

Post hearing Submission for Jonas Seafood Ltd.

Submission made in person on Tuesday 17th January 2023

I am trying to highlight the position Jonas Seafood Ltd find themselves in. I have previously spoken to Equinor directly regarding our concerns.

Whilst offshore windfarm developers are legally obliged to negotiate and compensate affected fishermen, there is no support for our Company that is entirely dependent on the supply of their catch.

We supply supermarkets across the UK with locally caught crab and lobster employing between 60/70 staff all year round. We are by some distance the largest processor of crab and lobster in East Anglia. Our annual payroll is around £1.6million and we spend around £1.1million with local fishermen.

During the last construction phase of the Dudgeon Wind Farm we suffered terribly due to a lack of supply. (All of our details can be verified by our accountants and our buyers and sellers receipts to the Marine Management Organisation). We were only able to purchase around 350 tonnes of crab at that time. Since the cessation of operations in both the Dudgeon and the Race Bank development (which finished 3 months later) we have seen our purchases rise to around 550 tonnes per year. This is shown on the attached document. We have made a steady profit being able to make use of the extra 200 tonnes per year, but were incurring large losses before this increase.

Equinor will rightly point out that they cannot account for every sub sequential loss for every business in the supply chain.

My point is that we are a special case, we operate a factory that can only process crab and lobster. Over 27 year we have developed a workforce that is skilled in processing the smaller crab that is found in this part of the coast. This smaller crab does not lend itself to the export market and therefore requires a specialised factory like ourselves to process for the domestic market. We cannot purchase crab from out of the area as it generally much larger and fetches a greater price on the market due to its export potential.

It may be said that the overall area of the sea required for these developments are very small in comparison to the whole of the sea available off of our coast. I understand this argument, but my point is that if fishermen are being paid not to fish then we simply do not see the volume of catches for our production. I believe some of the amounts being paid to fishermen are far in excess of the loss of earnings and in many cases spurious claims are made.

It is simply not feasible to operate on the much reduced volumes available.

Crab and lobster fishermen, the small boats on the beach and in the harbour are part of the fabric and history of this part of the country. Jonas Seafood is very much part of this fabric and needs to be considered if we are to have a fishing industry in the future.

Thank you.

Kevin Jonas