



## Preliminary Meeting Note Part 2

<b>Application:</b>	Dogger Bank South Offshore Wind Farms
<b>Reference:</b>	EN010125
<b>Time and date:</b>	10.00, 14 January 2025
<b>Venue:</b>	Virtual only

*This meeting note is not a full transcript of the resumed Preliminary Meeting. It is a summary of the key points discussed. It should be read in conjunction with preliminary Meeting Note Part 1 [\[EV2-007\]](#).*

*To help the reader this note includes hyperlinks to where further information on issues discussed at the meeting can be found.*

### 1. Welcome and Introduction

Jo Dowling (JD) welcomed those present and re-introduced herself as the lead member of the Panel of Examining Inspectors, the Examining Authority (ExA). The other members of the ExA, Claire Beloe, Helena Obremski, Laura Shorney and Matt Tandy also introduced themselves.

The ExA explained that it would be examining the application made by RWE Renewables UK Dogger Bank South (West) Ltd and RWE Renewables UK Dogger Bank South (East) Ltd ('the Applicants') before making a recommendation to the Secretary of State who will decide whether an Order granting Development Consent for the Proposed Development, which is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP), should be made.

The ExA encouraged anybody joining for the first time to read the background notes to the Preliminary Meeting set out in Annex B of both of the Rule 6 letters, listen to the digital recording and read the transcript of the earlier session of this meeting that is available on the website.

The ExA explained the purpose of the resumed Preliminary Meeting (PM) and asked all parties present to briefly introduce themselves.

The ExA confirmed that all documents and submissions received and accepted during the Examination will be published on the project-specific page of the National Infrastructure Planning website.

## 2. Audio recording

The video recording of the PM is available on the National Infrastructure Planning website and can be accessed [here](#).

## 3. Draft Timetable for the Examination Timetable

The ExA highlighted key points from the draft Examination timetable as detailed in [Annex C of the Rule 6 letter](#) of 17 December 2024. This included:

- The provision for Hearings on the 14, 15 and 16 January 2025 following the close of the PM.
- The timescales for issuing the Rule 8 letter which would include the finalised Examination Timetable.
- The timescales for Deadlines 1 and 2, and publication of the ExA's First and Further Written Questions (if required).
- Further time set aside in the timetable for further Hearings and an Accompanied Site Inspection (ASI) (if required).

The ExA noted requests received in writing at [Procedural Deadline C](#) to amend the draft Examination Timetable and summarised these for attendees. The ExA also welcomed further suggestions from the parties in attendance. The Applicants confirmed they had no additional comments to raise.

The ExA asked parties in attendance for any comments on preferences for future events (virtual, blended or in person) and the reasons why. The Applicants confirmed their preference for in person events.

The ExA acknowledged the request in writing from the Marine Management Organisation to rearrange the Issue Specific Hearings scheduled for 15 and 16 January 2025. The ExA advised there were matters which would benefit from early oral examination and therefore those hearings would proceed as scheduled.

All comments received were duly noted by the ExA and considerations will be reflected in the Rule 8 Letter. The final Examination Timetable can be found in the [Rule 8](#) letter published on 16 January 2025.

## 4. Any other business

The ExA confirmed the purpose of ASIs and the fact that no requests for an ASI had been received from any Interested Parties. At Procedural Deadline C, the Applicants requested that the ExA visit Butt Farm to carry out a walkover of the Heavy Anti-Aircraft Gun site and produced an itinerary for this [PDC-006]. The ExA confirmed it wished to visit this site and advised that an inspection may be possible on an access required basis. The ExA sought the Applicants' comments on this proposal. The Applicants confirmed that an access required basis would be acceptable and the ExA confirmed the Examination Timetable would be amended to reflect this. A note of the inspection would be published on the project page in due course.

The ExA confirmed that on 10 February 2025 the Applicants submitted two change requests. The change requests consist of proposed changes to the offshore and intertidal area (change request 1) and to the onshore substation zone (change request 2). The ExA has 28 days from submission of the requests to confirm if they are to be

accepted into the Examination. Due to the timing of the submission, the ExA had not had an opportunity to review the submissions in any detail prior to the PM and therefore were not in a position to confirm whether the requests were accepted. The ExA clarified that any discussions on the proposed changes at the hearings to be held on 14, 15 and 16 January 2025 would be on a without prejudice basis and would not be an indication that the ExA has or would accept the changes. The change requests documentation would be published on the project page as soon as practicable.

The ExA put a number of questions to the Applicants regarding the documents supplied with the change requests, to which the Applicants responded. This included the following points:

- The draft Development Consent Order (dDCO) included in the submission had been updated so that the definition of the Environmental Statement (ES) incorporated the change request supporting documents. Therefore, the Applicants considered that it was not necessary to update the original ES.
- Some work had commenced to update the documents referenced in Appendix A of the change requests cover letter, which were not included with the submission. However, the Applicants were mindful of the fact the change requests had not yet been accepted. The Applicants stated their intention to submit the outstanding documentation by Deadline 3.
- A thorough review of the Environmental Statement had been completed in order to compile a list of documents that would require updating as a result of the change requests.
- Environmental topics had been reviewed to reach conclusions regarding the impacts from the change requests on significant effects. Any potential changes were highlighted in the documents already supplied.
- Confirmation by the Applicants that the only change to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) significance of effect as a consequence of the change requests is from 'significant' to 'not significant' for one matter in relation to marine mammals.
- The Applicants' interpretation of guidance was that the change requests did not engage the EIA Regulations despite there being a change in likely significant effects, as it would lessen effects.
- Within the submission were two main documents which outlined each change request, consultation and consultation responses. These were to assist the ExA's decision on whether the change requests meet the criteria for acceptance.
- The Applicants confirmed that none of the outstanding documents would contain information required by the ExA in taking the decision on whether the change requests meet the criteria for acceptance.

The Applicants requested further clarification regarding the timings for Issue Specific Hearing 2 on the 15 and 16 January 2025 to facilitate the attendance of numerous topic experts. The ExA confirmed that in addition to the information already provided, it would seek to provide further details to assist.

## **5. Close of the Preliminary Meeting**

The PM closed at 10.40 and the ExA confirmed the Examination would begin after the close of the PM.