



Meeting note

Project name	Nautilus Interconnector
File reference	EN020023
Status	Draft
Author	The Planning Inspectorate
Date	25 August 2021
Meeting with	National Grid Ventures
Venue	Microsoft Teams
Meeting objectives	Project Update Meeting
Circulation	All attendees

Summary of key points discussed and advice given

The Planning Inspectorate (the Inspectorate) advised that a note of the meeting would be taken and published on its website in accordance with section 51 of the Planning Act 2008 (the PA2008). Any advice given under section 51 would not constitute legal advice upon which applicants (or others) could rely.

Project Update

The Applicant provided a short presentation outlining recent project progress.

The Applicant advised that regular engagement is ongoing with both East Suffolk Council (ESC) and Suffolk County Council (SCC). Breeding Bird Surveys remain ongoing and are due to conclude at the end of August 2021. These remain non-intrusive and from public rights of way.

The Applicant has submitted the Nautilus project to the Electricity System Operator (ESO) Pathfinder process. Engagement with BEIS remains ongoing regarding the Offshore Transmission Network Review (OTNR) process.

The Applicant informed the Inspectorate that as the project has been reclassified as a multi-purpose interconnector (MPI) an amendment would need to be made to the section 35 direction (S35) from the Secretary of State as the direction given relates to a point to point interconnector at present. The Applicant was aware that this would need to be done prior to scoping. The Inspectorate stated that they wished to be kept up to date with any revisions that occur with the S35 direction.

The Applicant continues to engage with other promoters within the locality including Scottish Power Renewables East Anglia One North and East Anglia Two Examinations, EDF's Sizewell C Examination, National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET) South East Anglia Link and NGET Bramford to Twinstead network reinforcement projects.

Non Statutory Consultation

The first round of non-statutory consultation will run for 6 weeks from 14 September - 26 October 2021. The consultation will be run as a Hybrid Event made up of 4 face to face events, 2 community webinars and a virtual exhibition.

The Applicant anticipates that the content of the consultation will focus upon two strands including updates on work in the terrestrial environment and initial details on the marine requirements for MPI. The Inspectorate were advised that the options presented assume a connection to the National Grid Substation at Friston as promoted by the Scottish Power Renewables (SPR) applications. The Inspectorate reminded the Applicant that they should aim to be as upfront as possible with stakeholders in the consultation process to encourage effective engagement.

The Applicant discussed the proposed landfall options for the connector with the Inspectorate. The consultation will focus upon four possible landfall options and a fifth option will be included but clearly state that this option is the least preferred option from a technical perspective, as indicated through discussions with technical stakeholders. Work in the offshore environment remains ongoing over routing.

TEN-E Regulations

The Inspectorate advised that unless Project of Common Interest (PCI) status was given Applicant further advised that although the project had received PCI status prior to Brexit due to the new status of the project as an MPI the project has been removed from the PCI list. Discussions are ongoing to understand whether the project could instead be considered as a Project of Mutual Interest (PMI).

EIA Scoping

The Applicant discussed the need for flexibility within the EIA scoping process. The Inspectorate advised that offshore projects do already receive a certain amount of flexibility with the Rochdale Envelope. The Applicant was further advised that at the point of submission the application should aim to have the flexibility required as refined as possible. The Inspectorate requested that the Applicant send a list of possible examples of flexibility that will be required for the project. The Inspectorate noted that digital EIA is being trialled for projects and this is something that the Inspectorate is seeking to further develop.

Anticipated Submission Date

The Applicant anticipates submission of the application in Q2 2023.

Specific decisions/ follow-up required?

The following actions were agreed:

- The Applicant to send the Inspectorate the presentation slides used.
- The Applicant to send through details of their contact within BEIS.
- The Applicant to create a note of possible examples of flexibility that will be required.
- The Applicant to keep the Inspectorate included in communication regarding the S35 direction.
- The Inspectorate to send through possible meeting dates for early November