

Appendix S.1. Analysis of Visual Effects to Historic Properties – Brayton Point: Executive Summary

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MAYFLOWER WIND ANALYSIS OF VISUAL EFFECTS TO HISTORIC PROPERTIES – BRAYTON POINT:

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FOR PUBLIC RELEASE

This Executive Summary provides the results of an Analysis of Visual Effects to Historic Properties (AVEHP) to support the Mayflower Wind Energy LLC (Mayflower Wind) Project (the Project). The Project has the potential to affect above-ground historic properties due to the visibility of Project components. An AVEHP for the proposed onshore facilities at Brayton Point in Somerset, Massachusetts associated with the Project was completed to evaluate the Project's potential to visually affect above-ground historic properties that are listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) or as a National Historic Landmark (NHL), including resources that have been identified, but not formally evaluated for eligibility. The AVEHP was conducted to assist the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), the Massachusetts and Rhode Island State Historic Preservation Offices (MHC and RIHPHC), and the Tribal Historic Preservation Offices in their review of the proposed Project's potential effects on above-ground historic properties in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA).

The AVEHP for the Project was conducted according to BOEM's Guidelines for Providing Archaeological and Historic Property Information Pursuant to 30 CFR 585 (BOEM, 2020a) and the National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation (NPS, 1990). This analysis included a program of viewshed modeling, background research, field investigation, desktop review, and data analysis. The AVEHP was conducted in close coordination with the separate Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) and draws upon the VIA findings to evaluate the potential for visual effects on historic properties according to the Criteria of Adverse Effect as outlined in 36 CFR § 800.5 of Section 106 of the NHPA. The VIA produced a bare earth digital elevation model of the Project components to identify areas of potential visibility within the Area of Potential Visual Impact (APVI) through a viewshed analysis. The APVI was conservatively set as the area within three miles (mi) (4.8 kilometer [km]) of the Brayton Point converter station based on human visual acuity thresholds and to encompass the area in which the Brayton Point Onshore Project Area could potentially affect visual resources.

Based on BOEM’s Guidelines for Providing Archaeological and Historic Property Information Pursuant to 30 CFR Part 585 (BOEM, 2020), the Preliminary Area of Potential Effect (PAPE) is the viewshed from which onshore renewable energy structures (including temporary or permanent construction or staging areas) *would be visible*. As such, the PAPE was defined by refining and field verifying the modeled visibility of the APVI to exclude areas that do not have actual visibility of the Project. The PAPE is defined as a 0.5 mi (0.8 km) buffer surrounding the converter station siting area at Brayton Point in Somerset, MA, within the APVI model, with verified visibility.

Based on the Criteria of Adverse Effect assessments conducted, it is anticipated that the Project would result in no adverse effect to the 11 historic properties identified in the Project’s PAPE for the Brayton Point Onshore Project Area. Historic properties, particularly those where setting is an integral part of the significance, may be visually affected by the introduction of a new converter station in the setting. However, the introduction of the Project will not adversely affect previously identified or unrecorded historic properties. While the introduction of new visual elements may result in viewshed impacts, they will either be temporary in nature or negligible. Because all but the uppermost portions of the highest converter station components would be screened from view and the remaining visible lightning protection masts or other narrow, vertical components would be seen at a minimum distance of 0.44 mi (0.7 km) and interspersed with existing industrial infrastructure, screening vegetation, or both; potential visual impacts will not occur to an extent that would erode the historic integrity of setting for historic properties within the PAPE. Therefore, the Project will not result in an adverse effect to historic properties within the Brayton Point Onshore Project Area.

During the preliminary design phases of the Project, potential visibility of above-ground Project facilities was taken into consideration. A previously disturbed site was chosen for the onshore converter station location during the siting phase to limit the impact to nearby resources to the extent practicable. By co-locating the Project within areas of previous disturbance, Mayflower Wind is minimizing impacts to the maximum extent practicable. As the Project design progresses, these and other avoidance and minimization efforts will be considered to reduce impacts to historic properties.

If, through the Section 106 and Section 110 processes, it is determined by the State Historic Preservation Office(s) (SHPO) and BOEM that the Project will result in adverse effects to historic properties, Mayflower Wind will consult with BOEM, SHPOs, THPOs, and consulting parties as necessary.