

Meeting note

Project name	Dogger Bank D Wind Farm
File reference	EN010144
Status	Final
Author	The Planning Inspectorate
Date	01 December 2022
Meeting with	Gatoben Developments 2 Limited
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.

The Inspectorate explained that the publication of the meeting note could be delayed up to six months, or until a formal scoping request had been submitted (if requested by an Applicant for commercial reasons).

Programme Update

The Applicant outlined its project programme to the Inspectorate in the short and medium future.

The Applicant indicated that the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping Report was due to be submitted at the end of March 2023. The Applicant stated that some of the offshore ecological surveys commenced in October 2021 (birds and marine mammals), and the geophysical survey had been completed. Further survey work including Phase 1 Habitat Surveys will take place in 2023.

The Applicant indicated that work on the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) would start in Q2 2023.

The Applicant stated that it intended to submit its application early in Q1 2025.

Draft scoping boundary

The Applicant presented a high-level plan showing the proposed project boundary, subject to refinement, which would likely form the basis of the EIA scoping request.

The Applicant highlighted the novel nature of the hydrogen element of the scheme and the issues with the site selection due to technical and commercial uncertainties at this stage.

The Inspectorate advised that any further refinements which can be made around about the design and layout of the Proposed Development prior to submission of the scoping request would improve the ability of the Inspectorate and consultation bodies to provide detailed comments in the Scoping Opinion. Should a high level of uncertainty remain around key design elements of the Proposed Development, this is likely to limit the Inspectorate's ability to agree to scope out aspects/ matters to enable the refinement of the Environmental Statement.

Site selection

The Applicant confirmed that detailed site selection for the potential hydrogen facility was underway. The Applicant stated that the preferred options were identified in relation to export cable routes, landfalls, onshore routes.

The Applicant confirmed that discussions had started with Natural England, in particular with regard to seabird data and potential impacts from the Proposed Development on the Dogger Bank Special Area of Conservation.

National Grid update

The Applicant stated that the project's grid connection was subject to the Holistic Network Design Review as part of the Offshore Transmission Network Review. The Applicant explained that although it was yet to receive specific grid coordinates for the Lincolnshire Connection Node, discussions were underway with National Grid to assess the connection possibilities to the Node.

Consultation

The Applicant stated that more consultations were due to be undertaken with statutory consultees (Environment Agency, Local Authorities, etc) in the coming weeks. The Inspectorate enquired about the timing of the non-statutory consultations given the timetable for submission of the Scoping Report (end of March 2023). The Inspectorate recommends that any non-statutory consultation avoids any overlap with the Inspectorate's statutory scoping consultation process. The Applicant responded that discussion with local communities and councils were due to commence and emphasised that the project wasn't a typical onshore grid connection, but a novel project on a significant scale.

The Applicant confirmed that it was going to engage with the Health & Safety Executive as a priority as soon as it had more details to share.

Design

The Inspectorate advised the Applicant to look at the design aspects of the project as set out in the [National Infrastructure Commission's design principles](#).

The Applicant emphasised that the scaling up of green hydrogen projects will come with various challenges as well as opportunities for innovation.

Planning Act 2008

The Applicant confirmed that it was seeking a Section 35 direction (Planning Act 2008) from the Secretary of State in relation to the manufacture of green hydrogen. The Inspectorate drew the Applicant's attention to two hydrogen-related NSIPs, the Keuper Gas Storage non-material change and the Hynet North West Hydrogen Pipeline applications. The Applicant confirmed that the offshore windfarm, and the green hydrogen development would be considered under one Development Consent Order (DCO).

Administrative process and next steps

The Inspectorate requested that the GIS shapefile should be submitted about two weeks before the Scoping Report. The specifications for the shapefile are set out in the Inspectorate's [Advice Note 7](#). A file sharing website (e.g WeTransfer) can be used to submit the scoping request documents.

The Inspectorate and the Applicant agreed to have the next project update meeting at the end of February 2023.