



The Woodland Trust

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Temple Quay House
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Interested Party reference 20050168

13th June 2025

FAO Examining Authority

Dear Sir/Madam

Reference: EN010125

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

The Woodland Trust's response to the Examining Authority's Rule 17 request dated 9th June 2025 is provided in the table below.

Kind regards



Programme Officer - Woods Under Threat

ExQ2	Question to:	Question	Woodland Trust Response
R17.2	The Woodland Trust, Forestry Commission	<p>Ecology and nature conservation - Burton Bushes Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and ancient woodland</p> <p>Your responses to the Examining Authority's (ExA) second written questions (ExQ2), ENC.2.5 in [AS-180] and [AS-182] are noted. With specific regard to the concerns raised by Dr Mounce [REP4-100] in relation to Burton Bushes, could you confirm whether you consider there could likely be any effects from the proposed development on Burton Bushes ancient woodland, noting the location of this ancient woodland approximately 0.12km away from the proposed onshore export cable corridor?</p>	<p>We note that the concerns raised in [REP4-100] relate to both the statutory designation of Burton Bushes as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and its designation as ancient woodland. The Woodland Trust is not able to comment on impacts with respect to the SSSI designation and would defer to Natural England in this respect. With regards to indirect impacts on ancient woodland, such as dust, noise and light pollution, provided there is a suitable CEMP in place we would not have evidence to suggest indirect impacts could result in deterioration of Burton Bushes given the distances involved. With regards to the comments made in [REP4-100] in relation to hydrogeology, the Woodland Trust does not hold information on hydrological, geological and archaeological conditions local to Burton Bushes. Where these are identified as potential issues, the applicant should demonstrate that the works would not result in changes to surface or ground water flows that would impact the ancient woodland. We note in [REP4-100] that in relation to the potential for geological effects, at the Oral Hearing on 9th April 2025 the applicant confirmed that there were no potential pollutant linkages. We are unclear as to whether this statement is supported by evidence. We have been unable to find any hydrological or hydrogeological assessments within the applicant's supporting documentation.</p>
R17.33	The applicants, Woodland Trust, Forestry Commission	<p>Landscape and visual interest – Ancient woodland and veteran trees</p>	<p>We have not been contacted by the applicant to discuss these matters, and it has not been possible to liaise with the Forestry Commission given the tight timescale for responding to the Rule</p>

		<p>The Woodland Trust [AS-180] and Forestry Commission [AS-182] raised concerns regarding proposed mitigation for ancient woodland and veteran trees, notably regarding trenchless crossing techniques, appropriate buffer zone and hydrological impacts. Liaise directly with one-another to address these concerns and provide an update on the matter. If you are not able to reach agreement on these matters, set out clearly why and how these matters could be resolved through the draft DCO or supporting documents.</p>	<p>17 letter. In view of our comments in response to R17.2 we would suggest a condition in the DCO to require the relevant hydrogeological assessments to be undertaken prior to commencing trenching or horizontal drilling works in proximity to ancient woodland. Natural England may be able to advise further.</p> <p>With regards to impacts on ancient woodland in the vicinity of Bentley Moor Wood (grid ref: TA 0219 3665), the converter station zone, utility connection works, haul road and cable corridor are situated immediately adjacent to ancient woodland. Buffer zones are not shown on the plans. All works (including any landscaping or bunding) should be a minimum of 15 metres from ancient woodland, but elements of the work may need a greater buffer depending on the potential to give rise to significant impact (for example, from dust, noise or vibration). We would suggest a condition in the DCO to require an assessment of ancient woodland impacts and proposed mitigation, including buffer widths, to be provided and agreed prior to commencement of work in proximity to Bentley Moor Wood.</p>
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