



Meeting note

Project name	Dogger Bank South Offshore Wind Farms
File reference	EN010125
Status	Final
Author	The Planning Inspectorate
Date	06 December 2023
Meeting with	RWE Renewables UK Dogger Bank South (West) Ltd and RWE Renewables UK Dogger Bank South (East) Ltd
Venue	Microsoft 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.

Project Update

The Applicant provided an overview of the current indicative project timeline:

- Development Consent Order (DCO) application submission – Q2 2024;
- First generation – Q4 2029; and
- Construction complete – Q4 2031.

The Applicant provided an overview of the expected submission dates for other offshore wind farm (OWF) projects. The Inspectorate advised that it is aware of the potential overlap in OWF applications and will seek to manage examination timetables effectively to try to avoid overlap, as much as possible. The Inspectorate advised that Applicants are encouraged to provide accurate submission dates for all parties to manage resources. The Applicant stated that it will notify the Inspectorate as soon as possible if there are any changes to the DCO application submission date.

The Applicant asked for the current timescales between Acceptance and the Preliminary Meeting (PM). The Inspectorate advised that it typically takes four months, but this can vary depending on matters such as any Section (s) 51 advice requiring action from the Applicant, the length of Relevant Representations (RR) period and when that period opens. However, the Inspectorate is not seeking to unnecessarily prolong the pre-examination period.

The Applicant explained it is continuing to engage in Steering Groups for the Round 4 Plan Strategic Compensation Plans (SCP) for Flamborough and Filey Coast Special Protected

Area (SPA) and Dogger Bank Special Area of Conservation (SAC). If possible, the Inspectorate asked to be provided with an overview in the next project update meeting of any matters relating to the SCPs that remain outstanding, so that it can understand potential issues in Examination and the intended approach.

Onshore EIA update

The Applicant stated that Environmental Statement (ES) chapters are currently being written and the Works Plans are being finalised. It explained that the red line boundary has mostly been confirmed with some minor amendments still needed. The Applicant confirmed that baseline studies and potential impacts considered in the ES and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) would address any new areas of land take and changes to the Proposed Development made since the Scoping Opinion was adopted.

The Applicant stated that a contact for the East Riding of Yorkshire Council (ERYC) has been identified and engaged with in the short term. Further resource is to be identified by ERYC to cover DCO applications.

The Applicant provided a summary of Expert Topic Groups (ETG) that had been held or are currently planned:

- Terrestrial Ecology;
- Flood risk and Geology;
- Public Rights of Way and Access;
- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment;
- Land Use; (*post-meeting note: not a specific ETG meeting topic but captured through on-going consultation*)
- Human Health;
- Noise and Air quality;
- Historical Environment; and
- Traffic and Transport.

The Applicant explained that onshore archaeology work is progressing but delayed due to external factors. Substation work will continue in Spring 2024. Surveys are ongoing and feedback from ETG meetings is ongoing. The Outline Landscape Management Plan is being drafted for consultation with ETG.

Offshore EIA

The Applicant stated that ES chapters are currently being written and the Works Plans are being finalised. The Applicant provided a summary of ETG that had been held or are currently planned:

- Marine physical processes;
- Benthic and Intertidal ecology;
- Marine mammals;
- Offshore archaeology;
- Ornithology;
- Fish and shellfish ecology; and
- HRA.

Workshops including the Commercial Fisheries working group, shipping, navigation and other third party stakeholders are ongoing.

Consultation update

The Applicant provided a summary of the consultation update:

- Non-statutory: 09 September – 14 October 2022;
- Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PIER) s42, s47: 06 June – 17 July 2023; and
- Targeted landowner: 13 November – 10 December 2023.

Draft documents

The Applicant stated that it expects to submit draft documents in early Q1 2024, with the exact date to be confirmed by Christmas 2023. It intends to submit draft versions of the Consultation Report (CR), the DCO, Explanatory Memorandum, six chapters of the ES, Works Plans and HRA. The Inspectorate advised that it is helpful that the draft documents are submitted at the same time, rather than staggered. It advised draft documents should be as detailed as possible to receive more specific advice and advice will be issued within six to eight weeks of receipt of the documents. The Inspectorate advised the Applicant to consider how files are sent to the Inspectorate and trial run of the chosen transfer method should take place.

Post meeting note: The Inspectorate is only able to review the draft Project Description chapter of the ES, other draft ES chapters would not be reviewed.

Compulsory Acquisition (CA) update

The Applicant stated that the draft Heads of Terms had been issued to land agents and that landowner consultation is ongoing where red line boundary differs from PEIR. Further engagements with land agent/ interests are planned on an individual basis this month. The Inspectorate advised that it would be beneficial to be given a rough guide of plots, landowners and any special category land. The Applicant explained that no special category land has been identified but there is some Crown Estate Land.

AOB:

The Applicant asked for an update of energy National Policy Statements (NPS). The Inspectorate advised that the NPSs have been laid before Parliament for formal approval or deemed approval after a period of 21 sitting days. After this they would be formally designated.

The Inspectorate advised that the next meeting should take place after the review of draft documents has taken place.