

Dr. Stephen R. Mounce,



Email: [REDACTED]

29/1/2025

Re: Dogger Bank South Project Targeted Non-statutory Consultation – Written representation (deadline 29/1/25)

Dear Planning Inspectorate,

I am responding to the above consultation as an Interested Party (20050002) and providing some feedback on the proposed changes/ current version of the proposal. I am a local resident of [REDACTED] who is particularly interested in the impacts of the overland cable route on ancient woodland and veteran trees, particularly Burton Bushes/ Beverley Westwood (a unique site and very popular nature amenity area for the public), both as a community area, as a unique habitat and in terms of archaeological interest.

At the last meeting (Specific Hearing 1 (ISH1)) the issue of removal of ancient woodland/ veteran trees near the substation was raised by The East Riding of Yorkshire Council. The response by RWE was unsatisfactory, they did not appear to have explored what would be considered due diligence to mitigate the effect on local woodlands, and the ERC questioning needed further research. This needs investigating further.

This new version of the proposal seems to be improved in that (provided the map at <https://interactivemap.doggerbanksouth.co.uk/> is correct) the proposed overland corridor is now given around a 100m gap whilst circling around Burton Bushes and the Westwood. This is better than some earlier maps which had this corridor right next to the Westwood which was completely inappropriate. In fact this is referred to in the November newsletter (having not being addressed previously nor still in the archaeology section) “*Avoids the designated landscape at Westwood Common;*” and under ecology p5 “*Potential impact on Beverley Westwood and Burton Bushes Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)*”:

- *The cable route avoids both Beverley Westwood and Burton Bushes SSSI.*
- *Temporary construction compounds have been selected that are further away from Burton Bushes SSSI to minimise impact.*
- *We have committed to Horizontal Directional Drill under woodland areas to leave them undisturbed and in situ.*

Comment: Can RWE confirm there is no drilling under Burton Bushes or the Westwood? This does not seem to be on the map and should not be allowed.

Whilst the adjustments described in the first two points are welcome, I still contend that the corridor and construction sites and buildings are too close to wildlife habitats/ archaeological SSIs to me (e.g. Burton Bushes) and general peaceful amenity areas on

the Westwood. There appears to be quite a lot of construction of 'temporary construction compounds' near to or next to various parts of the Westwood. The York road will be significantly disrupted.

I spoke to [REDACTED], a transport consultant/ contractor at the 2023 consultation event who gave me a lot of detailed information about the practicalities, timings, HGV, transport disruption, buildings, lengths per section. He explained the overland corridor is split into 15 sections overall, with each section requiring about 12 months of constructions, digging works, HGVs etc. One of these sections (16a) runs down the back length of the Westwood (including alongside Burton Bushes) and is forecast to last for months 15 to 26 of the project (likely earliest 2027 if the plan goes ahead and of course dependent on the National Grid Creyke Beck proposal).

Therefore, likely there could be large scale construction activities, major transport disruption, noise pollution, wildlife/ ecology impacts, amenity impacts, possible knock on archaeological damage for Beverley Westwood for a period of up to 12 months as the plans stand. Incredibly, in section 3.3.3. of the PEIR in point 178 for potential impacts on tourism and users of recreational routes the "effects were assessed as negligible.. no mitigation measures are proposed". Human health aspects were similarly glossed over in points 168 and 169.

I would like to highlight the following (particularly as the PEIR ignored important information about Burton Bushes and didn't mention it or the Westwood once - very cursory and sub standard):

- Burton Bushes is a unique habitat of 25 acres of ancient woodland (pre 1500s), is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest including for *Quercus robur* - *Pteridium aquilinum* - *Rubus fruticosus* woodland (Broadleaved, mixed and Yew).

SSSI designation:

<https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteList.aspx?siteName=Burton%20bushes&countyCode=&responsiblePerson=&DesignationType=All>

Map:

<https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx?startTopic=Designations&activelayer=sssiIndex&query=HYPERLINK%3D%271002049%27>

- The woodland trust has identified over 40 unique ancient trees in this wood:

<https://ati.woodlandtrust.org.uk/treesearch/?v=2161204&ml=map&z=17&nwLat=53.84295110571505&nwLng=0.47212924667010103&seLat=53.838494534874606&seLng=-0.4567762822688559>

- It is also a haven for birds, with over 63 varieties including greater spotted woodpecker, tawny owl, chiffchaffs and blackcaps.
- Burton Bushes is also a site of archaeological significance (Earthworks on the floor of Burton Bushes indicate probable agricultural enclosures, probably from the Romano-British period (c. AD 50-390)) - as is the Westwood in

general (three Bronze Age Barrows). The neighbouring field to Burton Bushes i.e. containing the corridor could potentially contain similar areas of interest.

English heritage Survey from 2004:

https://historicengland.org.uk/research/results/reports/6453/WestwoodCommonBeverley_anArchaeologicalSurvey_SurveyReport

Whilst I understand the need for these energy infrastructure projects I therefore make representation that this plan has made a poor decision on the onshore export cable corridor route and has not sufficiently thought through and investigated impacts (particularly around ecology, archaeology and heritage) on Beverley Westwood and Burton Bushes with the present corridor. It should be moved even further away from Burton Bushes and the Westwood to protect habitats and mitigate the other issues highlighted.

As a general comment, I was rather shocked to hear that only 4-6 members of the public responded to the consultation (one of which was myself) - I felt that information provided about the scheme and its impacts was rather under the radar.

No AI was utilised in the production of this submission.

Best Regards,

Dr Stephen R. Mounce