



THE PLANNING ACT 2008

THE INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING (EXAMINATION PROCEDURE) RULES

2010

East Anglia ONE North Offshore Wind Farm

Appendix C11 to the Natural England Deadline 12 Submission

Natural England's Comments to Hundred River Ecology Survey Report [REP11-063]

For:

The construction and operation of East Anglia ONE North Offshore Wind Farm, a 800MW wind farm which could consist of up to 67 turbines, generators and associated infrastructure, located 36km from Lowestoft and 42km from Southwold.

Planning Inspectorate Reference: EN010077

28th June 2021



Natural England's Comments to Hundred River Ecology Survey Report [REP11-063]

This document is applicable to both the East Anglia ONE North (EA1N) and East Anglia TWO (EA2) applications, and therefore is endorsed with the yellow and blue icon used to identify materially identical documentation in accordance with the Examining Authority's (ExA) procedural decisions on document management of 23rd December 2019. Whilst for completeness of the record this document has been submitted to both Examinations, if it is read for one project submission there is no need to read it again for the other project.

Introduction

This document provides Natural England's response in relation to the Hundred River Ecology Survey [REP11-063].

Natural England has also considered all the representations of interested parties in relation to the area of woodland and meadow adjacent to the Hundred River and provide the below advice.

Summary

From our experience we now believe that there is insufficient time remaining in the examination to progress this matter further and provide definitive advice on the status of the woodland or presence of Hairy Dragonfly in the meadow adjacent to the Hundred River. Therefore, we advise that measures are put in place to ensure that there are no detrimental impacts to either the woodland or Hairy Dragonflies. These measures should be in the form of pre-construction surveys and identified and secured mitigation measures. Therefore, before the end of examination we expect both the OLEMS and DCO to be updated accordingly.

Classification as Wet Woodland

1. Natural England acknowledges that the surveys have now been undertaken within the appropriate survey window. However, we do note the much colder spring we have had in 2021 which may have affected the growth rate of some species. It also remains unclear if the ecologists are botanists with high FISC.
2. We also note that the survey was a walkover survey rather than a National Vegetation Classification survey which would have listed out the distribution and abundance of species. Therefore this survey is more quantitative than qualitative.



3. Natural England notes that none of the photographic evidence presented has been geo referenced and/or have orientation provided. Therefore, Natural England is unable to fully rely on these alongside the written reports as definitive evidence that this area is/ is not wet woodland.
4. However, we still believe that because the area of the proposed works is on the margins of the woodland, it is likely to have different ecological conditions/characteristics to that of the surrounding wood.
5. Natural England's advice, on the basis of the evidence presented, is that while some areas of this woodland may have attributes of wet woodland, it is unlikely that the area to be affected by the proposed works is wet woodland.
6. Classification of wet woodland aside, please be advised that we do still consider that lowland mixed deciduous woodland is declining, and every effort should be made to avoid, reduce and mitigate the impacts to this habitat. We note that the Applicant has set out in the Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Strategy (OLEMS) [REP8-019] that the planting of trees over the cable corridor will not be possible. **Therefore, as per REP10-052 we strongly advise that the Applicants provide details on how impacts to this woodland and fragmentation thereof will be mitigated for and enhancements provided.**
7. Natural England notes that only two photographs have been provided by the Applicant in the meadow area, and therefore we are unable to advise the ExA on the levels of confidence surrounding the ecological conclusions of the survey. However, we believe that if the SoS is minded to grant consent then the requirement to undertake pre construction surveys and mitigate potential impacts prior to construction should be sufficient to address residual concerns in relation to this species.