

DESNZ Building the North Sea Energy Future

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/building-the-north-seas-energy-future>

April 2025

1a. What role can government play to ensure that local workers can benefit from the growth of these new energy sectors?

NA

1b. In addition to the investments in clean energy industries outlined in this section, are there any other areas you think should be targeted for investment?

The seabed and shallow subsurface record a range of geological and environmental processes that have operated over multiple timescales, including tectonism, glaciation and sea-level change, as well as modern hydrodynamics, active sediment transport, and responses to anthropogenic activity. Through playing host to interactions between physical, chemical, and biological processes, the seabed and shallow subsurface have a significant influence on the character and distribution of marine ecosystems, and because of their variable properties, directly impact and constrain many human activities.

Geoscience-led investment opportunities for offshore development will lie at the heart of successful and sustainable investment in clean energy. High-impact shallow geological (Quaternary-focussed) research could utilise existing data across offshore windfarm developments and legacy geological, geophysical and geotechnical data, which would support the strategic site selection and risk mitigation for the energy transition. Integration of datasets for desk-based studies would enable accurate and efficient policy decisions for seabed users, including the energy sector (renewables, hydrogen storage, carbon capture and storage) and conservation (benthic marine habitats, the designation of marine protected areas and blue carbon ecosystems). Joint venture opportunities would leverage existing data, develop high-resolution Quaternary stratigraphic framework and enable multi-sector integration to assist in marine resource management.

Similarly, regional assessments of deeper subsurface geology will generate improved open datasets to support site selection and evaluation in future hydrogen and CO₂ storage, especially in areas not subject to current evaluation (e.g. the Central North Sea) but which offer significant potential for future storage and economic growth with Europe.

1c. What opportunities do you foresee for the oil and gas industry to invest into clean energy?

Leveraging existing understanding and infrastructure to expand into new technologies will enable a diversification of portfolios into new clean energy sectors. There are clear links to emerging investment opportunities in geological carbon storage, hydrogen production and temporary storage, energy storage,

sustainable oil and gas and renewable energy such as on and offshore wind and solar. These investments will be underpinned by experience of exploration and production on UK Continental Shelf, expertise and data holdings gained through oil and gas exploration and production.

As the industry transitions from oil and gas and the range of interested parties in the seabed expands and develops into new areas of science, there is an opportunity to ensure seabed data, including of the UK Continental Shelf is captured, managed and stored so that it can be re-used. There is an opportunity to ensure that data already gathered is available so that it can be re-used for similar or different purposes, ensuring that investment into data collection is maximised. There is evidence to suggest that there are barriers to accessing data (<https://www.datocms-assets.com/136653/1737366965-owprojectlisting-dec2024.pdf>). Legacy and new data can unlock the opportunity for sustainability in both corporate strategies and the wider research that underpins this.

Offshore wind energy has seen remarkable growth in the last few years, with current operational capacity of 14.7 GW (<https://www.datocms-assets.com/136653/1737366965-owprojectlisting-dec2024.pdf>; <https://www.renewableuk.com/energypulse/blog/uk-wind-and-global-offshore-wind-2024-in-review/#:~:text=The%20number%20of%20offshore%20wind,22.85GW%20by%20year%2Dend%20and%20a%20further%20~50%20GW%20in%20development%20and%20within%20the%20planning%20phases.>) and a further ~50 GW in development and within the planning phases. Characterising the seabed and shallow sub-surface geology (<100m) is key for the development of Offshore Renewables including optimised turbine siting & foundation design. From a geoscience perspective, multiple activities and transferable skills from oil & gas entities and individuals are brought to offshore renewables including marine geophysical survey techniques and interpretation skillsets. In a simplistic sense, with renewables projects the stratigraphy is simply looking at shallower, and typically more recent geological phenomena. Oil & gas entities (and individuals) bring valuable geoscience experience, and good practice established following many decades of operation, to the relatively younger Offshore renewables industry (e.g. through Industry-Academic partnerships, industry support for international networks). Investing in this space not only supports the energy transition but also allows companies to repurpose their core competencies in a rapidly evolving market.

The Marine Data Exchange provides a valuable platform whereby site investigation data from completed offshore windfarm developments is made publicly available. However, a recent stakeholder [consultation](https://nora.nerc.ac.uk/id/eprint/538827/) (<https://nora.nerc.ac.uk/id/eprint/538827/>) undertaken by British Geological Survey for The Crown Estate identified that the delay in making data available following completion remains a barrier to developing optimum assessments for new projects. Providing support to encourage data release and data sharing would be valuable for the sector.

1d. Which locations offer the best opportunities for investment in clean energy industries?

Geology is the key enabler of the energy transition. Geological carbon storage targets comprise saline aquifers and depleted oil and gas fields, ideally located at depths of more than 800 m below the seabed. These rock units require a thick (ideally >100 m) overlying seal such as mudstone, evaporites, or shale. These conditions replicate the targets appraised and developed for oil and gas production. Planned and potential offshore depleted field CO₂ storage projects are located in the Southern North Sea, the Central North Sea, the Northern North Sea and the East Irish Sea.

Similarly, two main geological environments are required to support the uptake of hydrogen storage: salt formations that are thick enough (in excess of ~50 m) to support the creation of engineered solution-mined caverns, and depleted oil and gas reservoirs or saline aquifers. All these rock types are present in parts of both the Southern North Sea and East Irish Sea. For Compressed Air Energy Storage, the current technology uses salt caverns, using similar salt targets as those for hydrogen storage.

There is therefore, a clear overlap in the subsurface requirements for carbon capture and storage, hydrogen storage, energy storage, and some geothermal technologies, and requires strategic planning to optimise the delivery of energy transition technologies at a basin scale. A clear understanding of the consequences of proximal and co-located developments, and insight into the simultaneous operations that could reduce costs and unlock subsurface potential, would drive a clearer picture of the optimal locations for future investment.

Furthermore, characterising the seabed and shallow sub-surface (<100m) is key for the development of offshore renewables (e.g. siting & foundation design) as well as numerous other activities (e.g., marine conservation and blue carbon, defence, marine minerals, coastal and fisheries management). Managing access and interaction with the seabed and shallow sub-surface is increasingly complex with these multiple applications and interests, yet the approach to mapping the seabed and subsurface has been largely ad hoc and reactive more than proactive. Coordinated support and investment in seabed and sub-surface mapping has been shown to be sound investment (e.g. cost benefit of 86:1, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/679a162ddc6d75ae3ddc7b60/UK_Seabed_Mapping_CBA_Final_Report_V5.1.pdf), as the seabed is a fundamental interface that impacts on so many activities.

Although most of the UK continental shelf is, in principle, suitable for offshore wind development (excluding other activities/interests such as marine protected areas), dramatic variations in geological character on local and regional scales requires significantly different foundation types and design. Support for coordinated and systematic mapping of the offshore geology has been lacking since the nascent development of the oil & gas industry. Recent [mapping efforts](#) and [coordination](#) by BGS with The Crown Estate is demonstrating technical capacity and user requirements for Seabed Geology data and information (<https://geoscientist.online/sections/features/land-below-sea-a-new-generation-of-seabed-geology-mapping/>; <https://www.bgs.ac.uk/news/seabed-geology-data-consultation/>).

2. What, if any, additional measures could help the oil and gas workforce to transition into a) clean energy and b) other industrial strategy sectors?

NA

3a. What support is required for oil and gas workers to transition into low carbon sectors that align with the UK's longer-term environmental and economic ambitions, as proposed within this consultation?

In your response, please consider the transition through different lenses – for example, by location (domestically and internationally) or by demographic.

NA

3b. How do you think we should approach measuring the transition of workers from the oil and gas sector to low-carbon industries?

Do you have a view on what metrics we could be using to measure the transition of workers from the oil and gas sector to low carbon sectors?

NA

3c. How would you define a good work opportunity within the low-carbon economy?

In your response, please consider fair remuneration, the role of trade unions and creating jobs that are inclusive and contracted with financial security.

NA

3d. What, if any, other key occupations not already listed could oil and gas workers transition into that you think are important to supporting the transition to a low carbon economy?

NA

3e. Do you think the UK has a sufficient skills base to underpin the transition?

What role will the oil and gas sector play in the availability of critical skills?

A [review](#) of market barriers for the increased uptake of hydrogen in the East Coast industrial cluster was undertaken as part of the Industrial Decarbonisation Research and Innovation Centre work programme

(<https://www.arup.com/globalassets/downloads/insights/a/assessing-the-regional-demand-for-geological-hydrogen-storage.pdf>). This highlighted:

- The nascent nature of the hydrogen economy
- Over-reliance on salt cavern technology;
- Disjointed value chain;
- Potential issues with public acceptance of hydrogen storage;
- Immature/underdeveloped supply chain that will have delays in scaling-up;
- Lack of a detailed regulatory and fiscal framework.

All these points give opportunities to develop a skills base that supports hydrogen storage in the near and offshore.

In offshore renewables, there are numerous similar activities/transferrable skills and overlapping activities exist between offshore renewables and marine industries, including Marine Geological Surveys (such as borehole investigations, geotechnical assessments, and geophysical data acquisition). While many equipment manufacturers and survey companies are already adapting to the transition, broader uptake would benefit significantly from signposting from Government (e.g. signalling support through policy, procurement or direct incentives), along with coordinated planning and strategic support to guide long-term investment and capability development.

Many of the analytical techniques and technologies now applied in offshore renewables (wind), carbon capture and storage and hydrogen storage were originally developed for the oil & gas sector. As a result, oil & gas professionals are well positioned to contribute to the renewables industry. This is a trend that is increasingly evident, with oil & gas specialists now regularly participating in offshore renewable energy conferences, webinars and forums. The technical skills that oil & gas personnel can apply to future energy sectors include:

- Seismic interpretation and modelling;
- Comprehensive geological analysis, including depositional history and predictive sedimentary modelling, informed by the interpretation of integrated datasets spanning geological, geophysical, and geotechnical domains, with a focus on understanding past depositional systems.
- Translating deepwater expertise to developing markets such as floating wind and deepwater innovations. This includes floating foundation design, mooring systems, subsea cable and trenching, slope stability modelling, submarine landslide risk assessment and sediment analysis.
- Marine spatial planning and environmental risk assessment contribute to sustainable marine planning through seabed habitat mapping.

Within carbon capture, transport and storage, the critical skills that can be provided by the oil & gas sector include:

- Subsurface expertise, which covers most of the required skills for subsurface geological appraisal, and injection scheme design. Supply chains including those for other industries are available to provide skills and expertise in risk assessment and development and implementation of storage monitoring programmes. Evidence for this skills base can be seen in the progress being made towards the 20 or so storage permits currently being developed.
- International collaborative expertise provides needed knowledge including expertise on flue gas capture from the Boundary Dam CO₂ Capture project, in Canada, and experimental behaviour of capture technologies at the Technology Centre Mongstad in Norway.

As an international industry, oil and gas supply chains also provide key critical skills for carbon capture and storage, often developed internationally. These sectors include specialist compression technologies for CO₂ streams, and the UK sensor manufacturers for monitoring the transport and storage systems. However, it should be noted that some of these technologies are at medium technology readiness levels in the marine environment and further testing and demonstration, in dedicated test/research facilities would provide domestic UK benefits and may

encourage investment. There are also significant critical skills in the UK maritime engineering sector servicing the offshore wind sector.

The UK research sector in carbon capture and storage is fundamental to supporting the reskilling of UK oil & gas sector, and can provide knowledge and expertise to support the transition to carbon capture and storage. This clearly requires a well-funded research base with dedicated carbon capture and storage research programmes. UK Research and Innovation, led by the Natural Environment Research Council, explored the potential to create a CO2 Storage Research Facility (CSRF). The CSRF aimed to provide both a research and training facility, and a technology test bed at credible industrial scale to support the developing carbon capture and storage industry. Although the CSRF was terminated by the Natural Environment Research Council prior to submission of the business case to DSIT and DESNZ, the conceptual design was developed and costed and a potential location was identified, creating a “shovel-ready” design for future commissioning.

4a. How can government and industry develop the skills passport into a meaningful and effective mechanism for workers to transition from oil and gas into other industries?

What is the correct role for industry and government to make this happen?

NA

4b. What can we do to further support specific local communities that are heavily reliant on oil and gas through the transition?

NA

4c. Are you aware of any examples of successful collaborations between regions or sectors that could serve as a model for facilitating worker transitions?

NA

5a. We would welcome any evidence you can share on any of the barriers mentioned in this section (pay, geography, policy uncertainty, employer incentive to support retraining, aging workforce).

NA

5b. What, if any, additional barriers not already mentioned in this section are you aware of?

NA

5c. What do you think could be done to improve the pay and standards of the clean energy sector and help ensure a proper role for trade unions?

NA

6. How can we enhance diversity within the sector?

In your response, please consider the role of external organisations (such as employers and trade unions) and detail which group or persons this intervention would benefit.

NA

7a. Which parts of the oil and gas industry supply chain do you think will be most affected by the transition, and what impacts will it have on the workers within those businesses?

NA

7b. What potential barriers exist for current oil and gas supply chains to transition to alternative sectors?

NA

7c. What additional measures can we take to support these supply chains during the transition?

NA

7d. What are the current existing key strengths in the UK supply chains for these sectors?

The UK supply chain is geared towards the needs of the offshore energy sector, supporting activities since the rapid expansion of offshore oil and gas exploration and development in the 1960s. This long-standing, underpinning support infrastructure has evolved through the shift to natural gas during the early part of the 21st Century and the subsequent transition to clean energy – highlighted by the rise of offshore wind energy, and the increasing focus on decarbonizing the oil and gas industry and promoting clean energy technologies such as carbon capture and storage.

The UK research community has a globally leading research base and international scientific leadership for carbon capture and storage, for example the British Geological Survey (BGS) has the following roles:

- CO₂ storage lead for European committee responsible for monitoring carbon capture and storage implementation and advising countries and the European Commission on barriers and research and innovation (<https://ccus-setplan.eu/about-set-plan/>)
- President of [CO2GeoNet](https://co2geonet.com/home/) (<https://co2geonet.com/home/>), a European network of research institutes that provide independent scientific advice to key policy stakeholders on CO₂ storage
- CO₂ Storage lead for the European Energy Research Alliance's [Joint Programme on CCS](https://eera-ccs.eu/) (<https://eera-ccs.eu/>), a network of leading research groups across the full CCS chain that formally advises the European Commission on research priorities.

This international scientific leadership provides influence to ensure UK can take maximum benefit from growing international carbon capture and storage industries, for example through export of expertise and consultancy services and training and knowledge exchange. Additionally, the UK can, by supporting the transition of its oil & gas sector, provide a storage service for CO₂ captured in Europe (<https://idric.org/resources/report-quantification-of-the-uk-co2-storage-export-potential-for-a-carbon-capture-and-storage-service/>), thereby reducing costs and risks for investment in carbon capture and storage, enabling a more rapid evolution to a market-driven sector, and supporting new jobs for oil and gas workers. However, these opportunities require continued investment in UK research and training capacity and capability through dedicated research programmes to maximise the potential economic benefits.

The UK hosts one of only 4 worldwide operational underground hydrogen storage cavern facilities. Although not considered “fast-cycling”, they do give UK operators, policy makers and regulators an important competitive advantage in developing, operating and managing such facilities. The British Geological Survey were a subtask lead on the recently concluded International Energy Agency-Technology Collaboration Programme Task 42 group on Underground Hydrogen Storage.

For some regions, detailed assessments of potential demand, supply, hydrogen transport and storage have been completed (e.g. [EMStor project](#) led by Cadent Gas: Introducing EMStor: East Midlands Storage – a Strategic Innovation Fund project led by Cadent in collaboration with the British Geological Survey, University of Edinburgh and Star Energy). These give important detail required for the development of business cases and investment.

The UK research community also has considerable experience regarding the geological constraints for offshore windfarm development. The shallow geology is crucial when considering foundation design, anchors and cable burial. The British Geological Survey, for example, shows international leadership as the Work Package lead developing a catalogue of [key parameters for offshore windfarm siting](#) (https://www.geologicalservice.eu/upload/content/1691/gseu_d5-3_pan-european-catalogue-of-key-parameters-for-offshore-windfarm-siting_v1.pdf) for the Geological Service for Europe ([GSEU](#)) highlighting the value of geoscience-led collaboration in optimising windfarm placement and reducing development risk. This data inventory poses as a database to support other countries to identify key geological constraints and geohazards that may impact foundation design. The findings contribute to evidence-based marine spatial planning and align with the broader goals of the UK and Europe’s energy transition. For the same [GSEU](#) project, we have also been leading the application of a Storage Readiness Level framework (<https://nora.nerc.ac.uk/id/eprint/531380/>) to potential CO₂ storage locations across Europe in preparation for the publication of an updated European CO₂ Storage Atlas.

7e. Do you think that UK supply chain companies will be competitive in accessing growing clean energy sectors in the North Sea?

What role can government play in supporting them?

NA

7f. What key export opportunities do you anticipate will be open to the UK supply chain, as a result of the development of clean energy sectors in the North Sea?

The UK has abundant theoretical capacity for the geological storage of CO₂. Research by the British Geological Survey have shown that the Government targets for the 2030s will only be achieved if all of the currently licensed CO₂ storage sites become operational. Achieving longer term industrial decarbonisation targets will only be possible with additional storage capacity becoming operational in mid- to late 2030s. Given that development of a storage site can take up to 10 years, additional storage sites must be identified and initiated in the next few years. Our research indicates that some of the developed storage capacity could be used to store CO₂ captured in Europe (notably Ireland, France and Germany) which would provide additional income to UK supply chains and reduce costs and financial risks, thereby supporting the UK to achieve its decarbonisation targets (<https://idric.org/resources/report-quantification-of-the-uk-co2-storage-export-potential-for-a-carbon-capture-and-storage-service/>).

Opportunities also exist in the East Irish Sea, and other regions on the UK Continental Shelf to the west of England and Wales, in addition to the North Sea and we encourage DESNZ to consider these regions as both opportunities for export of CO₂ storage capacity (e.g. for CO₂ captured in France and Ireland) and for the UK's emissions. However, in some areas, notably the UK parts of the Celtic Sea, Bristol Channel and Cardigan Bay, lack of recent pre-commercial geological appraisal has prevented the potential of these regions for CO₂ storage from being fully defined. The BGS therefore encourages DESNZ to support pre-commercial CO₂ storage appraisal.

For hydrogen storage, there are geological storage opportunities in solution-mined caverns, depleted reservoirs and saline aquifers in both the Southern North Sea and East Irish Sea basins. As for carbon capture and storage, opportunities are considerably fewer/unknown into the Celtic Sea/Bristol Channel and Cardigan bay areas both due to a lack of known storage opportunities but also a lack of good-quality data that describes these areas. The opportunities in the Southern North Sea and East Irish Sea Basin represent significant opportunities for commercial development (e.g., import and storage of gas from EU, using storage space as an investment opportunity).

If electrolysis of hydrogen becomes a commercial reality (production of green hydrogen) then there is major potential for the co-location of hydrogen production and storage assets with both wind and solar power generation. For blue hydrogen production, the co-location of hydrogen manufacturing, hydrogen storage and CO₂ storage sites is viable in many areas of the offshore.

With the UK and north-west Europe being at the forefront of offshore wind development, national agencies (e.g. BGS) and industry are at the cutting edge in developing best practice for developing Geological Ground Models to inform on the siting, geospatial planning and design of offshore wind turbines. This geoscience input is an effective and economical part of the renewables

development to ensure turbine integrity, reduce material costs, and mitigate against environmental impacts and identify potential geohazards. With many international regions looking to develop offshore renewables, demand for this experience and expertise will be high, and UK science could be a marketable export (for example, BGS' recent [collaboration](https://www.bgs.ac.uk/news/bgs-collaborates-with-icelandic-colleagues-to-assess-windfarm-suitability/) with Icelandic Geological Survey, <https://www.bgs.ac.uk/news/bgs-collaborates-with-icelandic-colleagues-to-assess-windfarm-suitability/>).

7g. Where do you see the main opportunities in a) offshore wind b) floating offshore wind, c) CCS (T&S) d) hydrogen e) decommissioning for the oil and gas supply chain?

See response to Question 3e.

8. How can we improve our understanding of the interconnected basin, including its opportunities and risks?

Do you have any evidence you can share about this?

The offshore basins (Southern North Sea, East Irish Sea Basin and Central North Sea) are all being utilised by multiple technologies for the energy transition. The British Geological Survey research for a range of public bodies is investigating the potential conflicts that may arise from co-located technologies. These risks include those for containment of stored fluids, injectivity, operations, monitorability and conformance, and storage capacity. Key areas of change to the subsurface as a result of carbon capture and storage include: fluid replacement, pressure changes, geomechanical effects, thermal effects, geochemical effects, and risks to containment posed by legacy wells. The British Geological Survey is addressing the potential for wider subsurface fluid and pressure perturbations from injection of CO₂, including potential impacts on cross border migration (e.g. https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=5069495) We are investigating the properties of subsurface reservoirs that control fluid flow (e.g. <https://doi.org/10.1144/geoenergy2024-023>).

There is significant opportunity to transfer knowledge of subsurface conditions and characteristics gained in oil & gas, and CO₂ storage studies to other sectors, e.g. plans for CO₂ storage development in depleted hydrocarbon fields use existing information from exploration, appraisal and production to understand capacity, key risks, fracture limits to reduce project uncertainty and risk.

In the Central North Sea, some target reservoirs, currently being evaluated in the UK sector by BGS, cross international borders. We recommend that the following should also be evaluated:

- Co-development of CO₂ storage where this requires cross-border management. The extent to which their development may require joint exploitation of the resource through bilateral coordination of strategic development and regulation should be investigated.
- Potential for pressure communication, leading to reduced storage capacity, in open, connected saline aquifers across international borders in Central North Sea.

The North Sea Basin Task Force may have a role in providing a forum for discussions on these topics and in facilitating studies that provide the knowledge and evidence to both optimise these cross-border resources, and to constrain and mitigate the potential risks.

There is significant potential to improve quality, and efficiency of applied geoscience in Offshore Wind, CO₂ storage and hydrogen storage through international networks, and supported collaboration between Government, Improvements to include:

- Methodological and Technical innovation;
- Improved standards and protocols;
- More expansive, accurate and consistent mapping and characterisation of seabed and sub-surface geology utilising existing datasets (see question 1b)

9. How can we manage future oil and gas production from existing fields, in a way that accounts for the interdependencies across existing assets and supports an orderly transition across the basin?

We would welcome examples of technical or commercial dependencies including timing-related considerations if relevant.

NA

10. How can decarbonisation projects or asset repurposing support an orderly transition of the basin, or vice versa?

Please share any evidence to support your suggestions.

NA

11a. To what extent do you agree or disagree that this position on new licenses will support the UK to set a globally leading example in tackling climate change?

NA

11b. Is there anything else you think should be considered in the Government's definition of i) licensing and ii) new fields?

What would be the case for doing so, including consideration of the commercial and environmental impacts?

NA

11c. Aside from oil and gas, are there any other sectors you think would be affected by these proposals?

If yes, how would they be affected?

NA

11d. Do you anticipate any situations where additional targeted interventions might be needed or beneficial to support the government's climate and North Sea objectives?

If so, what criteria or mechanism do you think should be used to determine whether such situations have arisen?

NA

12a. What, if any, impact do you think these policy considerations could have on businesses?

Please consider if small and micro and/or medium-sized businesses would be disproportionately affected.

NA

12b. What, if any, impact do you think these policy considerations could have for individuals with protected characteristics?

If there are negative impacts, what potential mitigations could be explored?

NA

13a. Which of the following options for revising the principal objectives, if any, do you prefer?

- Revised single principal objective
- Introduction of sub-objectives
- Multiple primary objectives
- Other: Please specify
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

NA

13b. Please share your rationale for your answer to question 13a.

If you prefer the introduction of a revised single principal objective, or the introduction of sub-objectives or multiple primary objectives, please outline what you think the objective(s) should cover.

NA

14a. What are your views on the ideas for reforms to the NSTA's powers considered above?

As detailed in question 1c, the Crown Estate report (<https://www.datocms-assets.com/136653/1737366965-owprojectlisting-dec2024.pdf>) evidenced barriers to accessing data, in particular in relation to embargo periods. A review of embargo periods for carbon capture and storage licensed data would be welcomed, as would a discussion around data created by sectors other than non-oil and gas and CCS, including organisations are responsible for other sectors and setting agreed embargo periods. The release and sharing of data for research purposes is necessary to support the transition from oil and gas.

A review of the funding model for the physical assets associated with existing and new licenses under the NSTA remit would be welcomed. The NSTA currently funds and is solely responsible for the National Data Repository. The physical assets i.e. core and cuttings are sent to the National Geological Repository (NGR) within the British Geological Survey. The National Geological Repository is not currently funded via the NSTA, and the store is nearing capacity. As more operators leave the basin and fulfil the obligations of their current oil & gas licenses, an increase in physical material to be deposited with the National Geological Repository is expected. Future licenses for carbon capture and storage will also include appraisal wells, coring and the requirement to store the physical assets. Investment is required in refactoring/extending the National Geological Repository facility to hold these critical physical assets to ensure that the material, enabling scanning/digital surrogates created are available for UK PLC and/or research purposes for the long term.

14b. In addition to those explored above, are there any other areas of the NSTA's powers which could benefit from reforms?

NA