



Meeting note

Project name	Hornsea Project Four Offshore Windfarm
File reference	EN010098
Status	Final
Author	The Planning Inspectorate
Date	16 July 2020
Meeting with	Ørsted (the Applicant)
Venue	Teleconference
Meeting objectives	Project update
Circulation	All attendees

Summary of key points discussed and advice given

The Planning Inspectorate (the Inspectorate) advised that a note of the meeting would be taken and published on its website in accordance with section 51 of the Planning Act 2008 (the PA2008). Any advice given under section 51 would not constitute legal advice upon which applicants (or others) could rely.

Project update

The Applicant provided an update on the project including confirmation of intended submission in Q4 2020. This was mainly driven by a change in the Order Limits, the development of the derogation case following the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (SoS) recent 'Minded to Approve' letter for the Hornsea Three Project. Discussions have taken place with the Crown Estate relating to this change of date.

The Applicant confirmed that engagement with DFDS, the UK Chamber of Shipping and other stakeholders had led to agreement that, rather than having a commitment to a structure exclusion zone, the area where this would have been will be entirely omitted from the Order Limits. This had given stakeholders such as Natural England clarity and certainty that the Applicant will not build in this area. The Applicant confirmed that oil and gas stakeholders had been broadly in agreement on this change and that the Viking Link interconnector also supported it.

The Applicant explained that it had been progressing Statements of Common Ground with certain stakeholders such as the Environment Agency and East Riding of Yorkshire Council. Within these there would be three statuses: agreed, under discussion and not agreed. The Inspectorate mentioned the similarity of this to example documents on the Inspectorate's website, such as National Grid's [Statement of Commonality for Statements of Common Ground](#) for the Richborough Connection Project.

The Applicant spoke about its commitments to onshore biodiversity net gain and enhancement, following the recent [SoS Decision](#) on the Cleve Hill Solar Park Project. The former being onshore biodiversity improvement and the latter more general project wide benefits, which may include biodiversity. The Inspectorate asked whether these will be



separate to mitigation measures. The Applicant confirmed that this would be the case. The Inspectorate advised the Applicant that it should make clear that that the net gain is not intended to offset anything.

Post meeting note (relevant to project update section only)

Following publication of this meeting note correspondence was received from National Grid Viking Link clarifying that they do not support the Structures Exclusion Zone (and the proposal to remove this area from the project boundary to allow a navigation channel over the Viking Link Cable). Discussions between Viking Link and Ørsted are continuing and Viking Link have asked Ørsted to consider the inclusion of mitigation measures to lessen the impacts on the cable.

Derogation case

The Applicant introduced Project Seabird, which combines members of the Hornsea Project Four and Hornsea Project Three offshore windfarm teams to work together on Derogation and Compensation issues. The aim being to agree, with stakeholders, feasible and deliverable compensation measures on both projects.

The Applicant said it had been continuing to consider commitments to reduce or remove derogation risk, including engagement to achieve statements of no adverse effects from stakeholders. It also noted that it had been preparing a full derogation case on the principle that a derogation case should be presented even if they think there will be no adverse effect, if that was not agreed with the statutory nature conservation bodies, as set out by the SoS in the Hornsea Project Three 'Minded to Approve' letter.

The Inspectorate agreed that it would be helpful to have more information, at the point of submission, on what the recourse will be if there is a disagreement over the shadow Habitats Regulations Assessment.

Update from the Inspectorate

The Inspectorate advised the Applicant to keep track of how Preliminary Meetings and hearings were being held on other projects as the situation in relation to these was still very fluid.