

## Planning and Highways Delegations Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held on 26 October 2022 at 10am  
in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Norwich

### Voting Members Present:

Cllr Martin Wilby (Chair)	Cabinet Member for Highways and Infrastructure
Cllr Eric Vardy	Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste

### Non-Voting Members Present:

Cllr Brian Long	Planning (Regulatory) Committee Chair
Cllr Paul Neale	Planning (Regulatory) Committee Green Group Spokesperson

### Officers Present:

Naomi Chamberlain	Senior Planner
Stephen Faulkner	Principal Planner
Sarah Luff	Strategic Flood Risk Planning Officer
John Shaw	Developer Services Manager
Tim Shaw	Committee Officer
Dean Shelton	Senior Flood Risk Officer
Matt Tracey	Growth & Infrastructure Group Manager
Joe Wyatt	Officer, Community and Environmental Services

## 1 Apologies for Absence

1.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Graham Carpenter, Cllr Graham Plant and Cllr Mike Sands. Cllr Riley was also absent.

## 2. Election of Chair

2.1 Cllr Vardy nominated Cllr Wilby. Cllr Wilby was duly elected as Chairman for the ensuing Council year.

## 3. Election of Vice-Chair

3.1 Cllr Wilby nominated Cllr Plant seconded by Cllr Vardy. Cllr Plant was duly elected as Vice-Chairman for the ensuing Council year.

## 4. Minutes

4.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 27 August 2021 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

4.2 Cllr Paul Neale queried when the minutes were published. Tim Shaw agreed to check when these were published but clarified that minutes of meetings were usually published within a month of the meeting in question. *\*It was confirmed after the meeting that these minutes were published and circulated to Committee members on the 8 September 2021\**

## **5. Declarations of Interest**

5.1 There were no interests declared.

## **6. Urgent Business**

6.1 There was no urgent business discussed.

## **7. Sheringham Shoal and Dudgeon Offshore Windfarm Extension Projects - Submission Consultation**

7.1.1 The Committee received the report assessing the proposals for the extension of two offshore windfarms and the onshore ancillary grid connection infrastructure in Norfolk. The final decision for these proposals would be determined by the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy as it was defined as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project under the Planning Act 2008.

7.1.2 The Senior Planner introduced the report to Committee

- The Council had responded to the pre-application which was approved by the Committee in June 2021.
- The report covered proposals for extension projects of Sheringham and Dudgeon Offshore Windfarms off of the North Norfolk Coast. It was proposed to extend the windfarms by up to 53 windmills.
- The distance from the coast was 16km at Sheringham and 27km at Dudgeon. The turbines were estimated to be 330 metres high, with the overall size to be determined at a later stage.
- The capacity for the windfarms would double to approximately 700 megawatts, to supply about 600,000 homes with electricity.
- Landfall for the cable route was proposed to be at Weybourne with a cable from here to the Norwich main substation
- Approximately 2200 jobs would be created from the construction and 230 long term jobs would be created of which 85 would be in East Anglia
- The County Council would like to see a local community benefit fund prepared outside of the Development Consent Order (DCO) process and the applicant had stated in response to comments about the impact on fishing communities that there would be compensation provided.

7.1.3 The Principal Planner also gave an introduction to the report:

- The next stage would be an examination making comments through the local impact report.
- Officers were engaged with Equinor on a number of key issues including highway matters. There were ongoing issues around the traffic management plan and cumulative impacts of projects where the cable was making landfall and officers wanted to protect environmental assets and ensure highway safety was maintained
- As lead local flood authority there were issues which the Council had highlighted. The drainage and flood risk assessment and hydraulic modelling had been received from the applicant but at this stage further evidence and clarification was deemed necessary. The Council would work with the applicant to get requirements set out in the DCO to ensure these issues were covered.
- Members were informed that with regard to secondary interconnection, officers have been in discussion with Equinor; and separately with National

Grid in respect of their emerging East Anglian Green Project. This latter Project may provide opportunities to deliver power to local homes and businesses.

- The recommendations set out in the report proposed that the Council raise a holding objection regarding flood risk and delegate technical responses to officers.

7.2 The following points were discussed and noted:

- No substantive comments had been received from Local Members of areas along the proposed cable route, who had all received consultations on this project.
- Cllr Brian Long raised an interest in flood mitigation as the Chairman of a drainage board. He noted that to mitigate water that would have permeated around the existing station, there would need to be substantial measures in place to control flow rates from the stations and felt it was important to report back what mechanisms these mitigation measures would look like.
- The Principal Planner confirmed that the substation was part of the DCO decision and not covered by the Town and Country Planning Act and therefore not decided by South Norfolk District Council. However, they were a consultee on the DCO. There were other proposals at the Norwich Substation of which South Norfolk District Council would be the planning authority.
- A Committee Member asked if there was provision to make net gains on environmental impacts as Communities had raised concerns about this; The Principal Planner confirmed that this was covered by District Councils via environmental management plans from the applicant to be signed off by local planning authorities. Officers also confirmed that a Biodiversity net Gain Strategy had formed part of the DCO submission.
- The Principal Planner confirmed that around 12 letters had been received by the Council about this project. Other bodies such as district and parish councils also had the opportunity to respond to the DCO and where they had raised concerns the Council advised them to respond to the consultation. However, where concerns raised related to a statutory role of the Council, such as flooding or highways, these would be picked up.
- Compensation for those affected by cumulative effect of construction was queried by Cllr Neale and the officer indicated that any such compensation would be paid for by the applicant (not the Local Authority), but agreed to follow up with confirmation via a written response after the meeting.
- More information was requested on the set up of the local community benefit fund; The Principal Planner confirmed that the Council had asked the promoters of the scheme to recognise the impacts beyond immediate planning and had asked Vattenfall and Orsted to set up a fund as a charitable trust for local communities to bid into. The Growth & Infrastructure Group Manager added that the Council was having discussions to ensure they could help local communities access the fund to maximise benefits to local communities.
- Battery storage at Dunston (Norwich Main) was queried; The Principal Planner confirmed that this development was by Orsted and was being taken forward under the Town and County Planning Act to South Norfolk District Council as the local planning authority for this application. The County Council had been involved as a statutory consultee and would input through the planning process.

- Cllr Paul Neale asked whether the local district council would receive income from the cables hitting landfall in Weybourne. The Principal Planner agreed to provide a written response on this.
- Cllr Vardy noted that the planning inspectorate would hold a public Examination on the proposals set out in the report so residents could register their desire to speak on them at that stage. At this stage, the County Council were a consultee and were not determining the proposals.

The Committee **RESOLVED**

1. To support the principle of these offshore renewable energy proposals, subject to the detailed technical issues /comments set out in this report and Appendix 2 of the report being resolved through the DCO process;
2. There is a holding objection at this stage from the County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) in the absence of acceptable supporting information; and
3. To delegate any further detailed technical responses needed to officers as part of the above consultation and/or in preparing any further evidence for the Examination of the DCO

The meeting ended at 10:34

#### **CHAIRMAN**



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