



Morecambe Offshore Windfarm Project Update Meeting Note

Project name	Morecambe Offshore Windfarm Generation Assets
File reference	EN010121
Status	Final
Author	The Planning Inspectorate
Date	07/02/2023
Meeting with	Flotation Energy
Venue	MS Teams
Meeting objectives	Project Update Meeting
Circulation	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.

Consenting and consultation update

The Applicant confirmed that 12 non-statutory consultation events were held from November to December 2022, and over 500 individuals attended. Additionally, an excess of 800 responses were received during this time, a very high percentage of which from the Isle of Man area.

Given this application relates to the offshore generating station only elements of the scheme, the Inspectorate asked the Applicant which Local Authorities (LAs) had been consulted. The Applicant confirmed that whilst there are no 'host' LAs as such under s43 of the PA2008, it had consulted the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) and those LAs along the northwestern English coast, the Welsh coast and the Isle of Man coastline (post meeting note).

The Applicant confirmed that the consultation on the draft Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) will run from 30 January 2023, for 28 days in total.

Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) and schedule update

The Applicant informed the Inspectorate that the PEIR Statutory Consultation for the Morecambe Offshore Windfarm Generation Assets will take place between April and May 2023, alongside the Statutory Consultation for the Morgan Offshore Wind Project, and that the non-statutory consultation for the Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets application will also take place during this time. Additionally, the Applicant explained that their approach to consultation would include the publication of information on their website, online webinars, public consultation events, and engagement through the project Evidence Plan Process (EPP) Expert Topic Groups (ETG) meetings. Further information on their approach to consultation can be found within the SoCC (post meeting note).

The indicative consenting timeline for the project going forward is as follows:

- March 2023: PEIR submission;
- April/May 2023: Statutory Consultation; and
- Q1 2024: DCO application submission.

The PEIR offshore surveys will include a last aerial survey scheduled for the end of February 2023, and a Geotechnical survey planned for the second half 2023.

The EPP held its latest steering group meeting in September 2022. Additionally, the latest round of ETG meetings were held in November 2022. The focus for these was of the initial PEIR findings, and also included the Applicant presenting information on its approach to study areas and modelling approaches, and seeking agreements from stakeholders. The Applicant indicated that they would be seeking further agreement on the basis of the draft PEIR at the next round of meetings. The Inspectorate noted that this would be quite late in the process if major concerns arise, and the Applicant gave some reassurances that it had been consulting about methodology before and during scoping as well.

The Applicant informed the Inspectorate that the Isle of Man Government was included in the engagement. The next round of ETGs and EPP steering group meetings are to take place post PEIR consultation. The Applicant also provided an overview of areas that Isle of Man were primarily interested in, which was mainly shipping and navigation, some minor comments on landscape and visual aspects.

The Applicant informed the Inspectorate on the contents of the PEIR, and what to expect from it. This includes:

- In the form of draft Environmental Statement (ES) chapters;
- Scoping opinion comments, further work ongoing and required;
- Detailed project assessments;
- Higher level cumulative assessment, noting more detail has to be added at the ES stage when further details on other projects such as Mona and Morgan Offshore Wind Projects and the Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets are supplied in their PEIR documents;
- Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets considered and assessed as a cumulative project; and

- To be submitted digitally.

The Applicant mentioned that the site-specific aerial ornithology and marine mammal survey data in the PEIR will be incomplete. At present the Applicant has data for 12 months, but the ES will be based on 24 months of data.

The Inspectorate made a point about the consideration of consequential effects of fixing the location of the generation assets for the routeing of the transmission assets, and whether that leads to particular assets, and also made a point about ensuring that everything is considered.

The Inspectorate also made a point about the Net Zero Teesside examination potentially having some useful discussion on the ES approach where some project components are being consented separately, that might be helpful for the Applicant to review and think about as it prepares its ES.

The Applicant also informed the Inspectorate on the submission logistics, which will contain a three volume Environmental Statement of chapters, figures and appendices. Additionally, it will contain a confirmation of the Inspectorate's submission requirements.

Questions / AOB

The Inspectorate suggested it would be helpful to hold a post Statutory Consultation meeting in parallel to the Morgan project update meeting, covering both projects. The Applicant agreed that this was a good idea.