

CAWSTON PARISH COUNCIL

SHERINGHAM SHOAL & DUDGEON WIND FARM EXTENSION PROJECTS

DEADLINE 3 SUBMISSION (*confirmation of verbal statement at OFH2*)

A - CONFIRMATION OF VERBAL SUBMISSION TO OPEN FLOOR HEARING HELD ON 29th MARCH 2023

We do apologise for our limited engagement with the Examination so far. As previously explained, all of our available time and resource is being spent on dealing with Orsted/Vattenfall, issues around their CTMP, and other queries on signage and traffic management, and we have not been able to take more than a cursory look at some of the documents on the SEP/DEP project.

However, this review has shown that this Applicant is following the path set by Orsted and Vattenfall, with mountains of documents, relevant detail buried, no inclination to make any concessions towards reasonable treatment of residents and a rule bound, 'jobsworth' approach overriding common sense; for example when looking at the suitability of the road network.

We expected the Orsted situation to have been wrapped up by now, but their revised CTMP has only just been submitted to the local authority and so we cannot get any definitive answers to questions on traffic numbers. There are other issues including road signage and parking; after several meetings these are still not resolved.

The parking restrictions that have been unveiled are more draconian than we had been led to expect; we have asked for this to be investigated. Parking tickets are already being issued to residents; a cause of some anger here.

If the Equinor Application should get approved, what is the likely outcome for residents? Based on experiences so far with the other wind farm companies, they will include

- poor communication, lots of box ticking but broken promises and delays.
- difficulty arranging meetings or getting information.
- being fobbed off with dubious excuses and unkept promises
- finally, answers being offered, and meetings called to discuss them, only for the information not to be ready – a complete waste of our time.

We think it is worth offering an edited version of our comments at the previous OFH, as little has changed.

Cawston Parish Council is not opposed to wind farms. We are strong supporters of renewable energy and the drive to net zero. BUT we are totally opposed to badly thought out construction projects that could, and should, have been done better, in a way that weights the interests and welfare of Norfolk residents more fairly – at least on a par with kittiwakes.

(We note here that the latest news on Hornsea 3 is that they are now seeking, post consent, to dilute the agreed protection for these birds).

CPC has been heavily engaged in dealing with these proposals for the last six years. All of this work is done in councillors' spare time, unpaid, often using their personal resources, and we are simply worn out, with nothing left to engage with this latest DCO proposal in detail. Some councillors have decided not to stand for re-election in May.

Equinor will tell you that they alone will not route HGV traffic through the centre of Cawston, so there is little impact on the community. This argument ignores the need for residents to travel outside the village, pupils to get to and from school, and businesses to deal with deliveries and get their staff to work. The other developers have at least amended their working hours to recognise this; Equinor refused.

Equinor may also imply that their eastern route round the village was designed to remove impact. In fact this was the only space left for them; if approved, their cable route would complete the encirclement of the village, so there was no choice. Impact from the actual construction work will be similar whether it is east, west, north or south of the village.

As well as the inadequate B1145, Equinor also plan to send traffic on minor unclassified roads in the area. These are often used for recreation by cyclists, walkers and horse riders; we suggest there is a serious road safety issue here.

We ask you to consider the cumulative impacts in Cawston, both when schemes overlap and the impacts of successive schemes over time. These Equinor schemes will add several more years to the impacts of the three previous ones. This is an unacceptable load on a small rural community.

We do want to re-emphasise our request that the Examination takes a wide view, including the role of National Grid and its associated companies, the consideration given to alternative routes and methods of delivery, and cumulative impacts on communities over time - including both physical health and wellbeing issues.

Thank you

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