54' 00" W	50° 14' 00" N
001° 12' 00" W	50° 14' 00" N
001° 12' 00" W	50° 10' 00" N
003° 06' 00" W	50° 10' 00" N
003° 06' 00" W	50° 33' 00" N
003° 06' 00" W	50° 36' 00" N
002° 55' 15" W	50° 36' 00" N
002° 55' 15" W	50° 39' 14" N
002° 39' 00" W	50° 39' 14" N
002° 39' 00" W	50° 33' 00" N
002° 36' 00" W	50° 33' 00" N
002° 36' 00" W	50° 30' 00" N
002° 33' 00" W	50° 30' 00" N
002° 33' 00" W	50° 28' 00" N
002° 21' 00" W	50° 28' 00" N
002° 21' 00" W	50° 30' 00" N
002° 00' 00" W	50° 30' 00" N
002° 00' 00" W	50° 31' 00" N
001° 58' 00" W	50° 31' 00" N
001° 58' 00" W	50° 32' 00" N
001° 54' 00" W	50° 32' 00" N
001° 54' 00" W	50° 33' 00" N
001° 48' 00" W	50° 33' 00" N
001° 48' 00" W	50° 34' 00" N
001° 32' 00" W	50° 34' 00" N

end

Appendix 2 – Illustrative Map



Appendix 3 – Matters raised by OPRED

OPRED has advised as follows:

There is a range of Marine Protected Areas (SAC, SPA and MCZ) which are within or overlap with the Area. In particular, the Wight-Barfleur Reef SAC covers the south eastern quarter of the Area and is in unfavourable condition as detailed in the Joint Nature Conservation Committee ('**JNCC**') report: <https://data.jncc.gov.uk/data/11c55f61-4aa7-4665-a95b-0a552cccd62/WBR-4-ConservationStatements-V1.0.pdf>

Other National Sites Network sites (SACs and SPAs) requiring consideration as they overlap with or are immediately adjacent to Area are:

- Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC
- Lyme Bay and Torbay SAC
- Chesil and the Fleet SAC
- Solent and Dorset Coast SPA

Prospective applicants should be aware that sites which are part of the National Sites Network sites (SACs and SPAs) may, subject to the conclusions of any Habitats Regulations assessment, preclude development, necessitate suitable mitigation measures so as to avoid adverse effects on a designated site or species, or in some circumstance, would require derogation and compensatory measures.

In addition, the following MCZs are within or overlap with the Area and will also require consideration in activity planning and permitting:

- East of Start Point
- South of Portland
- South Dorset
- West of Wight-Barfleur
- Albert Field
- Offshore Brighton

Prospective applicants are referred to the JNCC's website (<https://jncc.gov.uk/mpa-mapper>) where the spatial extent of all relevant National Sites Network sites can be viewed and accessed.

Appendix 4 – Ministry of Defence Conditions

The MOD conditions that will be applicable to any CS Licence(s) in the Area are listed below and apply as shown in Tables 1 and 2 below:

D1

The Licensee shall give the Ministry of Defence 6 months' prior notice to any installation movements within the block.

D2

The Licensee shall give the Ministry of Defence 6 weeks' prior notice of any seismic survey within the block.

D3

The Licensee shall, at its own expense, install and maintain underwater sonar beacons to Ministry of Defence specifications on any structures that may be silent at any time within the block.

D4

The Ministry of Defence must be notified, at least 12 months in advance of the proposed siting of any permanent or temporary installations, whether fixed to the seabed, resting on the seabed or floating, which is intended for the purpose of conveying carbon, drilling, carbon storage, carbon injection or carbon storage monitoring.

Permanent installations suspended in the water, on the surface of the sea or projecting above the surface of the sea are not permitted.

The deployment and operation of any type of installation or infrastructure for the purposes of conveying, transferring, off-loading, injecting or storing carbon to which carbon (including carbon dioxide in gas or liquid forms) is delivered by any means other than a pipeline installed on or in the seafloor, is prohibited in any part of the block located within the boundaries of a Ministry of Defence Danger and/or Exercise Area.

The Ministry of Defence will, within 30 Calendar days of receipt of such Notification, notify the Licensee that it is content with this location or otherwise notify that a MOD activity at the location would require re-siting of the installation from the requested location.

In the case of potential difficulties identified by either the Ministry of Defence or the Licensee, discussion should be held between the parties (within three months of the original notification) with a view to achieving a mutually acceptable location. The licensee shall provide the Ministry of Defence with the precise coordinates of any installations that are then deployed within the block, within 1 week of completing their deployment.

The licensee shall notify the Ministry of Defence when any installations are decommissioned or removed within 1 week of completion.

D6

A programme of works to deploy and install any carbon storage installations or associated infrastructure, or to undertake intrusive works or survey activities (such as drilling), is to be submitted for the approval of the consenting authority in consultation with the Ministry of Defence to ensure such activities are scheduled to occur when Ministry of Defence acoustic range facilities are not operational, or, otherwise define means to regulate acoustic emissions from such activities, to prevent interference with Ministry of Defence acoustic range operations.

Prior to the deployment of any carbon storage installations or associated infrastructure, an acoustic emissions management plan must be submitted for the approval of the consenting authority in consultation with the Ministry of Defence.

The acoustic emissions management plan should define:

- specifications for operational sub-sea installations including compressors, injection pumps and associated, infrastructure defining the maximum acoustic emissions that they would produce.
- details of measures designed to prevent noise interference being caused to Ministry of Defence acoustic range facilities at Portland through the operation of sub-sea installations and other equipment or vessels that may periodically be deployed and operated in conjunction with sub-sea installations.
- a schedule setting out how the development(s) will be operated, maintained and tested throughout its life to ensure that acoustic emissions will not impact Ministry of Defence acoustic range operations.
- a protocol through which the operator can be notified of noise interference issues or observations relating to the operation of Ministry of Defence acoustic range facilities, the measures that would be taken to investigate, and a description of the approach to resolving/rectifying/ mitigating any such impacts identified by the Ministry of Defence.

Table 1 – Conditions D1, D2, D3 and D4

Block
96/25
98/15
98/20
98/25
99/16
99/21

Table 2 – Conditions D1, D2, D3, D4 and D6

Block
96/15
96/20
97/11
97/12
97/16
97/17
97/18
97/19
97/20
97/21
97/22
97/23
97/24
97/25
98/11
98/12
98/13
98/14
98/16
98/17
98/18

98/19
98/21
98/22
98/23
98/24

Note: Block numbers are defined on the map in Appendix 2.



North Sea Transition Authority

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