



Meeting note

Project name	Morgan Offshore Wind Farm Generation Assets
File reference	EN010136
Status	Final
Author	The Planning Inspectorate
Date	24 July 2023
Meeting with	bp/EnBW
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.

Project Updates

The Applicant confirmed that there has been a reduction in the proposed array area from the red line boundary presented in the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR). The Applicant also confirmed that the reduced array area will sit wholly within the array area assessed in the PEIR.

The Applicant confirmed that the reduction in the red line boundary and changes to the layout relate to the following:

- spacing arrangements;
- orientation of wind turbine rows;
- search and rescue requirements; and
- reduction of impacts to other sea users.

Projects and workshops with stakeholders are taking place in late July, September and October 2023.

The Applicant confirmed that the submission of the DCO application to the Inspectorate is planned for Quarter 2 2024.

The Inspectorate asked the Applicant about how the submission date sits with the Mona and Morecambe projects, and the Applicant responded that the aim is for submissions to be staggered.

Updates on surveys and assessments

The Applicant confirmed that bird and marine mammal aerial surveys were completed in March 2023. Additionally, a Benthic Survey for array zone of influence characterisation as well as a Vessel Traffic Survey was completed in 2023. The Vessel Traffic Survey for the Morgan and Morecambe Transmission Assets project is planned for August 2023.

The Applicant confirmed that Metocean and FLiDAR surveys are ongoing until March 2024. Additionally, deep Geotechnical Surveys of the array area (and the supporting Geophysical Survey) and the Suction Bucket tests at locations in the array area are planned to be completed this year.

Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder engagement for the Morgan Generation Assets includes the following:

- four meetings held to date for the Steering Group;
- four meetings held to date for Benthic Ecology, Fish and Shellfish and Physical Processes Expert Working Groups (EWG);
- five meetings held to date for the Marine Mammals EWG; and
- five meetings held to date for the Offshore Ornithology EWG.

The next round of meetings are to be held in October 2023.

The Maritime and Navigation Engagement Forum has engaged in four meetings held to date, and the next meeting is likely to be held in September 2023. Third party asset owner engagement is underway in relation to proximity and crossing agreements.

The Applicant confirmed that there will be an updated newsletter published in Autumn 2023, prior to the Morgan and Morecambe Offshore Wind Farms Transmission Assets PEIR, which will include key project updates:

The Inspectorate asked how discussions with Natural England (NE) have been progressing. The Applicant explained NE have been fully engaging in the Evidence Plan Process, regular bi-lateral meetings with the Project and provided a s42 response to the PEIR. The Applicant stated the Evidence Plan Process was enabling agreement with stakeholders, including NE, on the approach to EIA and Habitats Regulations Assessment.

The Applicant explained that Statutory Consultation lasted from 19 April to 04 June 2023, and occurred at the same time as the Non-Statutory Consultation for the Morgan and Morecambe Offshore Wind Farms Transmission Assets project and the Statutory Consultation for Mona Offshore Wind Farm. Consultation invitation postcards were sent to around 100,000 addresses across north-west England, north Wales and the Isle of Man. Posters were displayed at prominent locations across the project area, and there were two joint press releases for all projects. The advertising campaign spanned digital and audio means, including the use of Spotify. There were also twelve in-person consultation events and one online webinar. The Inspectorate advised that it would be useful to record how many people attended consultation events in person and virtually in the Consultation Report.

High-level PEIR Statutory Consultation feedback

The Applicant provided an overview of the PEIR assessment conclusions, proposed mitigation measures and consultation feedback received. Key themes raised included the following:

- Shipping and navigation;
- Marine mammals;
- Offshore ornithology;
- Commercial fisheries;
- Aviation and radar; and
- Cumulative Effects Assessment.

The Applicant described draft proposed measures to reduce these potential impacts. Requirements for mitigation are currently being discussed via the Evidence Plan Process and direct engagement with other relevant consultees. The Inspectorate enquired whether any mitigation/ management plans would be submitted in draft or outline with the application. The Applicant could not confirm this at the moment.

The Applicant advised that Natural England are undertaking a project looking at cumulative and in-combination ornithology data from Round 1 and 2 offshore wind farm projects, however this is unlikely to be complete in time for the Applicant to take into account for this project.

The Inspectorate queried whether any European Economic Area States had been contacted as part of the Applicant's consultation. The Applicant confirmed that Irish and Belgian fisheries had been engaged as part of the consultation.

Post-PEIR next steps and AOB

The Applicant confirmed that there will be continued engagement with stakeholders prior to submission, including as part of the Evidence Plan Process, with Steering Group and EWG meetings in October 2023 and engagement with shipping and navigation stakeholders, aviation and radar stakeholders and third-party asset owners.

In the lookahead to the Examination, the Applicant requested advice on hearing venues and blended hearing requirements. The Inspectorate advised the Applicant to consider appropriate venues, based on any they may have used for their consultation events.

The Applicant advised they would stagger future meetings for all the offshore wind farm projects in the area.