



Press release

North Falls Offshore Wind Farm DCO accepted for Examination by Planning Inspectorate

- **North Falls Offshore Wind Farm’s DCO application is to be examined by the Planning Inspectorate**
- **Project enters the pre-examination phase with an opportunity for people to register their interest and have their say shortly**
- **Examination phase expected to begin in early 2025 and last up to six months.**

Swindon, 23 August 2024

North Falls Offshore Wind Farm’s (North Falls) Development Consent Order (DCO) application has been accepted for examination by the Planning Inspectorate, on behalf of the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, marking a key milestone for the 50/50 joint venture between RWE Offshore Wind (RWE) and SSE Renewables (SSE). This follows the submission of the Project’s DCO application in July 2024.

North Falls now moves into the ‘pre-examination’ phase of the consenting process for major infrastructure projects. The next phase, examination, is expected to begin in early 2025.

North Falls Project Director, Andy Paine: “North Falls is set to play a key role in the UK’s net zero ambitions, as well as unlocking opportunities to create jobs and boost the supply chain in the local area. We’re pleased to have reached this major milestone and look forward to the examination phase beginning in early 2025.

“We would like to thank those who have engaged and shared feedback with the Project. Engagement with local communities, stakeholders and businesses over the last six years, alongside close coordination with the proposed Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm, has informed Project development and the application we submitted to the Planning Inspectorate.”

North Falls is a proposed extension to the southern array of the existing 504 megawatt (MW) Greater Gabbard Offshore Wind Farm, a 50/50 joint venture between SSE and RWE, with SSE operating the wind farm of behalf of the joint venture partners. North Falls’ site will comprise one offshore array area totalling 90 square kilometres (km²) and will have a generating capacity of up to 1 gigawatt (GW.) The site previously comprised two offshore array areas



RWE

totalling approximately 150km², but after North Falls' 2023 statutory consultation the decision was made to remove the whole of the northern offshore array area and reduce the size of the remaining southern array.

If consented and approved for delivery, North Falls would support the UK government's target of up to 50GW of installed offshore wind capacity by 2030 and make a substantial contribution to the achievement of UK decarbonisation targets and to global commitments to mitigating climate change.

All of North Falls' application documents are available to view on the project page of the Planning Inspectorate's website. Visit national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/ and search 'North Falls Offshore Wind Farm'.

People will shortly be able to become an Interested Party by making a Relevant Representation, which is a summary of a person's views on an application, made in writing. Details of how to take part in this process will be available via the project page of the Planning Inspectorate's website in the coming weeks. From here, people can also register for project updates from the Planning Inspectorate.

The examination is expected to take up to six months, followed by a three-month period for the Examining Authority to make recommendations to the Secretary of State about whether permission for development should be given. A final decision on consent, taken over a further three-month period, will sit with the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero.

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North Falls

North Falls is being developed by North Falls Offshore Wind Farm Limited, a 50/50 joint venture company owned by SSE Renewables (SSE) and RWE Offshore Wind (RWE). SSE's and RWE's extensive portfolios provide North Falls with valuable lessons learned and experiences gained from consenting, constructing and operating offshore wind farms. This experience and expertise has been used to inform the development of this Project, including informing the Project's understanding of its potential impacts through the ability to draw on available monitoring data. The Project has cooperated with the Offshore Transmission Network Review (OTNR) process and applied to the Offshore Coordination Support Scheme (OCSS) in consortium with National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET) and Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm for an offshore connection to Sea Link, a marine cable between Suffolk and Kent proposed by NGET as part of its Great Grid Upgrade.

RWE

RWE is leading the way to a green energy world. With its investment and growth strategy Growing Green, RWE is contributing significantly to the success of the energy transition and the decarbonisation of the energy system. Around 20,000 employees work for the company in almost 30 countries worldwide. RWE is already one of the leading companies in the field of renewable energy. Between 2024 and 2030, RWE will invest 55 billion euros worldwide in offshore and onshore wind, solar energy, batteries, flexible generation, and hydrogen projects. By the end of the decade, the company's green portfolio will grow to more than 65 gigawatts of generation capacity, which will be perfectly complemented by global energy trading. RWE is decarbonising its business in line with the 1.5-degree reduction pathway and will phase out coal by 2030. RWE will be net-zero by 2040. Fully in line with the company's purpose - Our energy for a sustainable life.

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