

Application by Equinor New Energy Limited for an Order Granting Development Consent for the Sheringham Shoal Offshore Wind Farm Extension Project and Dudgeon Offshore Wind Farm Extension Project

The Examining Authority's Second Written Questions and requests for information. Issued on Friday 12th April 2023 for response by Deadline 3 on 2nd May 2023

Question Number	Question	Historic England Response
<p>Offshore matters Q2.15.1.2</p>	<p>Geotechnical Work</p> <p>a) Applicant, Provide further comment on the suitability for purpose of the geotechnical survey work carried out to date within both the array areas and cable corridor.</p> <p>b) HE, explain, with further reasoning, whether it is deemed that the works carried out to date by the Applicant are not sufficient.</p>	<p>We accept that Environmental Statement Chapter 14 (Offshore Archaeology and Cultural Heritage (Document Reference: 6.1.14), PINs Reference: APP-100, includes detail about palaeo-geographic features of archaeological interest identified from geophysical data. We understand that it is the purpose of an EIA exercise to characterise the area subject to development as sufficient to determine significant impact (either negative or positive). We therefore acknowledge that the Applicant has offered sufficient characterisation in this instance, as demonstrated by recognition of palaeo-landscape features within the development area, as revealed by previous investigations and geophysical data acquired for this proposed development.</p> <p>However, we consider it relevant that geotechnical material is obtained post-consent, should permission be obtained. In this regard we offered the observation that it is not entirely clear if any more geotechnical survey will be conducted. Ideally, geophysical data requires corroboration with geotechnical materials (i.e. borehole or vibro-cores). Therefore, in reference to selection of foundation designs we consider it relevant that selection is informed by geoarchaeological ground models using data produced by a geotechnical survey. For example, in reference to a worst-case impact scenario based on the use of Gravity Base Foundations which will require substantial seabed preparation and thereby the risk of destruction of sedimentary sequences and possibly in-situ archaeological materials that could be considered as “heritage assets” (as described within Environmental Statement Volume 1, Chapter 14).</p>
<p>Offshore matters Q2.15.1.3</p>	<p>Outline Written Scheme of Investigation – Offshore</p> <p>Clarify whether the Applicant's outline WSI - Offshore [APP-298] provides a sufficient level of detail at this stage to address your concerns related to the extent of geophysical data presented by the Applicant to date [RR-041].</p>	<p>We are aware that the environmental assessment for this project used a combination of specifically acquired geophysical data and historic data sets generated to inform the Sheringham Shoal and Dudgeon Offshore Wind Farm projects (reports dated between 2009 and 2014).</p> <p>We are prepared to accept the professional opinion offered that sufficient characterisation was possible to satisfy EIA requirements for this proposed project with acknowledgement of the greater risk of encountering presently unknown archaeological sites where there is no existing geophysical survey data coverage. We also accept that</p>

		archaeological assessment of geophysical data acquired post-consent will be commissioned, as described in the Outline Written Scheme of Investigation (Offshore), Section 1.5 (Methodology for Further Site Investigation), Document Reference 9.11, PINs Reference APP-298.
Offshore matters Q2.15.1.5	<p>Unexploded Ordnance Do you accept that it is unnecessary for the Applicant to adopt the revised/additional wording proposed by HE in its WR [REP1-112, Paragraphs 17.4, 17.5 and 17.8].</p> <p>See related questions in the sections on Habitats and Ecology Offshore and the section on Benthic ecology, Intertidal, Subtidal and Coastal effects.</p>	<p>We appreciate that this question is also directed to the MMO and we therefore defer to the MMO as the Marine Licensing competent authority.</p> <p>We make this response in reference to the comment made by the Applicant (Ref: ID 162) in “Deadline 2 Submission - 14.2 The Applicant's Comments on Written Representations” (PINs Reference: REP2-017) that Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) clearance works are subject to separate marine licences and therefore the amendments proposed are not necessary.</p>
Onshore matters Q2.15.2.1	<p>Outline WSI – Onshore In responding to the Applicant’s responses to your RR [RR-041] and WR [REP1-112], please clarify whether the Applicant’s outline WSI - Onshore [APP-308] provides a sufficient level of detail at this stage to address your concerns related to the extent and overall suitability of geophysical survey data presented by the Applicant to date [RR-041].</p>	<p>We are broadly happy with the level of detail provided in the WSI-Onshore [APP-308] relating to the proposed geophysical surveys. We are satisfied that the exact details of the geophysical survey requirements can be established in final version of the Onshore WSI to be submitted and approved post-consent if the DCO is granted including the use of additional and alternative geophysical survey techniques (as noted in 15.4 of our WR).</p>