

Application for Development Consent for
Thanet Offshore Wind Farm Extension
Case Ref: EN010084

Examining Authority's Note of Unaccompanied Inspection of Sites

Inspection 4: Views from Essex Coast

18 March 2019

Background

The Examining Authority (ExA) undertook its fourth unaccompanied site inspections on 18 March 2019 to support its examination of an application for development consent for the proposed Thanet Offshore Wind Farm Extension (the application).

Inspections were undertaken from publicly accessible land including highways and public rights of way. No access was required to private land, so advance permission to enter land was not required and these inspections could be undertaken on an unaccompanied basis.

The inspections were undertaken to assess views to the existing Thanet Offshore Wind Farm and to the proposed Thanet Offshore Wind Farm Extension.

The fourth unaccompanied inspection is recorded in this note, the purposes of which were:

- to inform the applicant, interested parties and other persons of actions already taken by the ExA; and
- to enable the applicant, interested parties and other persons to consider which additional sites the ExA might need to inspect.

Further site inspections may be required. The site inspection programme was discussed at the Preliminary Meeting held on 11 December 2018. The applicant, interested parties and other persons were provided with an opportunity to provide comments to the ExA on the approach that it should take to site inspections and to nominate site inspection locations. An opportunity has been provided to propose inspections of private land on an accompanied basis, should this be necessary.

Before agreeing to a site inspection at a particular location, the ExA will consider the degree to which it is necessary to visit a site that has been nominated for an inspection to inform it about the application. It may decide not to visit nominated locations where it considers that it is not necessary to see the features to be observed there. It may decide not to hold an accompanied site inspection if all relevant features can be observed and understood from locations in the public domain.

Arrangements for any accompanied site inspections have been included in the ExA's examination timetable and procedural decision to be issued after the preliminary meeting. If further inspections are carried out, further inspection notes will be published.

Particulars of the Inspections

The fourth unaccompanied inspection was undertaken by Examining Inspector Stephen Bradley. The purpose of the visit was for the ExA to become familiar with:

- views towards the existing Thanet Offshore Wind Farm and to the proposed Thanet Offshore Wind Farm Extension (the application site and surrounds offshore) from the coast of Essex; and
- the nature of views from and immediately beyond the outer extent of the Seascape, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (SLVIA) study area [APP-126], Figures 12.3 – 12.5.

The inspection was undertaken by bicycle and on foot on 18 March 2019 commencing at 1200hrs. Weather conditions were clear and dry with sun and scattered cloud over the Thames Estuary; the Met Office inshore waters report for the day was for visibility "good", wind WNW; this was adequate to appreciate short, medium and long-range views towards the proposed development from each of the locations that were inspected. The inspection concluded at 1430hrs.

Individual locations inspected and the purposes of those inspections are recorded in the attached Annex.

Annex

Place	References	Notes
Essex Coast and Towns Views to proposed Array	SLVIA Offshore Viewpoints [APP-053] and Figure 12.54 [APP-128] Montages	
Viewpoint 28 Clacton-on-Sea, Tendring District. Record taken from bridge to esplanade above Clacton Pier	Bridge elevation approx. 17m above OD. Beachfront path approx. 10 m. above OD	Gunfleet Sands array in foreground. London Array visible in middle ground with naked eye. Kentish Flats array visible momentarily through binoculars before cloudbank formed over north Kent coast. Thanet Wind Farm and Kent Coast not visible.
Clacton Coastguard station	Beachfront path approx. 6m. above OD	Gunfleet Sands array in foreground. London Array visible in middle ground with naked eye. Kentish Flats array not visible. Thanet Wind Farm and Kent Coast not visible.
Radar mast, Holland-on-Sea	Base of tower, approx. 8m above OD	Gunfleet Sands array in foreground. London Array visible in middle ground with naked eyes. Kentish Flats array not visible. Thanet Wind Farm and Kent Coast not visible.

Place	References	Notes
Clifftop parkland, by Fourth Avenue, Frinton-on-Sea	14m above OD	Gunfleet Sands array in foreground. London Array visible in middle ground with naked eye. Kentish Flats array not visible. Thanet Wind Farm and Kent Coast not visible.
Southcliff, Walton-on-the-Naze	14m above OD	Gunfleet Sands array to right of view. London Array in middle ground. Kentish Flats array not visible. Thanet Wind Farm and Kent Coast not visible.
Naze Tower	15m above OD	Gunfleet Sands array to extreme right of view. Felixstowe docks to extreme left of view. Galloper /Gabbard wind farms clearly visible through binoculars and discernible with naked eye when sunlit, beyond commercial vessels some at anchor, some bound from/to Felixstowe. London Array visible in middle ground. Kentish Flats array not visible. Thanet Wind Farm and Kent Coast not visible.

Elevations were checked on site with reference to: www.freemaptools.com/elevation-finder.htm