



Meeting note

Project name	Hornsea Project Four Offshore Wind Farm
File reference	EN010098
Status	Final
Author	The Planning Inspectorate
Date	16/03/2020
Meeting with	Ørsted, East Riding of Yorkshire Council, Natural England, Historic England, the Marine Management Organisation, GoBe Consultants, RHDHV
Venue	Teleconference - Temple Quay House, Bristol and York
Meeting objectives	Steering Group fifth meeting
Circulation	All attendees

Summary of key points discussed and advice given

Introductions were made for those who had not met previously. The Inspectorate ensured those present understood that a summary note of the meeting would be published on the National Infrastructure Planning website.

A review of the actions from the previous meeting was held. The developer has been giving consideration to providing formal responses to Section 42 comments from stakeholders. It noted that the Hornsea Four programme had been extended since the previous Steering Group meeting and the developer is now in the process of providing stakeholders with detail on how their comments will be addressed at application. Natural England expressed a desire to capture matters as far as possible within a Statement of Common Ground prior to application. Natural England welcomed that survey data gaps had been filled following PEIR and that a more refined DCO application can be expected.

The developer listed the draft ES documents which have been issued to relevant Evidence Plan Technical Panels and those to follow in the coming weeks. A discussion was held on the timescales for stakeholder input.

The developer gave an overview of the work being undertaken to address shipping and navigation issues, which may affect the final array layout, however stated that the DCO application would assess the worst-case scenario. The Planning Inspectorate noted the potential for the final array layout to differ from the layout assessed at the point of application, and asked the developer about the potential for a change request to be made. Agreement was reached to discuss this matter at the next project update meeting.

The developer provided an update on the progress with seabed ground investigations and gave an overview of the timetabled investigations for 2020. They clarified that this survey work would feed into the detailed design of the proposals, and are not required to support the DCO application. Historic England highlighted the importance of consultation post-application to agree the objectives of these surveys and to ensure compliance with any agreed Written Scheme of Investigation.

The developer gave an update on a targeted round of consultation following changes to the onshore cable route. They also provided information on the design of the onshore substation and the principles adopted, including an update to the project Design Vision Statement to take account of recent National Infrastructure Commission guidance. It clarified that a distinction would be made in the EIA between mitigation and enhancement in terms of landscape and visual effects and other relevant effects assessed.

An updated Impacts Register and Commitments Register are being produced and will be issued to stakeholders when complete as it is intended that these will inform any Statements of Common Ground.

Updates to the draft DCO and deemed Marine Licences have been made following Section 42 consultation. The next steps for the project will be a review of the draft ES documents.

The Planning Inspectorate raised the matter of assessment under the Habitats Regulations, in particular in-combination effects on internationally designated nature conservation sites, and asked the developer to provide an update on the progress of the information to be provided with the application. The developer provided a brief overview of their expected position at the time of application regarding conclusions, however highlighted that work was still in progress. The Planning Inspectorate advised that developers should seek to reach a firm position and clearly present the level of agreement with relevant stakeholders at application. Developers should minimise the risk of it becoming necessary to submit large amounts of information which is new to stakeholders, for example relating to revised conclusions on adverse effects on integrity, during examination.