



Offshore Wind Farms

EAST ANGLIA ONE NORTH

PINS Ref: EN010077

and

EAST ANGLIA TWO

PINS Ref: EN010078

**SEAS Additional Evidence for BEIS
Review ISH2**

DEADLINE 2 – 17 November 2020

by

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Unique Ref. No. EA1(N): 2002 4494

Unique Ref. No. EA2: 2002 4496



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SEAS Additional Evidence for BEIS Review, ISH2

SEAS would like to remind the Examining Authority of the upcoming BEIS Review Seminar taking place on 17 December 2020. It may be that the inputs from specialist engineers, North Sea developers and the research carried out by a group of East Anglia MPs, now described as the Quintet could help inspire the long-term National MasterPlan and signal positive implications for short-term work-stream projects currently under examination, including EA1N and EA2.

A highly relevant and significant debate took place in Parliament on 5 November 2020. Detailed below are comments in Parliament by Kwasi Kwarteng MP, Minister for Business, Energy and Clean Growth

I should like to draw the Examining Authority's attention to comments made by Kwasi Kwarteng in Parliament on 5 November 2020, in which he said (*and I quote from Hansard*): "When I took over this brief, and I had the privilege of accepting the Prime Minister's offer to be the Energy Minister in this country, I was struck by the fact that thinking about this subject had not really evolved since 2015. That year was significant, because it was when Ofgem, to all intents and purposes, ruled out an offshore transmission system network of the kind that my hon. Friend has promoted. **However, in the short time since—in the last year and a bit—we as a Government and a lot of industry players have really shifted on this issue, and the contribution of hon. Members in this regard has been remarkable**".

I assert from this that the Minister of Energy is in agreement with the so-called 'Quintet of East Anglian MPs', (George Freeman MP (Mid Norfolk); Rt Hon Therese Coffey MP (Suffolk Coastal); Duncan Baker MP (North Norfolk); Jerome Mayhew MP (Broadland); James Cartlidge MP (South Suffolk)), who brought the need for innovative, offshore-located solutions to wind farm energy connections to Parliament



at this debate. These solutions would remove the need for needlessly destroying hundreds of acres of unspoilt countryside in East Anglia.

The Quintet produced a useful document ('Joint MP response to National Grid ESO (NGESO) Offshore Coordination Project consultation Autumn 2020'), which I commend to the Examining Authority. Each contributing MP strongly supports the acceleration of offshore wind electrical power generation, but is also grappling with the local onshore impact of the infrastructure necessary to transport that green electricity to the main population centres.

The Quintet conclude (*and I quote*): "However, whilst we very much welcome the enthusiasm with which NGESO has recently embraced coordinated offshore wind connectivity minimalism, **we are concerned that the regulatory system within which it sits is *inherently* unsuited to the kind of broader oversight needed to push a unified model.** In essence, the current model is based on unintended disincentives and conflicts of interest arising as a result of OFGEM / National Grid / Crown Estate profiting from the very fact that each connection of a wind farm is singular and not coordinated. This in turn leads to energy consumers paying for subsidies to monopoly quangos, benefiting a very narrow interest whilst the broader national interest of a maximally flourishing offshore wind sector – **minimizing harm to the natural environment – is held back**".

The Quintet go on further (*and I quote*): "We were also particularly interested in NGESO's diagrammatic representation of how onshore connectivity might differ in two contrasting futures in 2050 (p21 of consultation document) – one image for the 'current approach' showing a dense mesh of onshore connections; another showing very few, with a much greater emphasis on undersea transmission. With the clear precedent of the Western Link, brought in to protect a beautiful part of the country from physical harm from overhead power lines, and the substantive vision of a 'connection lite' integrated future, **we would regard it as a difficult exercise to communicate to East Anglian residents in the months ahead were moves towards a coordinated offshore future be discarded, delayed or approached without maximum thrust from all relevant stakeholders**".



If there is any doubt in the minds of the Examining Authority about where the Energy Minister, Kwasi Kwarteng's thinking has concluded, let me refer again to Hansard of 5 November where he said: "My hon. Friend the Member for North Norfolk also did a good job in suggesting that net zero was at the centre of our strategy to fight climate change. We are, as he said, rightly proud of our commitment to that. In many ways, the problem that he refers to is a function of our success. It was not long ago that we thought 10 GW of offshore wind capacity by 2030 would be a significant achievement, and that it was a reasonable target. Today we want to have 40 GW by 2030. That is a quadrupling of the ambition, and because we have upscaled our ambition so considerably, his argument about the disruptive effects that point-to-point landing of electricity would have on his and other communities has been recognised. **I would suggest that the argument for some form of offshore network system has been won**".

It therefore seems unambiguous that Kwasi Kwarteng, the Quintet of East Anglian MPs, the residents of, businesses in and visitors to East Anglia are all in common agreement. Yes, to green energy but let's do it right.

Perhaps, it is fitting that Kwasi Kwarteng should have the last word, again quoting Hansard of 5 November: "**The crucial thing to remember is that most of this technology is already here with us right now. Shifting away from individual connections towards a larger, more integrated solution would be environmentally sensible as well as presenting an enormous economic opportunity not only for the constituency of my hon. Friend the Member for Waveney (Peter Aldous) but for the whole country**".

It is really hard to argue with these sentiments and conclusions.

SEAS urges the Examining Authority to consider these conclusions as new impetus for the Applicants' current proposals, in conjunction with its more senior partner, National Grid, to be shelved in favour of integrated offshore delivery solutions to brownfield sites and in this way, complementing offshore green energy generation.

Fiona Gilmore, SEAS, 17.11.2020