

Equality Screening Template – Section 75 of Northern Ireland Act 1998

Policy title: Draft Offshore Renewable Energy Installations Policy

Policy screened out **without** mitigation, or an alternative policy adopted.

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Content

Part 1. Policy scoping – asks public authorities to provide details about the policy, procedure, practice and/or decision being screened and what available evidence you have gathered to help assess the likely impact on equality of opportunity and good relations.

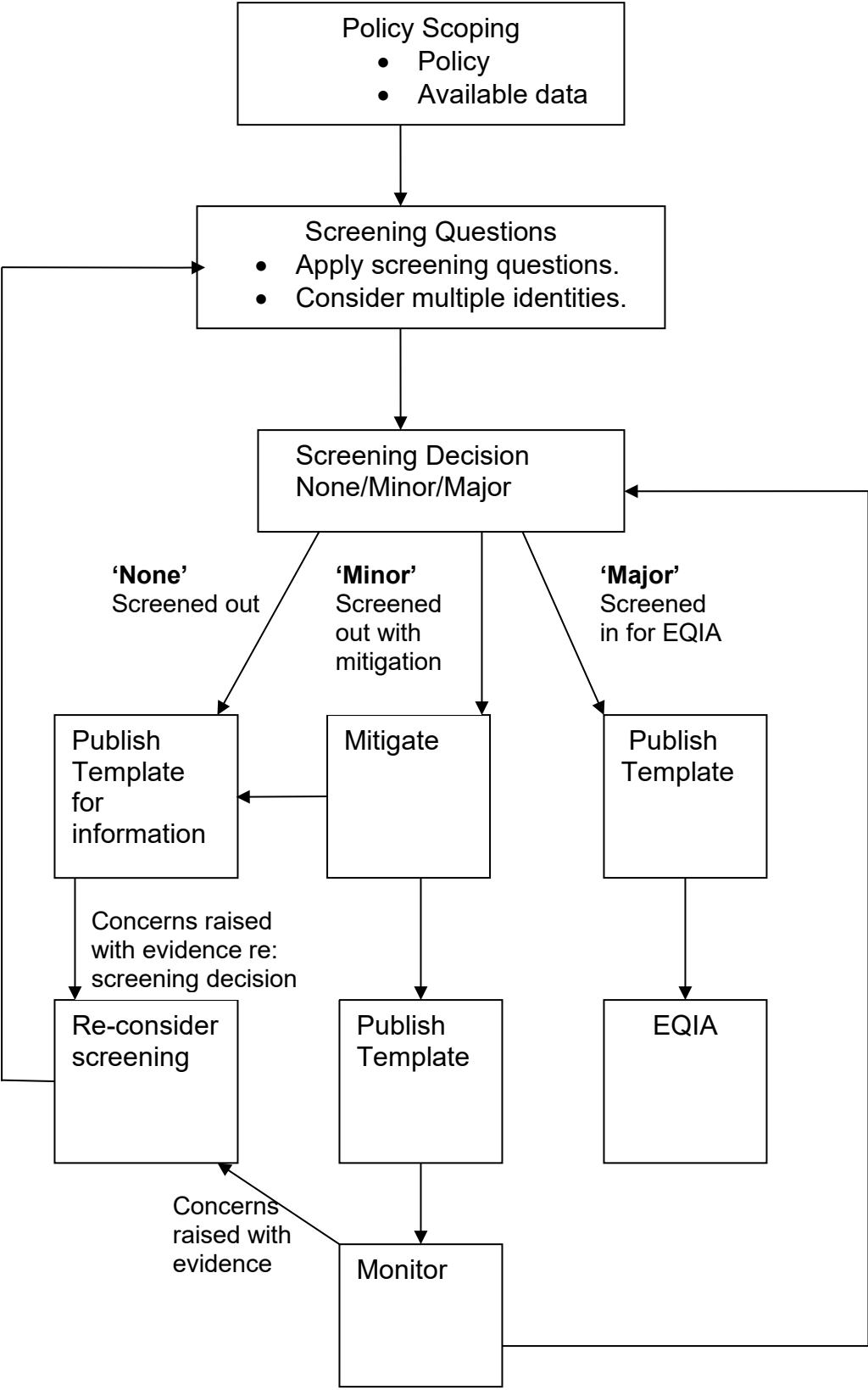
Part 2. Screening questions – asks about the extent of the likely impact of the policy on groups of people within each of the Section 75 categories. Details of the groups consulted and the level of assessment of the likely impact. This includes consideration of multiple identity and good relations issues.

Part 3. Screening decision – guides the public authority to reach a screening decision as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an equality impact assessment (EQIA), or to introduce measures to mitigate the likely impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

Part 4. Monitoring – provides guidance to public authorities on monitoring for adverse impact and broader monitoring.

Part 5. Approval and authorisation – verifies the public authority's approval of a screening decision by a senior manager responsible for the policy.

Flowchart for the equality screening process and decision.



Part 1. Policy scoping

Information about the policy

Name of the Policy

Draft Offshore Renewable Energy Installations Policy.

Is this an existing, revised or a new policy?

New - offshore renewable energy installations (OREIs) are not deployable in NI waters currently as there is no regime in place for decommissioning OREIs or provisions relating to safety and navigation surrounding OREIs.

What is it trying to achieve? (Intended aims/outcomes)

It is DfE's intention to consult on policy options that may lead to primary legislation to take powers to establish a decommissioning regime, safety and navigation framework for NI territorial waters (collectively referred to as Draft OREI policy).

For each of these areas three policy options are being considered and include:

1. Replication of the GB regime

By taking similar powers to those established in the Energy Act 2004 to establish a tried, tested and consistent with the rest of the UK.

2. Other regulatory options

Consideration of other regulatory options which may/may not enable NI to legislate in the areas of decommissioning, safety and navigation of OREIs.

3. Do nothing

The Department does not take forward any policy proposals.

The policy options outlined above are aimed at businesses and therefore will not have any impact on individuals.

Draft OREI policy will contribute towards achieving the target enshrined in law via the Climate Change (Northern Ireland) Act 2022 of 80% of electricity consumption to be from renewable sources by 2030. Bringing forward OREI policy for NI is also an essential step towards the achievement of the delivery of 1 Gigawatt of offshore wind in Northern Ireland from 2030 as outlined in the Energy Strategy Action Plan 2022 agreed by the former Minister for the Economy and published in January 2022.

Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy?

It is expected that Draft OREI Policy will benefit all of the population in Northern Ireland including all Section 75 categories.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has published a report on the impact of global warming at 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. They made it clear that by limiting warming to 1.5° we may be able to mitigate some of the effects on health, livelihoods, food security, water supply, human security and economic growth.

Through a move to cleaner sources of electricity, carbon emissions will be reduced along with energy costs, helping to tackle fuel poverty as well as reducing associated health problems.

Draft OREI Policy will accelerate Northern Ireland's journey towards net zero bringing on board large scale renewable generation to decarbonise local electricity production.

Who initiated or wrote the policy?

DfE established and led an Offshore Renewable Energy Action Plan (OREAP) Steering Group to identify the actions that need to be undertaken to ensure that the ambition for offshore wind is successfully delivered, and if feasibly possible, accelerated. The Steering Group brings together DfE's key delivery partners: The Department of Agriculture, Environmental and Rural Affairs (DAERA), The Department for Infrastructure (DfI), Utility Regulator for Northern Ireland (UR), The Crown Estate (TCE), Systems Operator for Northern Ireland (SONI), Northern Ireland Electricity Networks (NIEN), and RenewableNI, to identify the barriers to accelerating offshore wind deployment in Northern Ireland and seek solutions to overcoming them, through a joined-up and coordinated approach.

The OREAP Steering Group approved the Draft OREAP in December 2022, which was subject to its own public consultation. Within the Draft OREAP, the action to consult on decommissioning options for Northern Ireland was identified and that is this being delivered through a public consultation on Draft OREI Policy.

Who owns and who implements the policy?

DfE is responsible for the development of Draft OREI Policy.

Implementation factors

Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the policy/decision?

Legislative – Legislation may be necessary to enable key elements of Draft OREI Policy such as establishing a decommissioning regime for Northern Ireland, establishing safety zones and extinguishing navigational rights around wind farms.

Main stakeholders affected.

Who are the internal and external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the policy will impact upon?

- Offshore renewable energy developers
- Electricity networks (SONI/NIEN)
- Energy supply chain sector
- Utility Regulator
- DAERA (marine regulator)
- The Crown Estate
- DfI
- Environmental NGOs
- All those that live close to, work in or otherwise use the marine environment.

The Offshore Renewable Energy Forum (OREF) has been established, which includes bodies that are representative of those that live close to, work in, or use the marine environment including: the fishing industry, local government, maritime safety, environmental protection, maritime and marine economic development, ports and harbours, and marine heritage. The OREF functions to ensure that the views of marine users in the widest sense are considered in offshore renewable energy development in NI and have been consulted on the proposal to bring forward OREI policy for NI.

Other policies with a bearing on this policy

Draft OREI Policy will need to be observant in respect of products, services and schemes that will enable with a broad range of non-energy strategies, frameworks and policies. that will support and reflect the ambitions of the overall Energy Strategy including:

- Programme for Government, TEO
- Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland, SIB
- Vision for a 10X Economy, DfE
- Skills Strategy, DfE
- Circular Economy Strategic Framework, DfE
- Green Growth Strategy, DAERA
- Environment Strategy, DAERA
- Draft Marine Plan, DAERA

Available evidence

Throughout the development of the Path to Net Zero Energy Strategy, Draft OREAP and Draft OREI Policy, DfE has worked closely with a broad cross-section of business, consumers, environmental NGOs, government, and the energy industry.

During 2022, DfE has undertaken extensive stakeholder engagement via the OREAP Steering Group, OREAP Working Groups and the Offshore Renewable Energy Forum, to garner the input of 56 expert stakeholders from 22 organisations towards the development of the Draft OREAP, which has informed Draft OREI Policy. OREI policy options were approved by the OREAP Steering Group and presented to the OREF. From this engagement the three areas identified as requiring attention are a decommissioning regime, establishment of safety zones & extinguishing rights of navigation for OREIs.

Religious belief evidence / information:

The 2021 Census found that 43.5% of the population in Northern Ireland came from a Protestant background and 45.7% from a Catholic background. The Equality Commission's Fair Employment Monitoring Report No. 31¹ indicates that 50.2% of the (monitored) workforce are from a Protestant background and 49.8% from a Roman Catholic background.

Political Opinion evidence / information:

In 2020, 35% of respondents to a NI Life & Times Survey² considered themselves to be unionist, 19% nationalist and 42% neither.

A large number of stakeholders participated in the evidence gathering aspect of the policy development for the NI Executive's *Energy Strategy - Path to Net Zero* and offshore renewable energy was a key element of that. Although information on individuals was not collected based on political opinion, no responses identified political opinion as a factor in differing impacts of this strategy.

Racial Group evidence / information:

The 2021 Census reported that 96.55% of the total NI population was white.

A large number of stakeholders participated in the evidence gathering aspect of the Energy Strategy and, although information on individuals was not collected based on racial group, no responses identified racial grouping as a factor in differing impacts of this strategy.

Age evidence / information:

The Northern Ireland population continues to age. The 2021 Census³ shows:

- 0-14 years 19.20%
- 15-39 31.2%
- 40-64 32.40%
- 65+ 17.2%

A large number of stakeholders participated in the evidence gathering aspect of the Energy Strategy development, which this policy seeks to deliver on, including representatives of older people.

Marital Status evidence / information:

¹ [Fair Employment Monitoring Report No.31 \(equalityni.org\)](https://www.equalityni.org/Fair-Employment-Monitoring-Report-No-31)

² [NI Life and Times Survey - 2020: UNINATID \(ark.ac.uk\)](https://www.ark.ac.uk/NI-Life-and-Times-Survey-2020-UNINATID)

³ <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/census-2021-main-statistics-demography-tables-age-and-sex>

The 2011 Census contains information in relation to the marital and civil partnership status of the population within Northern Ireland:

A large number of stakeholders participated in the evidence gathering aspect of the Energy Strategy but information on individuals was not collected based on marital status and no responses identified marital as a factor in differing impacts of the strategy or specific policies such as Draft OREI Policy.

Sexual Orientation evidence / information:

A large number of stakeholders participated in the evidence gathering aspect of the Energy Strategy but information on individuals was not collected based on sexual orientation and no responses identified sexual orientation as a factor in differing impacts of this strategy or specific policies such as Draft OREI Policy.

Men & Women generally evidence / information:

NISRA population statistics for 2020 show that 50.7% are female with 49.3% male⁴. By 2031, projections are that the male/female balance will be 50/50 with that balance persisting to 2051.

The NISRA Labour Force Survey states that in 2020, of those aged 16-64 who were employed, 52% (432,000) were male⁵ compared to 48% of women (392,000). There are differences between the public and private sector. The public sector has a large majority of females within its composition (65%) whereas just under half (45%) of the private sector workforce is female. NISRA states that the 2020 population of Northern Ireland is made up of 961,400 females and 934,200⁶ males, however our future workforce balance is estimated to be slightly male dominated as the current population split for ages 0-15 is 192,844 females with 203,081 male, a difference of 2.6%.

DAERA leads on the Just Transition within the Green Growth Strategy. QUB has published an independent think piece on “Mapping a Just Transition”⁷ for Northern Ireland. This was grant funded by DfE.

Research carried out by DfE Skills Division into jobs advertised by the energy sector has identified that communications and customer service are the most sought after jobs although we do not know how many women or men are in these jobs.

A large number of stakeholders participated in the evidence gathering aspect of the Energy Strategy policy options consultation. Information on whether participants were women or men was not collected as part of this exercise.

Disability evidence / information:

The latest data from NISRA in 2018 report that 21.7% of the adult NI population are disabled.⁸

⁴ [Registrar General Northern Ireland Annual Report 2020 \(nisra.gov.uk\)](https://www.nisra.gov.uk/annual-reports/2020)

⁵ [Labour Force Survey Annual Summary 2020 \(nisra.gov.uk\)](https://www.nisra.gov.uk/labour-force-survey)

⁶ [NI Population 2020.jpg \(2481x1749\) \(nisra.gov.uk\)](https://www.nisra.gov.uk/population)

⁷ <https://www.qub.ac.uk/research-centres/SECA/News/MappingaJustEnergyTransitioninNorthernIreland.html>

⁸ [August 2018 NI Wellbeing Report.pdf \(nisra.gov.uk\)](https://www.nisra.gov.uk/annual-reports/2018)

One of eight consumer focus groups conducted during the Energy Strategy options consultation phase comprised people with disabilities. There were no discernible differences reported between the views expressed by people with disabilities or long-term illness and other focus group participants.

In addition, a large number of stakeholders participated in the other evidence gathering aspects of the policy options consultation document, covering a wide range of interests from many backgrounds. Information on individuals with or without disabilities was not collected as part of this exercise.

Dependants evidence / information:

A large number of stakeholders participated in the evidence gathering aspect of the Energy Strategy options consultation phase, which included offshore renewable energy policy. No respondents were under the age of 18 years old therefore no information on whether participants were dependents was collected as part of this exercise.

Needs, experiences and priorities.

Considering the information referred to above, what are the different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the following categories, in relation to the particular policy/decision?

Religious belief

No differential impact has been identified in respect of offshore renewable energy policy in the responses to the Call for Evidence or the Energy Strategy Policy Options Consultation. The department does not anticipate any difference in needs, experience or priorities. Draft OREI Policy and its policy interventions will apply to everyone regardless of their religious belief.

Political Opinion

No differential impact has been identified in respect of offshore renewable energy policy in the responses to the Call for Evidence or the Energy Strategy Policy Options Consultation. The department does not anticipate any difference in needs, experience, or priorities. Draft OREI Policy and its policy interventions will apply to everyone regardless of their political opinion.

Racial Group

No differential impact has been identified in respect of offshore renewable energy policy in the responses to the Call for Evidence or the Energy Strategy Policy Options Consultation. The department does not anticipate any difference in needs, experience, or priorities. Draft OREI Policy and its policy interventions will apply to everyone regardless of their racial group.

Age

No differential impact has been identified in respect of offshore renewable energy policy in the responses to the Call for Evidence or the Energy Strategy Policy Options Consultation. The department does not anticipate any difference in needs, experience, or priorities. Draft OREI Policy and its policy interventions will apply to everyone regardless of their age.

Marital status

No differential impact has been identified in respect of offshore renewable energy policy in the responses to the Call for Evidence or the Energy Strategy Policy Options Consultation. The department does not anticipate any difference in needs, experience, or priorities. Draft OREI Policy and its policy interventions will apply to everyone regardless of their marital status.

Sexual orientation

No differential impact has been identified in respect of offshore renewable energy policy in the responses to the Call for Evidence or the Energy Strategy Policy Options Consultation. The department does not anticipate any difference in needs, experience, or priorities. Draft OREI Policy and its policy interventions will apply to everyone regardless of their sexual orientation.

Men and Women Generally

No differential impact has been identified in respect of offshore renewable energy policy in the responses to the Call for Evidence or the Energy Strategy Policy Options Consultation. The department does not anticipate any difference in needs, experience, or priorities. Draft OREI Policy and its policy interventions will apply to everyone regardless of whether they are man or woman.

Disability

No differential impact has been identified in respect of offshore renewable energy policy in the responses to the Call for Evidence or the Energy Strategy Policy Options Consultation. The department does not anticipate any difference in needs, experience, or priorities. Draft OREI Policy and its policy interventions will apply to everyone regardless of their disability status.

Dependants

No differential impact has been identified in respect of offshore renewable energy policy in the responses to the Call for Evidence or the Energy Strategy Policy Options Consultation. The department does not anticipate any difference in needs, experience, or priorities. Draft OREI Policy and its policy interventions will apply to everyone regardless of whether they have dependents.

Part 2. Screening questions

Screening questions

1. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories?

Details of the likely policy impacts on **religious belief**:

Draft OREI Policy is likely to have no specific impact on this category.

What is the level of impact? **None**

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Political Opinion**:

Draft OREI Policy is likely to have no specific impact on this category.

What is the level of impact? None

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Racial Group:**

Draft OREI Policy is likely to have no specific impact on this category.

What is the level of impact? None

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Age:**

Draft OREI Policy is likely to have no specific impact on this category.

What is the level of impact? None

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Marital Status:**

Draft OREI Policy is likely to have no specific impact on this category.

What is the level of impact? None

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Sexual Orientation:**

Draft OREI Policy is likely to have no specific impact on this category.

What is the level of impact? None

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Men and Women:**

Draft OREI Policy is likely to have no specific impact on this category.

What is the level of impact? None

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Disability:**

Draft OREI Policy is likely to have no specific impact on this category.

What is the level of impact? None

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Dependants:**

Draft OREI Policy is likely to have no specific impact on this category.

What is the level of impact? None

2. Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equalities categories? Yes/No

Religious Belief –

No. Draft OREI Policy has no direct impact on the equality of opportunity of religious background or circumstances.

Political Opinion –

No. Draft OREI Policy has no direct impact on the equality of opportunity of political background or circumstances.

Racial Group –

No. Draft OREI Policy has no direct impact on the equality of opportunity of racial background or circumstances.

Age –

No. Draft OREI Policy has no direct impact on the equality of opportunity of their background or circumstances.

Marital Status –

No. Draft OREI Policy has no direct impact on the equality of opportunity of their background or circumstances.

Sexual Orientation –

No. Draft OREI Policy has no direct impact on the equality of opportunity of their background or circumstances.

Men and Women generally –

No. Draft OREI Policy has no direct impact on the equality of opportunity of their background or circumstances.

Disability –

No. Draft OREI Policy has no direct impact on the equality of opportunity of their background or circumstances.

Dependants –

No. Draft OREI Policy has no direct impact on the equality of opportunity of their background or circumstances.

3. To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?

Details of the likely policy impacts on **religious belief**:

Draft OREI Policy has no direct good relations impact.

What is the level of impact? None

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Political Opinion**:

Draft OREI Policy has no direct good relations impact.

What is the level of impact? None

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Racial Group**:

Draft OREI Policy has no direct good relations impact.

What is the level of impact? [None](#)

4. Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?

Religious Belief –

[Draft OREI Policy has no direct good relations impact.](#)

Political Opinion –

[Draft OREI Policy has no direct good relations impact.](#)

Racial Group –

[Draft OREI Policy has no direct good relations impact.](#)

Additional considerations

Multiple identity

Generally speaking, people can fall into more than one Section 75 category. Taking this into consideration, are there any potential impacts of the policy/decision on people with multiple identities?

(For example; disabled minority ethnic people; disabled women; young Protestant men; and young lesbians, gay and bisexual people).

[No.](#)

Part 3. Screening decision

If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment, please provide details of the reasons.

OREI Policy is screened out without mitigation or alternative policy adopted. It is expected that the proposed policy approach for OREIs will benefit all of the population in Northern Ireland including all Section 75 categories.

DfE will be consulting on the Draft Policy and the options contained within it. If any impacts are highlighted during this consultation period which the Department has not already considered the policy will be screened again prior to any decision being made.

If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment the public authority should consider if the policy should be mitigated, or an alternative policy be introduced - please provide details.

No adverse impact on equality of opportunity has been identified for any of the Section 75 categories.

If the decision is to subject the policy to an equality impact assessment, please provide details of the reasons.

Not applicable

Mitigation

Can the policy/decision be amended or changed, or an alternative policy introduced to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations?

Not applicable.

Part 4. Monitoring

DfE will be consulting on the Draft Policy and the options contained within it. If any impacts are highlighted during this consultation period which the Department has not already considered the policy will be screened again prior to any decision being made.

DfE will undertake monitoring of the implementation of Draft OREI Policy on an ongoing basis and provide regular reporting to the OREAP Steering Group and a wider stakeholder Offshore Renewable Energy Forum on progress. DfE will publish an annual report on OREAP actions progress including on OREI policy. Equality monitoring will be a part of this process. Reporting will be considered by the Offshore Renewable Energy Action Plan Steering Group and Offshore Renewable Energy Forum and will be published on the DfE website.

Part 5 - Approval and authorisation

Screened by: Koichi Samuels
Position/Job Title: Deputy Principal
Business Area/ Branch: Renewable Electricity
Date: 27/10/2023

Approved by: Zoë Crowe
Position/Job Title: Grade 7
Business Area/Branch: Renewable Electricity
Date: 13/12/2023