

Planning Act 2008 – Section 91

Application by RWE Renewables UK Dogger Bank South (West) Ltd and RWE Renewables UK Dogger Bank South (East) Ltd for an Order Granting Development Consent for the Dogger Bank South Offshore Wind Farms

Agenda for Issue Specific Hearing 5 (ISH5) dealing with matters relating to offshore coastal processes, marine ecology and the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

Hearing	Date and Time	Location
Issue Specific Hearing 5 on offshore coastal processes, marine ecology and the HRA	Thursday 10 April 2025 and, if required, Friday 11 April 2025 Both hearings start at 9:30am¹ Virtual registration process from 9.15am ²	By virtual means using Microsoft Teams or via Telephone. Full instructions on how to join online or by telephone will be provided in advance to those who have pre-registered to speak at the event.

Hearings Guidance: Please see Annex A of this Agenda

Interested parties who wish to speak at this event were required to provide notification by Friday 28 March. If you have not notified us that you wish to speak can you please contact the case team (doggerbanksouth@planninginspectorate.gov.uk) as soon as possible.

If you wish to observe the hearing, then you do not need to register. A link to the livestream will be made available on the [project page of the national infrastructure website](#) closer to the event.

Each interested party is entitled to make oral representations at hearings. However, this is subject to the power of the Examining Authority (ExA) to control the conduct and management of hearings.

¹ If you are joining as an active participant, please follow the joining instructions for the virtual event carefully and connect to the Hearing in good time. In common with traditional hearings, the event will start on time irrespective of late arrivals, for whom access might not be possible.

² Full instructions on how to join online or by telephone will be provided in advance of the meeting to those who have registered to speak.

The virtual event will be open 15 minutes prior to the start of the hearing to enable a prompt start. Hearings will finish as soon as the ExA deems that all those present have had their say and that all matters have been covered.

The agenda is for guidance only. It is not designed to be exclusive or exhaustive. The ExA may add other issues for consideration, may alter the order in which issues are considered and will seek to allocate sufficient time to each issue to allow proper consideration of them. Any lack of discussion of a particular issue at a hearing does not preclude further examination of this issue, including the asking of further written questions.

Every effort will be made to ensure that the issues will be discussed on the day that they are scheduled for. Should the consideration of these issues take less time than anticipated, the ExA may conclude the hearing as soon as all relevant contributions have been made and all questions asked and responded to.

If there are additional matters to be dealt with or there are submissions that take a considerable amount of time, there may be a need to continue the session for longer on the day or pick these matters up on Friday morning. Alternatively, it may be necessary to prioritise matters and defer others to further written questions.

Purpose of hearing on offshore coastal processes, marine ecology and the HRA

The main purpose of this hearing is to examine environmental issues relating to marine and coastal ecology, including populations of seabirds, fish, shellfish and marine mammals in and around the area that would be affected by the proposed development. Potential impacts of the proposed development on marine and coastal processes and benthic ecology will also be explored, including implications for the HRA.

Agenda

Title of meeting	Dogger Bank South Offshore Wind Farms Issue Specific Hearing 5 on offshore coastal processes, marine ecology and the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)
Date	10 April 2025 and, if required, 11 April 2025
Time	9.30am
Venue	Virtual event
Attendees	Invitees

1. **Welcome, introductions, arrangements for the hearing**
2. **Offshore ornithology Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)**
 - 2.1 **Assessment methodology**
 - 2.1.1 Abundance estimates
 - 2.1.2 Number of birds at risk of displacement and mortality
 - 2.2 **Possibilities for further ornithological mitigation**
3. **Offshore ornithology HRA**
 - 3.1 **Flamborough and Filey Coast Special Protection Area (SPA)**
 - 3.1.1 Kittiwakes
 - Population viability analysis for kittiwakes
 - Kittiwake compensation quanta
 - Plans for kittiwake compensation
 - 3.1.2 Auks
 - Population viability analysis for auks
 - Auk compensation quanta
 - Plans for auk compensation
 - 3.2 **Farne Islands SPA – Report to Inform Appropriate Assessment (RIAA) conclusions**
 - 3.3 **Greater Wash SPA – potential impacts on red throated diver populations from changes to the location of the planned exit pits**
4. **Fish and shellfish ecology EIA**
 - 4.1 **Potential impacts on herring**

- 4.1.1 Worst-case location for the assessment of underwater noise impacts on herring
 - 4.1.2 Temporal restriction on all piling and unexploded ordnance (UXO) clearance activities during the Banks herring population spawning season
- 4.2 **Potential impacts on sandeel**
- 4.3 **Fish habitat loss**
- 5. **Marine and coastal processes and benthic ecology EIA**
 - 5.1 **Assessment methodology:** sensitivity assessment of Dogger Bank and Smithic Bank
 - 5.2 **Disposal of dredged material:** The requirement for sand wave levelling and the extent of proposed mitigation and monitoring
 - 5.3 **Potential impacts to seabed and coastal morphology from trenchless landfall works**
 - 5.4 **Baseline assessment of sediment transport pathways and seabed mobility and the proposed requirement for cable/ scour protection**
 - 5.5 **Potential changes to physical and biological processes following the placement of structures and cable/ scour protection on the seabed**
- 6. **Benthic ecology and coastal processes HRA**
 - 6.1 **Dogger Bank Special Area of Conservation (SAC)**
 - 6.1.1 Physical disturbance and compensation for habitat loss
 - 6.1.2 Plan level HRA conclusions versus project level RIAA conclusions
 - 6.1.3 Recovery times for habitats within the Dogger Bank SAC and scale of predicted impact
 - 6.2 **Humber Estuary SAC - RIAA conclusions**
- 7. **Marine mammals EIA**
 - 7.1 **Worst case piling scenario(s)**
 - 7.2 **Embedded mitigation**
 - 7.3 **The Outline Marine Mammal Mitigation Protocol (MMMP)**
 - 7.4 **UXO clearance**

- 7.5 Conclusions for harbour porpoise and grey seal**
- 7.6 Monitoring and adaptive management**
- 8. Marine mammals HRA**
 - 8.1 Interim Population Consequence of Disturbance (iPCoD) modelling**
 - 8.2 Southern North Sea SAC, Humber Estuary SAC and Berwickshire and North Northumberland Coast SAC - RIAA conclusions, use of Noise Abatement Systems and Site Integrity Plan (SIP)**
 - 8.3 Post consent monitoring**
- 9. Other HRA issues**
 - 9.1 Habitats Regulations Derogation: Provision of Evidence [\[APP-051\]](#)**
 - 9.2 Decommissioning within the Dogger Bank SAC**
- 10. Any Other Business**
- 11. Action points**
- 12. Close**

Attendees

All interested parties are welcome to attend the hearing. However, the ExA considers that representatives for the following parties should consider attending because the ExA believes that the material that they have submitted raises issues that may need to be explored at the hearing:

- The applicants
- Cefas
- The Environment Agency
- The Marine Management Organisation
- Natural England
- The RSPB
- The Wildlife Trusts

The applicants are requested to have people with the following expertise to assist the hearing:

- HRA
- Ornithology
- Marine mammals
- Underwater noise
- Fish and shellfish
- Benthic ecology
- Marine physical processes

This list may also assist interested parties in preparing for the hearing.

Conduct and Management of Hearings

The Planning Act 2008 and the Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 provide that the ExA that will probe, test and assess the evidence at hearings through direct questioning of persons making oral representations. Questioning at this hearing will therefore be led by the ExA. Cross questioning of the person giving evidence by another person will only be permitted if the ExA decides it is necessary to ensure representations are adequately tested or that a person has had a fair chance to put their case. Parties wishing to make a representation will be invited to do so at the ExA's discretion.

The ExA will begin the hearing with opening comments and introductions, then will run through housekeeping matters and explain how the hearing will be conducted. The ExA's expectation is that each hearing session will typically last for one to two hours. However, the actual duration will depend on the progress made on the day and will be subject to the ExA's powers of control over the conduct of the hearing.

The agenda may be amended by the ExA at the start of the hearing or throughout its course. Furthermore, the ExA may wish to raise matters arising from oral submissions, relevant representations and written representations, and pursue lines of inquiry that are not listed on the agenda in the course of the discussion.

The hearing is being held at the discretion of the ExA to discuss matters that it considers to be important and relevant to the effective and robust examination of the application. Consequently, the business of the hearing will be limited to the matters identified in the agenda or otherwise raised by the ExA.

Active participation is at the invitation and discretion of the ExA. Oral submissions must address the matters and questions identified on the hearing agenda or raised by the ExA at the hearing. Oral submissions on other subject matters or from persons who have not been invited to speak by the ExA may only be heard at the discretion of the ExA, who may decide that such matters are not heard in the interests of relevance, efficiency or fairness.

A recording and transcript of the hearing will be published by the Planning Inspectorate on the project page of the national infrastructure website³ and any interested party may make a written submission on the specific matters either included in the agenda or arising at the hearing by **Deadline 4, 25 April 2025**.

³ [Dogger Bank South Offshore Wind Farms - Project information](#)