

Date: 14 June 2022
Our ref:
Your ref: EN010098



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Dear Jo Dowling,

Application by Ørsted Hornsea Project Four Limited for an Order granting Development Consent for the Hornsea Project Four Offshore Wind Farm (EN010098)

Rule 8 (3) letter dated 30th May 2022: Changes to the Examination Timetable

Natural England has noted the above letter and the corresponding changes to the Examination Timetable.

Whilst we appreciate that the intention behind the addition of Deadline 5a is to allow more meaningful discussion within the Issue Specific Hearings (ISH), we are concerned that the inclusion of this deadline just 9 working days after Deadline 5 will leave insufficient time for Natural England to undertake a robust and meaningful review of the applicant's Deadline 5 submissions.

In particular, we are anticipating the submission of revised ornithological assessments for all key species, as well as updates to all of the compensation documents and the results of the bycatch and predator eradication feasibility studies at Deadline 5. These highly technical documents are fundamental to addressing some of Natural England's key outstanding concerns relating to ornithological matters, and as such, they will require careful and considered review by our specialists and case team. This would have been a challenging prospect even within the time previously available between Deadlines 5 and 6. Therefore it will not be possible for Natural England to provide our advice on these crucial submissions within the timeframe proposed by the Examining Authority.

We will provide a further update at deadline 5a to indicate the likely timescales of our review ahead of the scheduled Issue Specific Hearing dates. I trust that this early and honest indication of our ability to meet Deadline 5a is of help to the ExA in your planning.

Yours faithfully,

Emma Brown
Yorkshire & Northern Lincolnshire Area Team

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