



Meeting note

File reference

Status

Final

Author

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Date

8 March 2016

Meeting with

DONG Energy Limited

Venue

Temple Quay House

Attendees

The Planning Inspectorate

Tom Carpen – Infrastructure Planning Lead

Kay Sully – Case Manager

Louise Evans – Case Officer

DONG ENERGY - Developer

Tracey Siddle – Consents Manager

Emily Woolfenden – Consultation Manager

Oliver Pallasmith – Commercial Manager

Stuart Livesey – Project Development Manager

Meeting

objectives

To introduce the teams and provide an overview of the Hornsea Project Three pre-application progress to date.

Circulation

All

Summary of key points discussed and advice given:

Welcome and introductions (all)

DONG Energy and the Hornsea Zone

The applicant gave a presentation providing an overview of DONG Energy as a business as well as plans for the Hornsea Project Three Offshore Wind Farm Hornsea Zone – covering 4735km², will provide electricity to meet 4% of all demand in UK and approximately 3 million homes (4GW) in total, possibly more).

The developer advised the Planning Inspectorate that it is important to differentiate between projects in the Hornsea Zone (Hornsea Projects One, Two and Three), and requested Inspectorate to inform them if they receive feedback that people are confused over areas.

The applicant confirmed that they intend to submit Hornsea Project Three Q2 of 2018 and do not anticipate this date moving, with onshore construction commencing in 2022, and offshore construction commencing 2023. They are currently in 'high level' screening process.

Consultation

Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) discussions with ten local planning authorities will take place late March/early April 2016. The applicant is also intending to refine the number of local authorities before the SoCC is finalised, subject to further work on grid connection options. The Inspectorate offered to review the draft SoCC for any procedural issues.

The applicant is intending to consult with their stakeholders on the draft Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) and Environmental Statement before consulting more widely in June/July 2017. They hope this will enable early and constructive engagement grounded in a detailed report.

There are currently three non-statutory consultation events planned for 2016/2017 but the applicant is uncertain they will need to hold all of them; they will make a decision from their consultation with local authorities.

The applicant intends for their consultation events to not just be public information days, but to facilitate a dialogue with local communities. As well as events, the applicant intends for their consultation to consist of quarterly newsletters, a website and a contact number.

The Inspectorate advised the applicant to keep two aspects in mind throughout its pre-application process and to clearly reflect these in its consultation report. Firstly, to ensure it has regard to representations received, and clearly demonstrates this. Secondly, to ensure that no-one who should be consulted is prejudiced from involvement in the process.

The Inspectorate asked the developer if there was any intended consultation targeted specifically for the offshore elements, for example the local fishing communities. Both parties agreed that as the local authorities may have experience with consultation for other offshore projects, their feedback may be useful on what has worked well with offshore groups. The applicant advised that it is currently in the process of developing a strategy which will focus on this.

Compulsory Acquisition/Development Consent Order (DCO)/Deemed Marine Licenses (DML)

The Inspectorate advised the applicant to be consistent with their DCO and DMLs, as ambiguities between these on past cases have caused challenges throughout examinations.

The developer stated that as the site covered an area up to 40km there may be compulsory acquisition required as part of this application, which they would be seeking to include compulsory acquisition in the DCO once the route has been finalised.

Commercial

The developer agreed and finalised leases with the Crown Estate 3 March 2016, and will be appointing land agents once the cable route has been finalised. The developer intends to finalise the GIS map within six months through high level screening.

Technology – Electricity Connection

The Inspectorate asked the applicant what the differences were for them between the choices of electricity connection technology (HVDC / AC)– the developer confirmed that with DC technology, more can be contained within a single cable route. If using AC technology, more and longer cable routes would be needed.

Environmental surveys

The applicant is in discussion with the Marine Management Organisation (MMO), Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) and Natural England (NE) regarding survey methodologies.

The Geophysical surveys are due to take place April 2016, and the export cable route survey will commence July 2016. The developer confirmed that only Historical England so far had expressed an interest in the Geophysical surveys, relating to potential wrecks.

Engagement with PINS and stakeholders

The Inspectorate and the applicant agreed regular teleconferences, as well as quarterly face to face update meetings, and potentially monthly meetings closer to the eventual submission of the application. The aim would be to stay up to date on the project, and to seek/provide on-going practical and impartial advice on procedures and potential issues.

The applicant asked for the Inspectorate to participate in its planned Evidence Plan process to support its Habitats Regulations Assessment. The applicant agreed in principle and to follow up with the applicant and Natural England on practical arrangements.

The applicant confirmed that they were keen to use the Evidence Plan fully, and show how it had informed Statements of Common Ground (SoCGs). The developer stated that if it was too early for the stakeholders to give their opinions that they were hoping to at least achieve a level of agreement over what the concerns actually are.

The Inspectorate recommended their suite of Good Example documents, which they would keep the developer aware of, as well as providing them with practical advice closer to the Acceptance stage on how to submit their application documents. The Inspectorate also advised that a new Advice Note on how to handle changes during Examination had recently been published.

The Inspectorate and the applicant agreed that, in line with the Inspectorate's pre-application prospectus, the meeting note would be published at a date to be agreed when the project was in the public domain, but no later than six months from the meeting date.

Specific decisions / follow up required?

The Inspectorate will provide a note of the meeting which will be sent to the developer for comments before it is published on the PINS project website under s51 of the Planning Act 2008 from an agreed date.

The Inspectorate will provide the developer with a project description template, as well as a copy of the formal Contact Plan from the Pre-Application Prospectus.

The next meeting will be used to understand the contents of the DMLs

The Inspectorate will dial in to the Evidence Plan meeting Thursday 10 March 2016.

The Inspectorate will provide the applicant with a link to examples of best practice documents on its website, terms of reference for Evidence Plans and Advice Note links.

The Inspectorate will provide further advice on local authority categories A, B, C and D.