



## Meeting note

<b>Project name</b>	Morecambe Offshore Windfarm project
<b>File reference</b>	EN010121
<b>Status</b>	<b>Final</b>
<b>Author</b>	The Planning Inspectorate
<b>Date</b>	8 February 2022
<b>Meeting with</b>	Flotation Energy Royal HaskoningDHV
<b>Venue</b>	Microsoft Teams
<b>Meeting objectives</b>	Update meeting
<b>Circulation</b>	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.

### *Details of the proposed development*

The site was auctioned in the "Round 4" by the Crown Estate and it is located in the Irish Sea, 30 km from shore and with an anticipated generating capacity of 480 MW. The Applicant is a consortium of Cobra Instalaciones Servicios, S.A. and Flotation Energy plc called Offshore Wind Ltd (OWL).

### *Scoping request*

The Applicant informed the Inspectorate that the most likely consenting approach for the project would be the submission of two separate Development Consent Orders (DCO), one for the generating asset site and the other the transmission assets, which is likely to be co-ordinated with another project and subject to a s35 direction. The Applicant confirmed that the DCO for the generating asset will acknowledge a full cumulative assessment of the future transmission works.

The Inspectorate advised the Applicant that in most cases, a collaborative DCO application can involve an increase in workload between project teams.

The Applicant is aware of the current delays to Offshore Transmission Network Review process (OTNR), and therefore the grid connection confirmation, and has decided to submit a scoping request for the generating asset before the decision of a connection point. The Applicant is aware that the OTNR decision is expected in July 2022.

The Applicant confirmed that the objective of the Scoping Opinion is to progress with the windfarm site to avoid further delays to the project. The Applicant clarified that it had considered the impact of this approach on the stakeholders and deemed the risk associated with it being low.

The Inspectorate advised that while they recognised the difficulties of the Applicant's position, their position on a scoping request being submitted at this stage remained as previously expressed. The Inspectorate queried on whether the Applicant was going to approach an Evidence Plan Process (EPP). The Applicant confirmed that is the most likely course of action, as this approach will give them the opportunity to explain clearly to stakeholders the links between the developments. However, if the Applicant wished to submit a scoping request for the offshore generation assets only, careful attention should be paid to the project description to make the relationship between the generation assets and the wider project.

### ***Stakeholder consultation***

The Applicant informed the Inspectorate that it has been completely transparent with stakeholders from the beginning, regarding the uncertainty around future grid connection point, and continue to work with consultees to use their opinion to steer the consultation assets.

The Inspectorate advised the Applicant that there will be a limited range of consultees, due to the way the legislation defines consultees. Natural England (NE) was not one of the consultees identified. However, the Inspectorate understands that NE has a formal agreement whereby they respond in conjunction with the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) for national infrastructure projects. NE may still therefore be consulted on the scoping request but only in relation to their role in acting on behalf of the JNCC. In response to a query from the Applicant as to which stakeholders would be consulted on the windfarm only scoping report, the Inspectorate confirmed that the list of prescribed consultees would include the Health and Safety Executive, the Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Lancashire Fire and Rescue Authority, Lancashire Fire and Rescue Committee, the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, the Marine Management Organisation, the Civil Aviation Authority, Trinity House, The Crown Estate, the Ministry of Defence, NATS En-Route Safeguarding and various statutory undertakers involved in the provision of gas or electricity, the Lancashire Police and Crime Commissioner, the Crown Estate and Public Health England. Additionally, they would consult local authorities within the zone of visual influence if any were identified, Historic England and the RNLI but only as non-statutory consultees.

### ***AOB***

The Applicant queried the Inspectorate as to what would be the most appropriate times frame to submit a draft of the scoping request for comment. The Inspectorate responded that the environment service team could provide feedback in a couple of days.