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All Interested Parties, Statutory Parties and
any Other Person invited to the Preliminary
Meeting

Your Ref:

Our Ref: EN010130

Date: 17 October 2024

Dear Sir/ Madam

Planning Act 2008 – Section 89 and The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 –Rule 8 and 9, 10, and 17

Application by GT R4 Limited (trading as Outer Dowsing Offshore Wind) for an Order Granting Development Consent for the Outer Dowsing Offshore Wind Project

Examination Timetable and procedure

This letter (the Rule 8 letter) provides important information about the Examination of this application. The letter includes:

- The Examination Timetable
- An invitation to submit Written Representations
- A request for Local Impact Reports from Local Authorities
- Other Procedural Decisions made by the ExA
- A request for further information from the Applicant in relation to the proposed Offshore Restricted Build Area (ORBA)
- Information about Hearings and Accompanied Site Inspections
- Information about the availability of Examination Documents
- Guidance on the use of the 'Make a submission' tab on the project webpage

All documentation associated with this Examination, including a note of the Preliminary Meeting and the recording of that meeting, can be viewed under the [Documents tab](#) on the project webpage of the National Infrastructure Planning website ([project webpage](#)).

The Examination Timetable

The ExA has made a Procedural Decision about the way the application will be examined. The final Examination Timetable is attached at **Annex A** to this letter.



The Examination Timetable replaces the draft timetable that was included in the ExA's [Rule 6 Letter](#). In finalising the Examination Timetable, the ExA has sought to accommodate requests and suggestions made orally or in writing to the Preliminary Meeting. A list of the main changes made to the draft Examination Timetable is set out at **Annex B** to this letter.

Please note that the Examination Timetable contains a number of Deadlines for receipt of information by the Planning Inspectorate. All Deadlines are at 23:59 on the date specified. Please ensure submissions arrive by the Deadline. If you do not make your submissions by the dates specified in the timetable, the ExA may disregard them.

The ExA requests that all Interested Parties make their submissions using the [Make a Submission](#) tab on the project webpage on or before the applicable Deadline. **Annex F** to this letter provides further information about using the [Make a Submission tab](#).

If the ExA considers it necessary to vary the Examination Timetable during the Examination, notification will be sent to Interested Parties, Statutory Parties and Other Persons invited to the Preliminary Meeting. The changes will be published on the [project webpage](#).

Written Representations

All Interested Parties have been invited to submit Written Representations and any additional comments on the Relevant Representations already submitted. The ExA requests that they are submitted at Deadline 1 as set out in its Procedural Decision letter of 31 July 2024 [[PD-006](#)]. Written Representations not submitted on Deadline 1 should be submitted by Deadline 2 at the latest. However, the ExA's strong preference is to receive these submissions by Deadline 1 so that they can be considered ahead of the publication of its First Written Questions.

Written Representations can cover any relevant matter and are not restricted to the matters set out in the ExA's Initial Assessment of Principal Issues, published in its Rule 6 letter [[PD-009](#)].

Any person, other than the Applicant, who submits a Written Representation must identify those parts of the application with which they agree and those parts with which they do not agree, explaining the reasons why. Interested Parties should also provide with their Written Representations any data, methodology and assumptions used to support their submissions to avoid delays in the Examination (see paragraph 009 of the [government's guidance on the examination stage for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects](#) for further information about Written Representations).

The ExA has requested further types of written submissions at various points in the Examination (see **Annex A**).

Any Written Representations and any further written submissions requested during the Examination, that exceed 1500 words, should also be accompanied by a summary which should not exceed 10% of the original text. The summary should set out the key facts of the written submission and must be representative of the submission made.

Representations **must not include hyperlinks** to documents/evidence hosted on third party websites. See the Planning Inspectorate's Advice for members of the public: [Advice for submitting representations or comments](#) for important information about making written submissions.

Other Procedural Decisions made by the Examining Authority

Annex B to this letter contains important details and clarifications about other Procedural Decisions the ExA made at, or following, the Preliminary Meeting. These include:

- Statements of Common Ground;
- Local Impact Reports;
- Changes to land interests;
- Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in evidence;
- Report on the inter-relationship with other infrastructure projects;
- Hearings to be held virtually; and
- Additional Submissions.

Request for further information from the Applicant under Rule 17 of the Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010

The ExA has requested further information from the Applicant in relation to the proposed Offshore Restricted Build Area (ORBA). Full details of this request are contained in **Annex C** to this letter.

Format of Examination Events

Both blended (part in-person and part virtual) and fully virtual events will form part of the operating model. The ExA remains flexible and will confirm the format of any hearings when it provides formal notification of each hearing at least 21 days in advance of it taking place.

Hearings and Site Inspections

The Examination of the application will principally be a written process supplemented where necessary by various types of hearings. See the Planning Inspectorate's Advice for members of the public: [The stages of the NSIP process and how you can have your say](#) for more information.

The Planning Inspectorate's Advice for members of the public also provides important information about hearing procedures:

- [What to expect at a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project event](#)
- [Registering to speak at, or attend, a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project event](#)

On this basis the Examination Timetable at **Annex A** to this letter includes periods of time reserved for any hearings to be held, and the ExA will notify all Interested Parties of any hearings scheduled as part of the Examination at least 21 days in advance of them taking place. That notification will include a Deadline for Interested Parties to inform the Planning Inspectorate if they wish to participate at the notified hearing(s).

The ExA will also undertake site inspections. Where the ExA is able to view the site from public land it is likely to do this unaccompanied and a note of the site inspection will be published on the project webpage. The Examination Timetable also reserves time for us to undertake an Accompanied Site Inspection (ASI) on **Wednesday 8 and Thursday 9 January 2024**. The ExA will consider each suggested site location, including those provided in the Applicant's draft itinerary, to determine if it could be viewed from public land on an unaccompanied basis or if it is necessary to view it on an accompanied basis. The ExA will also consider if it would be appropriate to make arrangements for access only to be provided to specific sites such that they could be inspected as part of an Unaccompanied Site Inspection on an access required basis.

Annex D provides details about what Interested Parties should include in a request to be heard at a hearing, and the procedure that will be followed at hearings. It also provides important information about the Accompanied Site Inspection and attendance at the inspection.

Managing Examination correspondence

Given the volume and frequency of letters the Planning Inspectorate needs to send to Interested Parties during an Examination, the ExA aims to communicate with people by email as electronic communication is more environmentally friendly and cost effective for the taxpayer.

If you have received a letter from the Planning Inspectorate but are able to receive communications by email, please inform the Case Team using the contact details at the top of this letter as soon as possible.

As the Examination process makes substantial use of electronic documents, it will be useful for you to become familiar with the [project webpage](#).

A [Make a Submission tab](#) is available on the website which provides a portal through which parties should make written submissions at relevant deadlines during the Examination. Further information about the '[Make a submission](#)' portal is provided at **Annex F** to this letter.

There is also a function on the right-hand side of the project webpage called 'E-mail updates'. This provides you with an opportunity to register to receive automatic e-mail updates at key stages during the Examination.

Your status in the Examination

You have received this letter because you are a person or organisation who is involved in the NSIP process. See the Planning Inspectorate's Advice for members of the public: [National Infrastructure Projects and the people and organisations involved in the process](#) for further details.

If, having read the advice, you are still unsure about how you are involved in the process please contact the Case Team using the details at the top of this letter.

Awards of costs

All parties will normally be expected to meet their own costs. Costs can be awarded against a party who has acted unreasonably and has caused the party applying for the award of costs to incur unnecessary or wasted expense during the Examination. You should be aware of the relevant costs guidance [Awards of costs: examinations of applications for development consent orders](#).

Management of information

Information, including representations, submitted in respect of this Examination (if accepted by the Examining Authority) and a record of any advice which has been provided by the Planning Inspectorate is published on the [project webpage](#).

Examination Documents can also be viewed electronically at the locations listed in **Annex E** to this letter.

Please note that in the interest of facilitating an effective and fair Examination, it is necessary to publish some personal information. To find out how we handle your personal information please view our [Privacy Notice](#).

The ExA looks forward to working with all parties in the Examination of this application.

Yours faithfully

Rod MacArthur

Lead Member of the Examining Authority

Annexes

- A** Examination Timetable
- B** Other Procedural Decisions made by the Examining Authority
- C** ExA's request for further information from the Applicant in relation to the proposed Offshore Restricted Build Area (ORBA)
- D** Arrangements for hearings
- E** Availability of Examination Documents
- F** Information about the Make a submission tab

This communication does not constitute legal advice.
Please view our [Privacy Notice](#) before sending information to the Planning Inspectorate.

Examination Timetable

The Examining Authority (ExA) is under a duty to **complete** the Examination of the application by the end of the period of six months beginning with the day after the close of the Preliminary Meeting.

The Examination of the application primarily takes the form of the consideration of written submissions. The ExA will also consider any oral representations made at hearings.

Item		Date
1.	<p>Procedural Deadline Deadline for receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Responses to the Rule 6 letter relating to Examination procedure, including any submissions about the draft Examination Timetable and the use of virtual methods ▪ Responses to Relevant Representations (RRs), as requested by ExA in its Procedural Decision (PD) letter on 31 July 2024 [PD-006] ▪ Other responses (if applicable) to the ExA's PD letter of 31 July 2024 [PD-006] ▪ Summaries of all RRs exceeding 1500 words ▪ Submission of Pre-examination Progress Tracker ▪ Applicant's submission of the CA and Land Rights Tracker ▪ Applicant's submission of draft Statement of Commonality for Statements of Common Ground ▪ Requests to be heard orally at the Preliminary Meeting and under which part of the agenda set out in Annex A of the Rule 6 letter. ▪ Requests by Parties to be heard orally at the Open Floor Hearing (OFH) to be held on Thursday 10 October 2024. ▪ An indicative schedule showing when updated or new benthic and intertidal ecology, offshore and intertidal ornithology and HRA documents are likely to be submitted into the Examination by the Applicant, including their likely content and approximate size. 	<p>Thursday 19 September 2024</p>
2.	<p>Preliminary Meeting</p>	<p>Thursday 10 October 2024 10:00</p>

Item	Date	
3.	Open Floor Hearing (OFH1)	Thursday 10 October 2024
4.	Issue by the ExA of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Examination Timetable 	As soon as practicable following the Preliminary Meeting
5.	Deadline 1 Deadline for receipt by the ExA of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Comments on any updates to application documents submitted by the Applicant before or at the PM ▪ Submission of comments on oral submissions made and written summaries of oral case put at the OFH held on 10 October 2024 ▪ Requests from Affected Persons to be heard at any subsequent Compulsory Acquisition Hearing (CAH). Requests by Affected Persons (defined in section 59(4) of the Planning Act 2008) ▪ Requests by Interested Parties to attend an Accompanied Site Inspection (ASI) ▪ Suggested locations for the ASI including justification, and whether such locations can be seen from public land or require private access, for consideration by the ExA ▪ Notification by Statutory Parties of their wish to be considered as an Interested Party (IP) by the ExA ▪ Notification of wish to have future correspondence received electronically ▪ Applicant's updated Book of Reference (BoR) and Schedule of Changes to the BoR (If required) in clean and tracked versions ▪ Applicant's planning obligations, proximity and commercial side agreements tracking list and any draft s106 agreement (see Annex F of the ExA's Rule 6 letter [PD-009]) ▪ Applicant's updated Schedule of Negotiations and Powers Sought in clean and tracked versions ▪ Comments on the Applicant's Land Rights Tracker ▪ Initial draft Statements of Common Ground ▪ Comments on the Applicant's draft Statement of Commonality of Statements of Common Ground 	Thursday 24 October 2024

Item		Date
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Written Representations (WRs), as requested by ExA in its PD letter on 31 July 2024 [PD-006] ▪ Summaries of any WRs that exceed 1500 words ▪ Summaries of all RRs exceeding 1500 words (if not provided at the Pre-Examination Procedural Deadline) ▪ Responses to RRs (if not provided at the Pre-Examination Procedural Deadline) ▪ Local Impact Reports (LIRs) from local authorities (see Annex B) ▪ Requests from Interested Parties to be heard at any subsequent Open Floor Hearing (OFH) ▪ A revised version of the draft Development Consent Order (draft DCO) in clean and tracked versions ▪ An updated Explanatory Memorandum in clean and tracked versions (if required) ▪ Comments on any further information / submissions accepted by the ExA ▪ Any further information requested by the ExA under Rule 17 of the Examination Procedure Rules 	
6.	<p>Publication of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The ExA's First Written Questions (ExQ1) 	Wednesday 6 November 2024
7.	<p>Deadline 2 Deadline for receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Responses to ExQ1 ▪ Written Representations (WRs), if not provided at Deadline 1 ▪ Summaries of any WRs that exceed 1500 words, if not provided at Deadline 1 ▪ Comments on the LIR(s) ▪ Applicant to provide a draft itinerary for the ASI if required ▪ Applicant's update to the Guide to the Application ▪ Applicant's update to the Statements of Commonality of Statements of Common Ground ▪ Applicant's update to the Land Rights Tracker 	Wednesday 27 November 2024

Item		Date
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An updated version of the draft DCO in clean and tracked versions (if required as a result of ExQ1) ▪ Schedule of changes to the draft DCO (if required) ▪ An updated Explanatory Memorandum in clean and tracked versions (if required) ▪ Applicant's updated BoR and Schedule of Changes to the BoR (If required) in clean and tracked versions ▪ Responses to comments on RRs ▪ Comments on any other submissions received at Deadline 1 ▪ Initial report on the inter-relationship with other infrastructure projects (as described in Annex B) ▪ Any further information requested by the ExA under Rule 17 of the Examination Procedure Rules 	
8.	<p>Dates reserved (if required) for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Any Compulsory Acquisition Hearing ▪ Any Issue Specific Hearing ▪ Further Open Floor Hearing (if required) 	<p>Tuesday 3 December 2024 – Friday 6 December 2024</p>
9.	<p>Deadline 3 Deadline for receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Post-hearing submissions including written summaries of oral case put at any of the hearings during the w/c 2 December 2024 ▪ Comments on the Applicant's update to the draft DCO ▪ Comments on other submissions received at Deadline 2 ▪ Comments on the Applicant's update to the Land Rights Tracker ▪ Applicant's update to the Land Rights Tracker ▪ Comments on the update to the Statements of Commonality of Statements of Common Ground ▪ Comments on draft ASI itinerary produced by the Applicant (if required) ▪ Comments on WRs ▪ Applicant to provide an updated Guide to the Application ▪ An updated version of the draft DCO in clean and tracked versions (if required) ▪ Schedule of changes to the draft DCO (if required) 	<p>Friday 13 December 2024</p>

Item		Date
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An updated Explanatory Memorandum in clean and tracked versions (if required) ▪ Applicant's updated BoR and Schedule of Changes to the BoR (If required) in clean and tracked versions ▪ Updated Statements of Commonality of Statements of Common Ground ▪ Applicant's updated Schedule of Negotiations and Powers Sought in clean and tracked versions ▪ Applicant's 'Mid-Examination' Progress Tracker ▪ Any further information requested by the ExA under Rule 17 of the Examination Procedure Rules 	
10.	<p>Dates reserved (if required) for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Accompanied Site Inspection 	<p>Wednesday 8 January 2025 and Thursday 9 January 2025</p>
11.	<p>Publication of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ExA's further written questions (ExQ2) (if required). 	<p>Monday 13 January 2025</p>
12.	<p>Deadline 4 Deadline for receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Responses to ExQ2 (if published) ▪ Comments on the Applicant's update to the draft DCO ▪ Comments on the Applicant's update to the Land Rights Tracker ▪ Applicant's update to the draft DCO ▪ Applicant's update to the Land Rights Tracker ▪ Applicant's update to the Guide to the Application ▪ Applicant's update to the Statements of Commonality of Statements of Common Ground ▪ Comments on any other submissions received at Deadline 3 ▪ Updated report on the inter-relationship with other infrastructure projects (as described in Annex B) ▪ Any further information requested by the ExA under Rule 17 of the Examination Procedure Rules 	<p>Monday 3 February 2025</p>
13.	<p>Dates reserved (if required) for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Any Compulsory Acquisition Hearing 	<p>Tuesday 11 February 2025 to Friday 14 February 2025</p>

Item		Date
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A further Open Floor Hearing (if requested) ▪ Any Issue Specific Hearing 	
14.	<p>Issue by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Report into the Implications for European Sites (RIES) (if required) ▪ The ExA's preferred draft DCO, proposed schedule of changes, or commentary on the draft DCO (if required) 	Monday 17 February 2025
15.	<p>Deadline 5 Deadline for receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Post-hearing submissions including written summaries of oral case put at hearings during w/c 10 February 2025 (if held) ▪ Comments on the Applicant's third update to the draft DCO ▪ Comments on the Applicant's third update to the Land Rights Tracker ▪ Comments on the Report into the Implications for European Sites (RIES) (if required) ▪ Comments on ExA's commentary on, or schedule of changes to, the draft DCO (if required) ▪ Completed, signed and dated Statements of Common Ground ▪ Final Statement of Commonality of Statements of Common Ground ▪ Comments on any other submissions received at Deadline 4 ▪ Any further information requested by the ExA under Rule 17 of the Examination Procedure Rules 	Thursday 13 March 2025
16.	<p>Dates reserved (if required) for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Any Compulsory Acquisition Hearing ▪ Any Issue Specific Hearing 	Tuesday 18 March 2025 to Friday 21 March 2025
17.	<p>Deadline 6 Deadline for receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Post-hearing submissions including written summaries of oral case put at hearings during w/c 18 March 2025 (if held) ▪ Final Principal Areas of Disagreement Statements ▪ IP's Closing Statement(s) 	Friday 4 April 2025

Item		Date
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Post-hearing submissions including written submissions of oral cases (if applicable) ▪ Applicant's Closing Statement(s) ▪ Applicant's Close of Examination Progress Tracker ▪ Final draft DCO to be submitted by the Applicant in the SI template with the SI template validation report ▪ Final Explanatory Memorandum in clean and tracked versions ▪ Final Book of Reference (BoR) and schedule of changes to BoR ▪ Applicant's final Schedule of Negotiations and Powers Sought in clean and tracked versions ▪ Completed s106 Agreements (if required) ▪ Final Land Rights Tracker ▪ Final planning obligations and commercial side agreements tracker ▪ Final Guide to the Application ▪ Final schedule of changes to the draft DCO (if required) ▪ Comments on any other submissions received at Deadline 5 ▪ Final report on the inter-relationship with other infrastructure projects (as described in Annex B) ▪ Any further information requested by the ExA under Rule 17 of the Examination Procedure Rules 	
18.	<p>The ExA is under a duty to complete the examination of the application by the end of the period of six months. Please note that the ExA may close the Examination before the end of the six-month period if it is satisfied that all relevant matters have been addressed and discussed.</p>	Thursday 10 April 2025

Submission times for Deadlines

The time for submission of documents at any Deadline in the timetable is 23:59 on the relevant Deadline date, unless instructed otherwise by the ExA.

Publication dates

All information received will be published on the [project webpage](#) as soon as practicable after the Deadlines for submissions.

Report on the Implications for European Sites (RIES)

Where an applicant has provided a No Significant Effects Report or a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Report with the application, the ExA may decide to issue a RIES during the Examination. The RIES is a factual account of the information and evidence provided to the ExA on HRA matters during the Examination up to the date of the publication of the RIES, for the purposes of enabling the Secretary of State, as competent authority, to undertake its HRA. It is not the ExA's opinion on HRA matters. Comments on the RIES will be invited by the ExA and any received will be taken into account as part of the ExA's Recommendation to the Secretary of State. The ExA may also raise questions in the RIES to confirm or clarify matters that remain outstanding.

The Secretary of State may rely on the consultation on the RIES to meet its obligations under Regulation 63(3) of The Habitats Regulations 2017 and Regulation 28 of The Offshore Marine Regulations.

Other Procedural Decisions made by the Examining Authority (ExA)

The ExA has made a number of Procedural Decisions following the Preliminary Meeting:

1. Examination Timetable

Having considered feedback raised before and at the Preliminary Meeting, the ExA has made the following amendments to the Examination Table. These changes are reflected in Annex A.

- In response to Natural England's request in its Procedural Deadline response [[PD1-108](#)], Deadline 5 has been moved from Tuesday 11 March to Thursday 13 March 2025. Discussion regarding the potential change during the Preliminary Meeting did not indicate that it would present parties with any difficulties.
- Issue by the ExA of Further Written Questions (ExQ3) (if required) on Friday 14 March 2025 has been removed from the final Examination Timetable. The ExA has made this change on the basis that it would not have sufficient time to review Deadline 5 submissions on 13 March ahead of the potential publication of its Further Written Questions (if required). The ExA is also mindful that the Examination Timetable reserves dates during the following week for any Compulsory Acquisition and Issue Specific Hearing (if required). Nevertheless, the ExA may decide to request further information in writing under Rule 17 of The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 at an alternative point during the Examination, if deemed necessary.
- A report on the inter-relationship with other infrastructure projects is now requested from the Applicant at Deadlines 2, 4 and 6. This is discussed further in Annex B.

For the avoidance of doubt, no further changes to the final Examination Timetable are included in Annex A.

The ExA has reflected on Natural England's request to move Deadline 1 from Thursday 24 October to Thursday 31 October as well as feedback on the matter received during the Preliminary Meeting. However, the ExA does not consider that it would be possible to accommodate this request as it would provide insufficient time for the ExA to review submissions ahead of the publication of its First Written Questions on Wednesday 6 November.

The ExA has noted that one of the reasons given by NE for requesting that Deadline 1 be moved was the lack of available time for it to review and respond to the information submitted by the Applicant at Procedural Deadline 1. Because the ExA has requested that changes which may arise from the proposed introduction of the Offshore Restricted Build Area (ORBA) be submitted as part of a formal Change Request by the Applicant – as set out in Annex B, item 8 of this letter, the ExA is not seeking responses to submissions from the Applicant which relate to this matter at Deadline 1.

As outlined by the ExA during the Preliminary Meeting, the Examination Timetable seeks to front load written submissions and so a substantial volume of information is anticipated to be received by the ExA at this deadline. Moving the date of the publication of the ExA's

First Written Questions to address this would also impact the timing of subsequent deadlines in the Examination Timetable.

The ExA also notes the request made on behalf of T.H. Clements and Son Limited for the inclusion of an Issue Specific Hearing regarding agriculture as well as the availability of its representatives for such a hearing during the week commencing 2 December 2024. This feedback as well as written submissions received at Deadline 1 will inform agendas for any Issue Specific Hearings held during this week.

2. Statements of Common Ground (SoCG)

The Applicant is taking the lead in the preparation of SoCGs and it will aid the smooth running of the Examination if all Interested Parties who are participating in the preparation of SoCGs liaise and co-operate with the Applicant in respect of their production. The ExA set out in Annex F of its Rule 6 letter dated 4 September 2024 the SoCGs which it requests are submitted during the Examination of this application. Final signed versions of the SoCGs listed below are requested to be submitted **by the Applicant to Deadline 5.**

1. SoCG between the Applicant and Lincolnshire County Council
2. SoCG between the Applicant and East Lindsey District Council
3. SoCG between the Applicant and South Holland District Council
4. SoCG between the Applicant and Boston Borough Council
5. SoCG between the Applicant and The Environment Agency
6. SoCG between the Applicant and Natural England
7. SoCG between the Applicant and Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.
8. SoCG between the Applicant and Historic England
9. SoCG between the Applicant and National Trust
10. SoCG between the Applicant and The Forestry Commission
11. SoCG between the Applicant and National Highways
12. SoCG between the Applicant and The Maritime and Coastguard Agency
13. SoCG between the Applicant and The Marine Management Organisation
14. SoCG between the Applicant and Trinity House
15. SoCG between the Applicant and National Grid Electricity Transmission
16. SoCG between the Applicant and Chamber of Shipping
17. SoCG between the Applicant and NATS (En Route) plc
18. SoCG between the Applicant and Defence Infrastructure Organisation (Ministry of Defence)

All of the SoCGs listed above should cover the Articles and Requirements in the draft Development Consent Order. Any Interested Party seeking that an Article or Requirement is reworded should provide the form of words which are being sought.

The content of SoCGs will help to inform the ExA about the need to hold any Issue Specific Hearings during the Examination, and to enable it and the Applicant to give notice of such hearings at least 21 days in advance of them taking place.

3. Local Impact Reports (LIR)

A LIR is a report in writing giving details of the likely impact of a Proposed Development on a local authority's area (or any part of that area). For more information about the

importance and content of LIRs see the Planning Inspectorate's [Advice for local authorities](#).

Local Authorities, defined in section 56A of the Planning Act 2008, are invited to submit LIRs by **Deadline 1**.

4. Changes to land interests

When the Applicant becomes aware that there has been a change in ownership, or a new interest in relevant land, the Applicant is requested to make the relevant person aware that they can make a request to the ExA to become an Interested Party under section 102A of the PA2008 by emailing the project mailbox:

outerdowsingoffshorewind@planninginspectorate.gov.uk .

The Examination Timetable includes various Deadlines for the submission of an updated Book of Reference and schedule of changes to the Book of Reference, which should include confirmation that relevant persons have been informed of their rights under section 102A.

5. Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in evidence

The ExA understands that AI can be used to support the work of Applicants and Interested Parties and that this can be done positively when it is transparently used. The Planning Inspectorate has recently issued guidance in relation to the use of AI and due to the evolving capability and application of AI this guidance will be kept under review.

AI is technology that enables a computer or other machine to exhibit a level of 'intelligence' normally associated with humans. Recent advances mean that AI can now be used to create new content in the form of text, images, videos, audio, computer code and other types of data. It can also be used to alter or enhance existing content. In such cases, AI works by drawing on existing information, usually from a large database or from the internet, to provide a response to a user's prompts or requests.

The ExA has made the Procedural Decision to ask all IPs to clarify whether AI has been used to create or alter any part of documents, information or data, which are then submitted as evidence to the Examination of this Application. All parties should tell us that they have done this when they provide the material to us. The ExA should also be told what systems or tools have been used, the source of the information that the AI system has based its content on, and what information or material the AI has been used to create or alter.

In addition, parties that have used AI in their submissions should do the following:

- Clearly label where AI has been used in the body of the content that AI has created or altered, and clearly state that AI has been used in that content in any references to it elsewhere in your documentation.
- Tell the ExA whether any images or video of people, property, objects or places have been created or altered using AI.
- Tell the ExA whether any images or video using AI has changed, augmented, or removed parts of the original image or video, and identify which parts of the image

or video has been changed (such as adding or removing buildings or infrastructure within an image).

- Tell the ExA the date that you used the AI.
- Declare your responsibility for the factual accuracy of the content.
- Declare your use of AI is responsible and lawful.
- Declare that you have appropriate permissions to disclose and share any personal information and that its use complies with data protection and copyright legislation.

As the Planning Inspectorate's guidance was published after the date that the application was accepted for Examination, we ask all Parties affected by this decision to provide us with this information as it may relate to any submissions made to date at **Deadline 1 on 24 October 2024** and for any submissions subsequent to that date to be suitably endorsed at the time of submission.

6. Report on the Inter-relationship with other infrastructure projects

In its Relevant Representation [[RR-004](#)], Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) requested that the ExA adopts a mechanism similar to that adopted by the ExAs for solar projects in western Lincolnshire where each applicant was required to produce an inter-relationship report at the start of their examination which was subsequently updated at each deadline during the examination.

The ExA is aware of a number of infrastructure projects within the Lincolnshire area, including, but not necessarily limited to:

- Cottam Solar Project;
- Gate Burton Energy Park;
- Heckington Fen Solar Park;
- Mallard Pass Solar Project;
- West Burton Solar Project;
- Immingham Eastern Ro-Ro Terminal; and
- Tillbridge Solar Project

The Applicant and LCC are requested to regularly review this list and to update it, if appropriate.

With the exception of Tillbridge Solar Project, these projects have moved beyond the recommendation stage. The examination of Tillbridge Solar Project will be conducted by another ExA, separately appointed by the Secretary of State.

The ExA for the Outer Dowsing Offshore Wind Project will carry out the Examination for this project only and will have no responsibility for the Examination of any other projects. Similarly, the ExA for Tillbridge Solar Project will have no responsibility for the Examination of this one.

Given the proximity of some of these projects, the ExA has recognised the importance of considering cumulative and in-combination effects with other infrastructure projects. Recognising the potential for the information available on other projects to change during

this Examination, the ExA has made the **Procedural Decision** to request the Applicant to provide a 'Report on the inter-relationship with other infrastructure projects'

The initial version shall be submitted at **Deadline 2** on **27 November 2024** with an updated version to be submitted at **Deadline 4** on **03 February 2025** and a final version submitted at **Deadline 6** on **04 April 2025**. The Examination timetable has been updated to reflect these additional submissions.

The Inter-relationship Report should include:

- An overview of the Proposed Development and the other projects identified above, including the timings for submission (or current Examination), decision by the relevant Secretary of State, construction phasing, grid connection and expected start of operation.
- The approach taken by the Applicant to coordinate the Proposed Development with the other projects, including during the Examination.
- A plan showing the order limits for the Proposed Development and the other projects and the locations of the main features of each, including array areas, cable routes and onshore connections to grid connection.
- Any provisions in the Development Consent Order required for the Proposed Development to be implemented satisfactorily in relation to other projects.
- Key survey data shared with other projects.
- Mitigation measures shared with other projects, and how they are to be secured.
- A summary of any other information on the other projects relied on for the cumulative effects assessment, the level of detail, and any changes since the application was prepared for submission. The detail of the cumulative effects assessment should remain in the Environmental Statement, but the Applicant is to ensure that any changes are summarised in the Report.
- A summary of progress of coordination with the other projects, setting out the matters that have been agreed, any inconsistencies or outstanding matters, and the next steps.

7. Hearings to be held virtually

The ExA's standard approach to hearings will be to hold blended events where attendees can participate either in person or virtually via Microsoft Teams. However due to the lack of available venues, the ExA has made the decision to hold the hearings currently scheduled for **3 - 6 December 2024** (if required) as **virtual only**. If these hearings are to go ahead, full details will be included in the Notice of Hearings which will be issued and published on the project website no later than 28 days before the first hearing date.

8. Additional Submissions

In addition to the documentation submitted by Procedural Deadline 1 the ExA has exercised its discretion and made a **Procedural Decision** to accept the following Additional Submission from the Applicant:

1. **The Applicant's response to Procedural Decision and Change Notification dated 8 October**

In **Appendix 1** of its Additional Submission [[AS-025](#)], the Applicant has set out a summary of the changes that it has proposed to the application documents to date. The ExA advises that any proposed amendments to the Order limits are substantive matters which would constitute a change to the original application. Where such changes are minor, the ExA may exercise discretion and accept such changes without the need for further submissions from the Applicant. In the interests of clarity in this case, the Applicant is advised that it should submit a change request, or requests, which identify **all** proposed changes to the order limits.

Appendix 1, section 5 of the Applicant's Additional Submission [[AS-025](#)] summarises the changes proposed by the Applicant in its Procedural Deadline 1 submissions [[PD1-001](#)] and [[PD1-002](#)]. The ExA agrees that the following amendments to the application should not be subject to a formal change request:

- Minor onshore works number amendments – change from landscaping works to drainage works;
- Reductions in the compulsory acquisition rights sought from freehold acquisition to acquisition of permanent rights in respect of certain plots; and
- Changes to documents to account for an additional pipeline crossing.

Appendix 2 of the Applicant's Additional Submission [[AS-025](#)] provides a formal change notification for each of the proposed changes submitted by the Applicant in its Procedural Deadline 1 submissions [[PD1-001](#)] and [[PD1-002](#)]. The ExA advises that the Applicant should make a formal Change Request for the following proposed changes:

a) Changes to documents to account for five recently identified proposed Public Rights of Way (“PRoWs”), the proposed diversions to three of those five PRoWs

- i) The ExA notes that the Applicant intends to consult on the proposed change with landowners on whose land the proposed PRoWs and the proposed diversions are situated, and Lincolnshire County Council as the Authority responsible for public rights of way, giving a minimum of 28 days for responses.
- ii) The ExA looks forward to receiving the Applicant's Change Request at Deadline 2.

b) The introduction of the Offshore Restricted Build Area (ORBA)

- i) For the reasons set out in **Annex C**, the ExA is not satisfied that the changes associated with the proposed introduction of the ORBA do not constitute a change to the application documents. The Applicant is therefore requested to include this proposed change within its formal change request. In further regard to this specific proposed change the ExA advises that the Applicant consult with the following parties to determine if they agree with the Applicant's consideration of the implications for the conclusions in Chapter 16 of the ES [[AS1-042](#)]:
 - Defence Infrastructure Organisation;
 - NATS En Route Ltd

As part of this consultation, the ExA would welcome confirmation of any possible effects relating to aviation and radar arising from the possibility of a more condensed layout of WTGs within the array area as a result of the ORBA.

c) Revision to the Offshore Export Cable Corridor

- i) The ExA agrees that no further consultation with additional persons prescribed under section 42(1)(a) to (d) of the Planning Act 2008 is required and that all necessary consultation has taken place.
- ii) The ExA looks forward to receiving the Applicant's Change Request at Deadline 1.

d) Onshore Order Limit reductions - removal of unnecessary plots

- i) The ExA agrees that no further consultation with additional persons prescribed under section 42(1)(a) to (d) of the Planning Act 2008 is required and that all necessary consultation has taken place.
- ii) The ExA looks forward to receiving the Applicant's Change Request at Deadline 1.

If the Applicant concludes that it would not be necessary to consult with any of the parties named above, it should note this within its formal request to make a change to the Application, giving reasons for such a conclusion alongside an appropriate explanation of why it considers the level of consultation carried out to be appropriate.

When submitting its formal change request the ExA recommends that the Applicant continues to closely follow all of the guidance set out in Step 4 of [the Planning Inspectorate's guidance for changes to an application after it has been accepted for examination](#) when preparing its change application.

The ExA stresses that should any formal Change Request be accepted by the ExA the proposed changes would be made on the basis that all the processes can be completed in the required time prior to the close of the Examination and in accordance with the Examination Timetable set out in **Annex A** of this letter. Should it not be possible to achieve this, then the ExA would not be in a position to take the change request into account in its recommendation to the Secretary of State as the relevant statutory procedures would not have been complied with

ExA's request for further information from the Applicant in relation to the proposed Offshore Restricted Build Area (ORBA) and the revision to the Offshore Export Cable Corridor

On 19 September 2024 the Applicant submitted a suite of documents that the ExA has accepted into the Examination and which have the Examination Library references of [PD1-001] to [PD1-102]. The Applicant's covering letter [PD1-001] explains that it has provided a range of documents "...in response to the ExA's requests, described and signposted in the Applicant's Response to the Rule 17 letter dated 31 July 2024 (Doc 15.3)." These documents are listed in Table 1 of [PD1-001]. The Applicant also refers to additional documents that it has provided and which include the following:

- (i) New or updated documents in response to comments made by Interested Parties in Relevant Representations.
- (ii) Documents prepared in support of the introduction of the ORBA and Revision to the Offshore Export Cable Corridor (ECC Revision). Certain Plans and Outline Plans have been updated to reflect the introduction of the ORBA and the removal of offshore cable corridor optionality.
- (iii) Documents updated to (a) reflect minor changes due to small reductions to the areas of land required and amendments to the rights sought, and (b) account for recently identified proposed Public Rights of Way and an additional pipeline crossing.

In the 'ORBA and Revision to the Offshore ECC Appendix E Collision Risk Modelling', Document Reference 15.9 E [PD1-087] the Applicant presents revised collision risk modelling (CRM) figures and in paragraph 13 states that: "*This technical annex has been produced to provide the methodology and results of the collision risk modelling (CRM) which has been used to inform the consideration of the environmental implications of the ORBA.*" Furthermore, in paragraph 14 of [PD1-087] the Applicant states that: "*The methodology and input parameters used within the modelling have been updated to follow the recent JNCC (2024) guidance.*"

The ExA notes that Table 2.1 in [PD1-087] is different from that in Table 12.1 of the Applicant's original document reference 6.3.12.2 'Appendix 12.2 Offshore Ornithology Collision Risk Modelling' [APP-163], in that Table 2.1 of [PD1-087] now contains both a High and a Low set of figures. The High set of figures in Table 2.1 of [PD1-087] corresponds to the only set of figures provided in Table 12.1 of [APP-163].

Table 2.7 of [PD1-087] provides a summary of average monthly collisions by species based on the High scenario. For kittiwake the revised predicted figures are higher than those provided in Table 12.7 of [APP-163] for the mean and 97.5% confidence interval (CI) but not for the 2.5% CI. For gannet the predicted figures are lower in Table 2.7 of [PD1-087] than in Table 12.7 of [APP-163] across the mean, 97.5% CI and the 2.5% CI.

However, the ExA is unclear whether the changes to the average monthly collisions for some of the six species between Table 12.7 of [APP-163] and the High scenario in Table 2.7 of [PD1-087] are as a result of the proposed ORBA and ECC Revision, the updated 2024 JNCC guidance solely, or both of these taken together. The Applicant is requested to provide clarification of this which should include figures for each of the variables defined by the Applicant.

The ExA notes that the Maximum Design Scenario for offshore and intertidal ornithology has been set out in Table 12.10 of ES Chapter 12 [[AS1-040](#)]. Notwithstanding this, the ExA remains unclear as to exactly how the worst-case scenario that underpins the ornithological modelling has been arrived at. In particular, the ExA notes that for the operation and maintenance phase, as set out in Table 12.10, WTGs deployed across the full array area has been considered to represent the maximum design scenario for both collision risk and for disturbance and displacement mortalities.

The ExA seeks clarification from the Applicant as to what deploying WTGs across the full array area, which is considered to represent the maximum design scenario, would entail. For example, would it be the worst-case scenario in terms of modelling for both collision and disturbance/displacement mortalities to assume that 100 WTGs would be spaced at equal distances along only the entire outer boundary of the array area, or would they be equally spaced out so as to cover the entire array area and therefore with larger distances between each WTG? Alternatively, would more concentrated groupings of up to 100 WTGs in certain zones within the overall array area have the potential to result in greater adverse effects for certain species?

A response to this is requested by **Deadline 1 on 24 October 2024**.

Arrangements for hearings

The ExA's Examination will be principally undertaken through the exchange of written submissions however the Examination Timetable reserves periods of time for hearings to be held (if required).

Requests to participate at hearings

Interested Parties are required to notify the Examining Authority (ExA) in writing of their wish to take part in a Compulsory Acquisition Hearing (CAH) or any further Open Floor Hearing (OFH) on or before 24 October 2024 (see **Deadline 1**).

Any request to participate in a hearing **should include** the following information:

- Name and unique reference number (found at the top of any letter or email from the Planning Inspectorate);
- email address (if available) and contact telephone number;
- name and unique reference number of any person/organisation that you are representing (if applicable);
- for blended events, confirmation of whether you will participate virtually or in-person;
- confirmation of the hearing(s) you wish to participate in, the agenda item(s) on which you wish to speak and/or brief details of the topic(s) that you would like to raise;
- for Compulsory Acquisition Hearings, the plot number(s) of the relevant land provided in the [Book of Reference](#) and the [Land Plans](#); and
- the [Examination Library](#) reference number (with paragraph/page number where appropriate) of any documents you wish to refer to.

The time, date and place of any confirmed hearing will be notified in writing to all Interested Parties, providing at least 21 days' notice.

Requests to participate should be made using an **Event Participation Form** which will be provided with the notification of the hearing.

Please contact the Case Team using the contact details at the top of this letter if you require any support or assistance to attend an Event, either virtually or in person.

If no written requests to take part in an OFH or CAH are received by the above Deadline, we are not required to hold such a hearing, although we may choose to do so nonetheless.

We may also choose to hold Issue Specific Hearings (ISH) about topics that we think need to be explored orally. The decision to hold an ISH about a particular topic is not connected to how relevant or important we consider an issue or topic to be.

Hearing agendas

For Issue Specific Hearings and Compulsory Acquisition Hearings the ExA will publish a detailed draft agenda on the project website at least five working days in advance of the hearing date. However, the actual agenda on the day of each hearing may be subject to change at the discretion of the ExA. For Open Floor Hearings an agenda may not be published.

Procedure at hearings

The Examination of the application will principally be a written process supplemented where necessary by various types of hearings. See the Planning Inspectorate's Advice for members of the public: [The stages of the NSIP process and how you can have your say](#) for more information.

The procedure to be followed at hearings is set out in Rule 14 of The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010. The ExA is responsible for the oral questioning of a person giving evidence and the process affords very limited scope to allow cross-questioning between parties.

Hearing livestream and recording

A link to a livestream for each hearing will be made available on the [project webpage](#) shortly before any hearing is due to open. The livestream is available to anybody who wishes to observe a hearing in real time.

All hearings are recorded, and the recordings will be made available on the [project webpage](#) as soon as practicable after the close of the hearing. The recordings allow any member of the public who is interested in the application and the Examination to find out what has been discussed.

Availability of Examination Documents

The application documents and Relevant Representations are available to view on the [project webpage](#).

All further documents submitted in the course of the Examination will also be published under the [Documents tab](#) of the project webpage.

The Examination Library

For ease of navigation, please refer to the [Examination Library](#) (EL) which is accessible by clicking the blue button under the Documents tab. The EL is updated regularly throughout the Examination.

The EL records and provides a hyperlink to:

- Each application document;
- each representation and submission made to the Examination; and
- each Procedural Decision made by the Examining Authority.

Each document is given a unique reference number which will be fixed for the duration of the Examination. **Please quote the unique reference number from the EL when referring to any Examination Documents in any future submissions that you make.**

Electronic deposit locations

Documents can be viewed electronically, free of charge, at the electronic deposit locations listed in the table below. Please note that you will need to bring a form of identification and register as a member in order to use a computer at Pinchbeck Community Hub and Library.

The opening hours and availability of information technology set out in the table below may be subject to changes. Please check the current circumstances with the relevant locations before you attend.

Local authority	Venue/address	Opening hours	Printing Costs
Boston Library	County Hall Boston Lincolnshire PE21 6DY	Monday - Wednesday: 09:00 – 17:00 Thursday: 09:00 – 18:00 Friday: 09:00 – 17:00 Saturday: 09:00 – 16:00 Sunday: Closed	A4 BW COST 10p A4 COL 25p A3 BW COST 20p A3 COL COST 50p

Local authority	Venue/address	Opening hours	Printing Costs
Pinchbeck Community Hub and Library	48 Knight Street Pinchbeck Lincolnshire PE11 3RU	Monday: Closed Tuesday: 10:00 – 13:00 Wednesday: 10:00 – 13:00 and 14:00 – 16:00 Thursday: 10:00 – 13:00 Friday: Closed Saturday: 10:00 – 12:00 on first Saturday of every month Sunday: Closed	A4 BW COST 10p A4 COL COST 25p A3 BW COST 20p A3 COL COST 50p
Skegness Library	23 Roman Bank Skegness Lincolnshire PE25 2SA	Monday – Wednesday: 09:00 – 17:00 Thursday: 09:00 – 18:00 Friday: 09:00 – 17:00 Saturday: 09:00 – 13:00 Sunday: Closed	A4 BW COST 10p A4 COL COST 25p A3 BW COST 20p A3 COL COST 50p

Information about the Make a submission tab

The [Make a submission tab](#) is available on the [project webpage](#).

You will need to enter your unique reference number ('Your ref' found at the top your postcard or email from the Planning Inspectorate) beginning either 2002 or ODOW. If you are making a submission on behalf of another person or organisation, and do not have your own unique reference number, then you should enter the unique reference number of the person or organisation you are representing. If you are not a registered Interested Party then it is at the discretion of the Examining Authority whether or not your submission is accepted.

Submissions will be published on the [project webpage](#) as soon as practicable following the close of the relevant Deadline. For further information about publishing submissions please view our [Privacy Notice](#).

You will be able to submit a document (upload file), make a text representation or both. It is possible to upload multiple files for each individual submission item. Electronic attachments should be clearly labelled with the subject title and not exceed 50MB.

Submissions **must not include hyperlinks** to documents/evidence hosted on a third party website eg technical reports, media articles etc. See the Planning Inspectorate's [Advice Note 8.4: The Examination](#) for further information about making written submissions. All submissions must be made in a format that can be viewed in full on the National Infrastructure Planning website. Any submissions that exceed 1500 words should also be accompanied by a summary; this summary should not exceed 10% of the original text.

You should select the relevant Deadline for your submission and then, on the next webpage, select the appropriate Submission item as described in the Examination Timetable at **Annex A** to this letter. Please ensure you make a separate submission for each Submission item and **do not duplicate your submission**. If you consider that your submission does not fit the description of any of the Submission items then please select the Submission item 'Other' and ensure that it is titled appropriately.

If you experience any issues when using the [Make a submission tab](#) please contact the Case Team using the contact details at the top of this letter and they will assist.