



Rt. Hon. Secretary of State
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Date: 07 August 2026

SENT BY EMAIL ONLY

Dear Rt. Hon. Secretary of State

**Morgan and Morecambe Offshore Wind Farms Transmission Assets Development Consent Order
Response to SoS Consultation of 20 May 2026**

Fylde Borough Council [FBC] is a statutory consultee and main impacted party for the proposed Morgan and Morecambe Offshore Wind Farms Transmission Cables proposal.

This representation is provided by FBC for submission at the Secretary of State [SoS] deadline of 7 August 2026.

FBC has reviewed all documents published on and after 29 June 2026 including those published following the 22 July 2026 deadline, and provides relevant comments in the following sections of this statement.

Submissions made in this letter should not be regarded as representing the final representations of FBC on the matters with which they are concerned, and FBC expressly reserves its rights to make further representations and any other legal rights that it may have.

FBC is concerned that a substantial volume of material has been published leaving only nine days for the submission of representations. This material includes matters which FBC has previously made representations; materially significant issues; information which addresses contradictory information submitted at the previous deadline; and, information for which there is intense public interest. These matters are discussed in further detail later in this submission.

This submission is the work of the FBC officers and no part of it has been generated by AI.

[C2-092.2] Applicants' Response to the SoS (bird strike risk, bird surveys and ecological impacts)

FBC notes that this document refers to a number of matters where progress is said to have been in discussions with Natural England [NE], but where this did not align with the position as set out by NE. This included with respect to matters which must be attributed substantial weight during determination. These matters are discussed in further detail below, with references to the relevant documents.

Whilst NE have now set out in their 22 July submission [C3-005] that agreement has been reached with regards to AEol land, FBC is concerned that at this advanced stage, matters relating to significant issues are being addressed against very short timeframes, without sufficient time for proper consultation with all relevant parties.

For example, in Section 1.3.2.8 of the Applicants' Response to the SoS [C2-092.2], the Applicants propose an approach which had not been "*specifically discussed with Natural England*" and for which it the strongest indication that land would be available are "*initial discussions with the landowner's agent*" which are said to indicate that "*in principle*" the landowners would "*be interested*". Given the lack of assurance that the land would be available, FBC disagrees with the assertion by the Applicants in 1.3.2.9 that this approach can be regarded as robust or deliverable.

Similarly, Section 1.3.2.13 includes assumptions made by the Applicants about the suitability of proposals. This reflects that fact that insufficient work has been done to properly understand the likely impacts of the proposed approach. FBC considers that the position set out in 1.3.2.12, summarised in one sentence, should instead be set out in detailed work, subsequently subject to consultation. It is not appropriate or sufficient for the Applicants to make such assumptions, without evidenced justification for doing so.

FBC also raises significant concern that in Section 1.3.2.13 [C2-092.2] the Applicants reported that Natural England assertion that an AEol can be excluded is at odds with the Natural England submission [C2-025], which merely states on page 2 that "*it is likely that Natural England would be able to conclude that the loss of FLL would not result in an AEol*" and continues that "*Notwithstanding this provisional view (...) In summary, Natural England does not consider the proposed measures at Crossens Outer and Banks Marsh to be suitable mitigation or compensation.*" The Natural England response goes on to discuss matters relating to the scenario in which an AEol cannot be ruled out on page 4.

FBC is very concerned that despite the Applicants' reassurances set out in Section 1.3.2.1 about their engagement with Natural England, that even at this advanced stage, there were fundamental and significant deficiencies in the information being presented by the Applicants for the purposes of assessing the likely impacts and setting out suitable management and mitigation measures.

This AEol issue has consequences for a number of other submissions made by the Applicants at this most recent deadline.

In Section 1.3.2.13 [C2-092.2] and in setting out their position with respect to comments made by the Defence Infrastructure Organisation [DIO], the Applicants again base therein that NE have advised that an AEol can be excluded on the Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA and Ramsar Site.

Consequently, the Applicants direction for the SoS in Section 1.3.2.15 was factually incorrect, with the matter being of significant material weight. The Applicant seeks to protect their position in setting out in Section 1.3.2.16 that both the Ecological and Wildlife Hazard Management Plans are in outline, with details to be approved, asserting that this provides further assurance. However, where such a fundamental and significant difference exists, all related work cannot be relied upon.

FBC notes that these issues primarily relate to impacts on wildlife, habitat, employment and defence, and that a significant number of interested parties have made representations relating to these specific issues at these specific sites since consultations first began. This includes relevant statutory consultees, as well as local residents, politicians, interest groups and businesses.

The National Policy Statements provide advice specific to these types of impacts, with EN-1 5.5.41 and 5.5.60 being most pertinent. FBC maintains its position that given the ongoing points of disagreement between the Applicants and Natural England, BAE and DIO, specifically with reference to incomplete assessments and disagreement on points of principle, that there is insufficient information to balance any likely harm against the substantial weight to be given to these considerations in accordance with EN-1 5.4.55, and that it is not possible to conclude that there would be no risk to national security and physical safety in accordance with EN-1 5.5.60.

Whilst NE have now confirmed in their latest submission that AEoI can be ruled out, there are still issues for which there is no resolution. Additionally, FBC considers that there is not a full explanation as to why the position between NE and the Applicants has changed, and that this should be explained more fully.

For example, with regards to survey works, FBC notes that the Applicants states in Section 1.3.2.26 [C2-092.2] that agreement was made with NE, with reference to APP-095. Section 1.1.2 of APP-095 implies agreement with NE on 18 September 2023, with reference to APP-05. However, pages 39 to 48 clearly show points of disagreement from NE after this date, with all subsequent submissions by NE including recent submissions still raising points of disagreement.

Relatedly, it is not clear to FBC why the Applicants make a distinction in Section 1.3.2.33 between the birds being recorded on an access tracks to the proposed substation site, as opposed to within the substation footprints, given that Table 4.24 of [APP-090] and the associated methodology makes no such distinction (see [A-090] Sections 4.12.2.3 and 4.17.1.1).

It is concerning that the Applicants appear to be introducing this distinction to reduce the significance of the likely impact, when the ES has not been prepared or assessed on this basis.

Sections 1.3.2.41 and 1.3.2.49 [C2-092.2] repeated the assertion that NE had agreed that the loss of land would not represent an AEoI but as set out earlier in this response, that assertion was incorrect. For these same reasons, the update to the Alternative Ornithology Mitigation Note [C2-029.23] was flawed, as highlighted by the alleged justification set out in Section 1.1.1.2 of that report.

Whilst an agreed position on AEoI has been reached between the Applicants and NE, there are still issues in terms of matters relating to previous NE comments. Additionally, the approach by the Applicants appears to misrepresent previous submissions and does not provide full and reasoned explanations for all proposals. EN-1 5.4.17 requires applicants to clearly set out any effects on protected species and habitats, with EN-1 5.4.42 requiring development to be in line with the mitigation hierarchy. FBC considers that these requirements have not and cannot be satisfied, given the deficiencies in the ES and management plans in this regard, as evidence by the previous submissions made by NE.

FBC also requests that the Applicants confirm whether those parts of [C2-092.2] which relate to ecological matters have been prepared by their ecological consultant (RPS), another suitably qualified ecological consultant, or otherwise.

Consent scenario – Morgan elements not granted

FBC notes the continued submissions from the Applicants, as well as other interested parties, providing comments on the potential scenario in which the Morecambe elements of the proposals only are consented. This includes submissions from local residents and businesses. For example, [C2-018] and [C2-003] from landowners explain that in such circumstances that only Morecambe were to be consented, then their position may change, as it may be possible to better define the maximum envelope for development where it affects their land.

This relates to a wider point relating to the maximum design envelope and substation positioning. FBC maintains its position, most recently set out in Section 2.2 [REP7-046], that close or colocation of the substations is in no way necessary or inevitable, and therefore the basis of the site search and subsequent selection of a Green Belt location is flawed. More broadly, should one element not be consented then it is very likely that the likely harm arising from the Morecambe element could be reduced through consideration of a reduced overall design envelope.

The Applicants chose this approach, effectively bundling two separate schemes into one Application. This should have provided opportunities to reduce the overall likely harmful impacts but despite representations to this effect

from FBC, the Applicants have chosen not to progress any materially significant strategies, management plans or commitments which could deliver any such benefits through collaboration between both developers.

If it cannot be guaranteed ahead of determination that there is a reasonable prospect of both elements coming forward, with all associated necessary conditions relating to land rights being met, then FBC considers that one element should not be allowed to proceed with what would therefore be an unjustified and excessive maximum design envelope.

[C3-008.41] – Without Prejudice ES Addendum

FBC are concerned that this document reflects the fact that more detailed assessment is being inappropriately shortcut. There is a requirement to assess the likely impacts, not simply quantify harm against other more detailed assessment. For example, the comments relating to traffic and transport impacts and worst-case peak daily traffic numbers in Section 2.7.2.1 are not clearly explained or justified. It is not clear how this type of assessment can appropriately feed into the weighing of impacts and benefits, in a manner consistent with the guidance set out in Section 4 (Assessment Principles) of EN-1.

[C3-008.5] – Outline Ecological Management Plan

FBC relies upon the relevant statutory consultees to comment on the suitability of the amendments made at Section 1.5.3.40 which would remove the requirement for pre-construction surveys. FBC seeks reassurance that there were no other purposes of requiring such surveys, than those now removed by adoption of seasonal working practices.

FBC is concerned that the information relating to likely noise impacts and mitigation do not appear to outline a way to achieve suitable mitigation. The Applicants' own framework set out in Section 1.11.1.70 provides an example reduction over distance for a certain maximum sound. However, this maximum is exceeded by a number of sources in their own Construction Noise and Vibration chapter [REP6-065], with Appendix A including numerous sources which exceed this level. The same previous chapter sets out in Table 1.6 [REP6-065] that screening would have an indicative reduction in noise level of up to 10dB.

Whilst there are gaps in the assessment as provided by the Applicants, a simple reading of the data indicates that it will not be possible to achieve the 70dB acceptable noise level for all relevant areas at all times. FBC requests that further detail and analysis is presented, in order to make it possible to ascertain whether the likely harm can be appropriately mitigated.

[C2-029.21] Outline Landfall Construction Method Statement, [C2-029.14] Commitments Register

FBC is supportive of the amendment to CoT44 but requests that the Local Planning Authority are added as approving body alongside NE. This is consistent with earlier representations made by FBC on this matter, notably in Section 7.4.3 of [REP4-134] and Section 2.6 of [REP5-170], which includes confirmation of direct engagement with the Applicants on this specific matter.

FBC makes this request on the basis that it delivers specific monitoring and works within this area, particularly with regards to maintaining a sensitive habitat for sand lizards, these being protected in the UK under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981, a Priority Species under the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework and a European Protected Species under Annex IV of the European Habitats Directive.

FBC is supportive of the amendments to CoT128 and Section 1.8.

[C2-029.14] Commitments Register

FBC is supportive of the amendment to CoT44 but requests that the Local Planning Authority are added as approving body alongside NE. This is explained further under [C2-029.21] above.

FBC defers to NE with regards to the suitability of the amendments to CoT120 but requests that such amendments are not accepted without specific agreement from NE.

[C2029.8] Outline Code of Construction Practice

FBC is supportive of the amendments as they relate to CoTs 44, 120 and 128 but request that further amendments be made to CoT44 as explained further under [C2-029.21] above.

[C3-008.8] – Outline Wildlife Hazard Management Plan

FBC relies upon the relevant statutory consultees with regards to whether the assumptions summarised in Sections 1.3.4.4 and 2.1.1.3 are appropriate, specifically with regards to implications for the bird strike risk assessment.

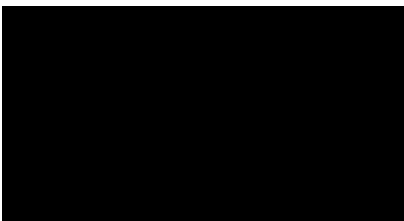
[C3-008.11] – Applicants' Response to SoS

In terms of work with landowners, FBC remains concerned at the slow rate progress made, including no progress being made with regards to the Morgan position. Throughout all stages of the examination and post-examination, submissions have been made raising concerns and complaints about the approach taken by the Applicants, including reports of attempts by residents to progress matters being ignored. For example, FBC requests that the Applicants or their land agents provide a clearly evidenced and justified written response to the query raised by a local resident in the latest submissions [C3-002] and other similar submissions.

[C3-006] – Crown Estate

FBC is reassured with the commitment presented by the Crown Estate in terms of transfer to any new party taking up the Morgan portion of the scheme but requests that more detail be presented in terms of what the additional assurances actually are. The position presented is high level and brief and it would be helpful to have a better understanding of likely impacts, given previous representations made on project uncertainties and timescales.

END OF COMMENTS



**Service Director for Planning and Building Control
Fylde Borough Council**