



# Triton Knoll Offshore Wind Farm Limited Triton Knoll Electrical System



**Appendix 2: Written  
Representation Response to  
Bicker Parish Council**

**Date: October 2015**

**Appendix 2 of the Applicant's  
Response to Deadline 2**

Triton Knoll Offshore Wind Farm Limited

## Triton Knoll Electrical System

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to Bicker Parish Council

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Deadline 2

Date: October 2015

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

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<b>1. Bicker Parish Council</b>	<b>4</b>
Cumulative impacts	4
Visual impacts	5
Environmental impacts	6
Loss of agricultural land	6
Impacts on human health	8
Impacts on agricultural businesses	8
Traffic impacts	9
Adequacy of consultation	11
Choice of interface for connection point	12
Increased flood risk	13

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## 1. Bicker Parish Council

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1.1 Bicker Parish Council submitted a Written Representation for Deadline 1 (5th October 2015). The Representation raised a number of specific issues and concerns regarding potential impacts arising from the proposed development. The issues raised relate to the following:

1. Cumulative impacts
2. Visual impacts
3. Environmental impact
4. Loss of agricultural land
5. Impacts on human health
6. Impacts on agricultural businesses
7. Traffic impacts
8. Adequacy of consultation
9. Choice of interface for connection point
10. Increased flood risk

1.2 The Applicant's response to the matters raised in each of the categories is below, and broadly follows the structure of the questions posed within the Representation.

### Cumulative impacts

1.3 The Applicant acknowledges the Parish Council's concerns regarding the possible cumulative effect of the proposed development with the Viking Link project and the Heckington Fen Wind Park project.

1.4 The *Planning Statement* (Document Reference 8.4) sets out how the proposed development is in accordance with relevant policies.

1.5 The Applicant's response to Question **EOn 1.1** of the ExA's First Written Questions highlights that, as stated in paragraph 1.61 of Volume 1, Annex 3.1 *Approach to Cumulative and Inter-relationships Impact Assessment for the Triton Knoll Electrical System* (document reference 6.2.1.3.1) of the ES, the Viking Link project has been

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classed as a Tier 3 project. To clarify, and as set out in paragraph 1.58 of Volume 1, Annex 3.1 of the ES, Tier 3 projects comprise those for which a developer has notified the relevant planning authority in writing that they intend to submit an application in the future. This includes projects where a scoping report may be available, but where data presented is limited and / or data confidence is low. In the case of the Viking Link, no information has been available to the Applicant to undertake a cumulative assessment or to update the assessment presented in the ES. This is a point of agreement between the Applicant and National Grid Viking Link Limited, as set out in paragraphs 3.7 and 3.8 of Appendix 22 of the Applicant's response to Deadline 1 and confirmed in the responses to the ExA's First Questions from National Grid Viking Link dated 08 October 2015.

- 1.6 In response to question **DCO 1.34** of the ExA's First Written Questions, the Applicant has provided clarification of the consideration that has been given to the cumulative impacts of the TKES and the Viking Link Interconnector Project.
- 1.7 The proposed Heckington Fen Wind Park Grid Connection project is listed as a Tier 2 project in Table 2-22 of Volume 3, Chapter 2 of the ES. The Heckington Fen Wind Farm itself is located outside the cumulative assessment study area (limited to within 3.0 km from the substation) and therefore is not considered within the cumulative assessment.

## Visual impacts

- 1.8 The Parish Council raises concerns about potential landscape and visual impacts arising from the proposed development.
- 1.9 The Applicant has assessed potential landscape and visual impacts arising from the proposed development in Volume 3, Chapter 2 *Landscape and Visual* of the ES (Document Reference 6.2.3.2). Paragraphs 2.769 – 2.771 of Volume 3, Chapter 2 of the ES assess the cumulative landscape and visual impacts at the substation, with the conclusion that:

*"...given the level of existing large-scale electrical infrastructure development within the immediate vicinity of the site (i.e. Bicker Fen wind turbines and lines of pylons) and the limited number of cumulative projects that have been identified, it is not considered that there will be adverse visual cumulative effects during either the construction or operational phases."*

- 1.10 The Applicant directs the ExA to the Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) with Boston Borough Council (BBC) (Appendix 27 of the Applicant's response to Deadline 1) which concludes in paragraphs 6.22 - 6.24 that:
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*“It is agreed that the predicted long term residual landscape and visual effects at the substation as set out Table 2-33 in Volume 3, Chapter 2 of the ES, are Neutral during the construction and decommissioning phase, which is Not significant.”*

*“It is agreed that the predicted long term residual landscape effects at the substation during the operation phase as defined in Table 2-33 in Volume 3, Chapter 2, of the ES are Not significant.”*

*“It is agreed that predicted long term residual visual effects at the substation during the operation phase as defined in Table 2-25 in Volume 3, Chapter 2 of the ES are Neutral, which is Not significant.”*

1.11 Paragraph 6.29 of the SoCG states;

*“It is agreed that given the generally low level of effect likely to be experienced by Landscape and Visual receptors when including embedded mitigation during the construction, operation and decommissioning of the project, no further specific applied mitigation or monitoring is required.”*

## **Environmental impacts**

1.12 The Parish Council raises concerns regarding environmental impacts, but has not specified what those impacts are (beyond the other environmental impacts outlined elsewhere within its Representation).

1.13 The Applicant notes the Parish Council's general concerns regarding environmental impacts, and directs it towards its comprehensive assessment of possible impacts within the ES, its engagement with statutory bodies responsible for environmental protection through the Evidence Plan process, and its consultation with local residents as detailed in its Consultation Report (document reference 5.1)

## **Loss of agricultural land**

1.14 The Parish Council raises concerns regarding a loss of agricultural land. It has also separately itemised concerns about the impacts of the loss of agricultural land on agricultural businesses, both in isolation and in combination with other projects such as the Viking Link project and the Heckington Fen Wind Park project.

1.15 The ES generally, including Volume 3, Chapter 5, *Land Use, Soils and Agriculture* of the ES (Document Reference 6.2.3.5) includes loss of agricultural land as part of the assessment. Paragraph 5.6 of Volume 3, Chapter 5 of the ES concludes that:

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*“Following the full reinstatement of areas impacted by construction activities, the effect on agricultural operations is assessed to be negligible.”*

- 1.16 Paragraphs 5.57-5.59 of Volume 3, Chapter 5, *Land use, Agriculture and Soils* of the ES (Document Reference 6.2.3.5) state:

*“Construction will involve the temporary stripping and storage of topsoil and subsoil to excavate trenches to the required width and depth to install cable circuits. Following completion of the works, the working width will be fully reinstated as near as practically possible to its former condition. Full reinstatement will allow normal farming practices to continue (i.e. crop growth, ploughing, machine loads).”*

- 1.17 The rights, and restrictions on activities, which are being sought for the cable corridor are proportionate and will not prevent the existing use of the land from continuing once the installation is complete. As paragraph 5.85 in Volume 3, Chapter 5, *Land Use, Soils and Agriculture* (Document Reference 6.2.3.5) explains:

*“There will be no permanent land take associated with the operational cable with the exception of the man-hole covers associated with the jointing bay link boxes and a raised area of land associated with the transition joint bays and permanent access track at the landfall.....”*

- 1.18 The Applicant is seeking to mitigate impacts on farm operations where reasonably practicable. For example, Table 5-7 in Volume 3, Chapter 5, *Land Use, Soils and Agriculture* (Document Reference 6.2.3.5) states:

*“Following the completion of all cable construction works, the land within the working width will be fully reinstated as near as practically possible to its former condition.*

*TKOWFL will discuss with affected parties and secure commercial terms with them including the loss of any ongoing payments or fines relating to agri-environmental stewardship schemes that may be affected by the permanent land restrictions or any cable maintenance or repair work.”*

- 1.19 The Applicant’s proposal to landowners for private treaty agreements contain a commitment to compensate for any damages or losses caused as a direct result of the use of the cable corridor.

- 1.20 In addition, socio-economic impacts of the proposed development are assessed in Volume 3, Chapter 3 *Socioeconomics, Tourism and Economics* of the ES (Document Reference 6.2.3.3).

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- 1.21 In light of these assessments the Parish Council should be reassured that there will not be a significant loss of agricultural land during the construction, operation, maintenance or decommissioning of the proposed development.

### **Impacts on human health**

- 1.22 The Parish Council raises a concern regarding the impacts on human health of the proposed cable circuits through electromagnetic radiation.
- 1.23 The Applicant has given consideration to the electromagnetic fields (EMFs) that may arise from the onshore power cables of the proposed development in paragraphs 1.109 – 1.113 of Volume 3, Chapter 1, *Onshore Project Description* of the ES (Document Reference 6.2.3.1).
- 1.24 Paragraph 1.113 in Volume 3, Chapter 1 of the ES states that *“Potential electromagnetic fields from the onshore electrical circuits will comply with the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) recommended exposure limits for the public, or those outlined by the appropriate EU directive as in effect at the time”*.
- 1.25 In addition, the Applicant has submitted a clarification note (Appendix 10 of the Applicant’s response to Deadline 1) providing further detail on how EMFs and health impacts in general have been assessed within the Application. Furthermore, Appendix 24 of the Applicant’s Response to Deadline 1 includes a letter from Public Health England confirming that *“the documentation confirms that the EMF levels will comply with the recommended exposure guidelines. Public Health England (PHE) is now able to confirm that we have no further concerns regarding this aspect of the application.”*
- 1.26 The Parish Council should therefore be reassured that any possible impacts on human health have been appropriately assessed within the Applicant’s application documents.

### **Impacts on agricultural businesses**

- 1.27 Separate to its concern addressed above concerning the loss of agricultural land, the Parish Council also raises concerns about the impacts of the loss of agricultural land on agricultural businesses, both in isolation and in combination with other projects such as the Viking Link project, and the Heckington Fen Wind Park project.
- 1.28 In addition to what has been set out above in respect of the loss of agricultural land, the Applicant is seeking to mitigate other impacts on farm operations where reasonably practicable. For example, as the following application documents explain:
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- 1.29 Paragraph 1.108 in Volume 3, Chapter 1, *Onshore Project Description* of the ES (Document reference 6.2.3.1) states:

*“When fencing the route, allowances will be made for private land access, stock crossing and relevant ecological constraints. “*

- 1.30 Table 5-7 in Volume 3, Chapter 5, *Land Use, Soils and Agriculture* of the ES (Document Reference 6.2.3.5) states:

*“Where required, crossing points will be used in suitable places in order that livestock and vehicles can cross the working width.”*

*Following the completion of all cable construction works, the land within the working width will be fully reinstated as near as practically possible to its former condition.*

*TKOWFL will discuss with affected parties and secure commercial terms with them including the loss of any ongoing payments or fines relating to agri-environmental stewardship schemes that may be affected by the permanent land restrictions or any cable maintenance or repair work.”*

- 1.31 The commercial agreements that the Applicant is currently negotiating with landowners also contain a commitment to compensate for any damages or losses caused as a direct result of the use of the cable corridor.
- 1.32 The Applicant will continue to liaise with landowners as the detailed design evolves so as to seek to accommodate site specific arrangements where reasonably practicable.
- 1.33 The Applicant would wish to clarify that it has no ability to influence or control any other project but will seek to minimise the impacts from the proposed development. However, any possible impacts from the proposed development in combination with either the Viking Link project or the Heckington Fen Wind Park project (or both) have been appropriately assessed within the relevant ES technical chapter.

## **Traffic impacts**

- 1.34 The Parish Council’s Representation raises concerns about the use of the proposed site access route parallel to South Forty Foot Drain, and the suitability of Cowbridge Road for construction traffic.
- 1.35 The Applicant acknowledges the concerns that are raised concerning possible impacts of the proposed development on the local road infrastructure. It has undertaken a full assessment of the potential impacts of the proposed development on traffic and access. The Applicant directs the ExA to Table 2 of Appendix 1 of the Applicant’s

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Response to Deadline 1 which states that the potential impacts on traffic and access have been assessed in Volume 3, Chapter 9 *Traffic and Access* of the ES (document reference 6.2.3.9). The assessment presented therein concludes at paragraph 9.189 that *“there are no significant adverse effects associated with the construction, operation or decommissioning phases of the proposed development.”*

1.36 The Applicant recognises that the management of construction traffic is important and has included a specific requirement in the draft DCO (document reference 3.1) dealing with this. Requirement 18 secures a construction Traffic Management Plan (TMP) and a Contractor Travel Plan that must be agreed with the appropriate local planning authority (LPA) (ELDC or BBC) and adhered to during construction. The Applicant submitted an Outline TMP with the application (document reference 8.9) that includes matters such as the routing of construction vehicles, pre- and post-construction route surveys, road crossings, management of abnormal loads and pedestrian management. The implementation of the TMP will ensure that construction traffic is properly regulated and controlled by the relevant planning authority.

1.37 The Applicant can confirm that the requirement of construction traffic to use the permanent new access road (the route parallel to South Forty Foot Drain) will be stipulated in, and controlled through, the final TMP. That TMP will also specify that HGV traffic must not use Cowbridge Road.

1.38 Both BBC and ELDC have agreed with the conclusions of the assessment set out within the ES and the appropriateness of the mitigation secured in the draft DCO (see the SoCGs with BBC) (Appendix 27 of the Applicant’s response to Deadline 1) and with ELDC (Appendix 28 of the Applicant’s response to Deadline 1) which conclude in paragraphs 10.9 and 10.8 respectively that;

*“With respect to mitigation measures it is agreed that in accordance with paragraph 9.189 of Volume 3 Chapter 9 of the ES, given there are no significant adverse effects predicted on traffic and access as a result of the construction, operation and decommissioning of the project, no further specific mitigation is required beyond that which is already embedded into the project design and secured through the management plans that will be secured under the DCO”*

1.39 The Applicant would also direct the ExA to paragraph 5.5 of the Local Impact Report (LIR) from BBC which states:

*“The Council believes that the roads in the Bicker area, west of the village are unsuitable and incapable of accommodating the volumes of traffic expected by the TKES project. Thus the highway network is unsuitable to take traffic associated with any other major infrastructure connection projects. The provision of the permanent*

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*access road from Swineshead Bridge as part of the proposals removed all Council objections or concerns to the highway impact of the TKES project.”*

1.40 Accordingly, the Parish Council should be reassured that its concerns about road use have been addressed within the Applicant’s mitigation measures.

### **Adequacy of consultation**

1.41 The Applicant is disappointed to see that the Representation has chosen to ignore the extensive consultation which the Applicant has undertaken for the proposed development and has instead made an assertion that engagement has not been adequate, which the Applicant refutes. No further details are provided within the Representation, which makes it difficult for the Applicant to address any specific concerns that the Parish Council might have.

1.42 The Applicant would direct the ExA to the *Consultation Report* (document reference 5.1), which details the extensive non-statutory and statutory consultations undertaken with landowners and other stakeholders and the changes made to the proposed development as a result of those consultations. Attention is drawn to:

- Section 2, *Non Statutory Consultation commencing prior to s42/s47 consultation*, which includes:
  - *The Alternatives Consultation*, a consultation on shortlisted sites for the above ground infrastructure and associated cable corridors, which included 7 public exhibitions attended by 888 visitors;
  - *2014 public, landowner and Parish Council consultations*, which included an *Onshore cable route consultation* that was an iterative process of onshore cable route alignment; and *Landowner Consultations* which describes the process of information sharing with landowners, including 2 landowner-specific exhibitions.
- Section 5, *Community Consultation under section 47*, including six public exhibitions attended by 293 people;
- Section 7, *Land Interest Consultation (including consultation under s42)*, which explains the consultation carried out under the provisions of the Planning Act 2008, including six rounds of land interest consultation.

1.43 The Applicant has undertaken a robust consultation on the proposed development in line with the statutory requirements under the Planning Act 2008 and has made some

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significant amendments to the scheme following statutory and non-statutory consultation.

- 1.44 The Applicant notes the Parish Council's assertion that it has received no consultation from National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET). It is assumed this is in relation to the Viking Link project, which the Applicant notes is a separate project that is not the subject of this application.

### **Choice of interface for connection point**

- 1.45 The Parish Council objects to the proposed development on the basis of "Suitable connections / capacity available near Grimsby". The Applicant recognises that the route chosen and the choice of the interface point into the national grid through connection at the Bicker Fen substation, is of great importance to the Parish Council.
- 1.46 The Applicant has described the site selection process in Volume 1, Chapter 4 *Site Selection and Alternatives* of the ES (Document Reference 6.2.1.4). Further detail is provided in the *Site Selection and Design Report* (document reference 8.17). The Applicant is confident that the concerns raised in the Written Representation with regards to site selection and cable routing are addressed by the Application documents referred to.
- 1.47 The Applicant directs the ExA to its response to Question **Alt 1.1** of the ExA's first written questions which explains that National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET), as holder of a Transmission Licence (under the Electricity Act 1989) and the Applicant in planning the offshore transmission network have, amongst other things, two key obligations:
- a) Section 9 of the Electricity Act requires all licence holders to ensure that the design of all elements of the transmission network is economic and efficient as set out in paragraph 2.1.3 of Document Reference 8.18, *Interface Selection Assessment Report*.
  - b) Schedule 9 of the Electricity Act requires all licence holders to ensure that the natural environment is protected as set out in paragraph 2.1.12 of Document Reference 8.18, *Interface Selection Assessment Report*.
- 1.48 NGET considered the Transmission network reinforcement requirements for each of the existing National Grid substation (Interface Connection Point) options and then worked with the Applicant to undertake an economic and environmental appraisal of the relative merits of these options, including the likely offshore transmission network requirements. This fed into the overall appraisal, which also included engineering and environmental issues, and considered both the required reinforcements to NGET's

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network and the risks and effects relating to the Triton Knoll connection. That process led to the identification of Bicker Fen as the appropriate connection point for the proposed development.

- 1.49 The ExA is also referred to the draft Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) submitted by the Applicant at Deadline 1 with Boston Borough Council (BBC), East Lindsey District Council (ELDC) and Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) (Appendices 27, 28 and 30 (respectively) of the Applicant's response to Deadline 1) which indicate that those parties agreed that the interface point chosen is the best location for the connection of TKOWF to the wider national grid.
- 1.50 The Applicant has also provided clarification with regards to alternative connection points in its responses to Questions **Alt 1.1, 1.4, 1.5, 1.7** and **1.8** of the ExA's First Written Questions.
- 1.51 The Applicant is confident that the concerns raised in the Written Representation with regards to site selection and cable routing are addressed by the Application documents referred to.

### **Increased flood risk**

- 1.52 The Parish Council's representation asserts that there will be an acknowledged increase in flood risk through the closure of a number of pumps which service Forty Foot Drain. It is not clear whether that assertion is linked to the proposed development.
- 1.53 The Applicant directs the ExA to its responses in Table 4 of Appendix 1 of the Applicant's response to Deadline 1. Volume 5, Annex 7.3 *Flood Risk Assessment (FRA)* of the ES (document reference 6.2.5.7.3) has assessed the potential flood risks arising from the proposed development.
- 1.54 Table 7-10 of Volume 3, Chapter 7 *Hydrology and Flood Risk* of the ES (document reference 6.2.3.7) provides detail of the mitigation measures that have been embedded into the project design in order to minimise potential hydrology and flood risk impacts.
- 1.55 Requirement 10 of the draft DCO (document reference 3.1) requires a surface water drainage scheme to be submitted and approved by the lead local flood authority, the drainage boards and the relevant planning authority. The FRA includes a surface water drainage strategy which outlines the principles which the final scheme shall be in accordance with. The surface water drainage scheme will minimise risk of flooding.
- 1.56 The Parish Council should therefore be reassured that any possible impacts of the proposed development on flood risk have been addressed appropriately.