



Meeting note

Project name	Hornsea Project Four Offshore Wind Farm (Generating Stations)
File reference	EN010098
Status	Final
Author	The Planning Inspectorate
Date	16 August 2021
Meeting with	Ørsted Hornsea Project Four Limited
Venue	Microsoft Teams Meeting
Meeting objectives	Project Update
Circulation	All Attendees

Summary of key points discussed and advice given:

Introduction

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. The Inspectorate introduced changes to the case team.

Hornsea Project Four Update

The Applicant was working towards a submission date of 30 September 2021. It was liaising with local planning authorities (LPA) and considering the suitability of potential venues for blended Examination events.

The targeted consultation on Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) compensation measures was underway following the conclusion of consultation workshops. Measures included predator eradication and fish habitat management. Location options would be refined as consultation progressed. Positive responses had been received from Guernsey LPA regarding predator eradication and the Applicant had mobilized teams to undertake habitats and rat surveys to assess the proposed locations. Consultation materials had been circulated and were also available online. Online footfall was being monitored and viewed to be positive.

The Applicant was developing an impact register and commitments register for the environmental impact assessment (EIA) for the proposed development for the point of application. Where no likely significant effects had been identified and the matter was

not assessed in the Environmental Statement (ES), the matter would be included in the accompanying impact register and commitment register as applicable. The registers would be possible to electronically search by site, measure, project phase etc to facilitate their use by the reader. The Applicant was working on a Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) on Derogation and Compensation Matters with Natural England (NE) supported by an agreement log on the efficacy of the compensation measures proposed to compensate for the species of concern.

HRA Compensation Options

The Applicant stated that they had explored all available compensation options via the long list process and was confident they had considered all potential compensation options relevant to the project. The Applicant commented that this view was supported by stakeholders at the Derogation shortlisting and Criteria workshop. The Applicant queried whether the Inspectorate was aware of any unexplored compensation categories. The Inspectorate confirmed it was not aware of any and that it was in stakeholders' interests to raise unexplored options, even if these were ultimately deemed not feasible or had been excluded for other projects. Compensation consultation was due to close on 6 September 2021 and following review of responses the Applicant would be able to confirm the submission date.

HRA Derogation SoCG

The Applicant had met with NE to review the draft SoCG on Derogation and Compensation Matters and provide an update on compensation consultation. The Applicant was in the process of developing road maps to identify any outstanding information for key measures/options for each species. The Applicant had agreed with NE that the road map content would match the SoCG content on HRA derogation and compensation matters. The streamlined detail to include at the point of submission was to be agreed. This would concentrate on compensation options with agreements in principle that they were supported ecologically and environmentally, subject to matters such as location and scale. The Applicant was producing a derogation matters agreement log, using the outputs from various compensation workshops with NE. The Inspectorate acknowledged this approach and highlighted the importance of setting out the positions of comfort/discomfort and reasons for any matters not agreed. The matters of feasibility and meeting the threshold for compensation criteria were high priority, as well as setting out matters to be discussed further and agreed. The Inspectorate acknowledged the Applicant's conclusion of no Adverse Effects on Integrity (AEOI) and the fact this had not been agreed with NE.

Update from PINs

The Inspectorate advised it would be issuing "warm up" letters approximately one month before submission, which would set out further information about how to prepare for submission and fees. A brief overview of the fees schedule was provided. The Inspectorate would also be issuing letters to LPA's in advance of submission, regarding the adequacy of consultation assessment during acceptance. It requested early notification of any delays to submission dates prior to issuing these letters.

AOB

The Applicant queried the potential appointment of an expert assessor for the carbon capture elements on the Endurance Reserve and its co-existence with Hornsea Four. The Inspectorate advised this was likely to be a decision for the Examining Authority, once appointed.