

THE ALDEBURGH SOCIETY

Registered Charity Number 262239 www.aldeburghsociety.org.uk
47 Park Road
Aldeburgh
IP15 5EN

OFFSHORE WINDFARMS EAST ANGLIA ONE NORTH AND EAST ANGLIA TWO

DEADLINE 13

STATEMENT CONCERNING SPR's PROPOSED ONSHORE INSTALLATIONS

As the civic society for the historic coastal town and cultural centre of Aldeburgh, the Aldeburgh Society has registered its grave concern over these DCO applications. The objects of the Society are to encourage public interest in and care for the character of the town and its surroundings, and the preservation, development and improvement of general public amenity in the area. Scottish Power Renewables' proposals conflict with the fulfilment of these objects.

The Society strongly supports the development of renewable energies, including the generation of offshore wind energy in suitable locations. We have followed the Examination of Scottish Power Renewables' applications with keen interest and we value the calm efficiency and thoroughness with which it has been conducted.

In this final submission at deadline 13 the Aldeburgh Society reiterates that nothing we have heard or read during the extended Examination has convinced us that the proposed substations at Friston and the associated landfall site and cable corridor via Thorpeness would be anything other than irretrievably destructive of a fragile landscape, much of it located in a nationally protected Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

We endorse the call for a positive way forward, and we urge the PINS Examiners to reject part of this DCO and split the offshore plans from the onshore plans. We request the Examining Authorities to recommend to the Secretary of State a 'split decision' so that:

1. The offshore turbines are recommended for consent.
2. The needlessly destructive onshore plans are rejected in favour of full consideration of better locations for this infrastructure where the adverse impacts are minimised at a brownfield or industrialised site.

We fully endorse and call the Examiners' attention again to the SEAS response to Action Point 6 Deadline 5 (OFH6 - The Planning Balance - Response to Action Point 6 Deadline 5 – 3 February 2021 by SEAS (Suffolk Energy Action Solutions) Unique Ref. No. EA1 (N): 2002 4494 Unique Ref. No. EA2: 2002 4496).

We say again (as said by SEAS and others) that " to locate an Energy Hub, in the midst of one of the UK's most fragile nature-based tourism destinations will lead to: the decimation of a thriving tourism economy, a principal revenue stream for the Suffolk Heritage Coast; the destruction of biodiversity

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as multiple cable corridors cut through the protected landscapes of the Suffolk AONB and Suffolk Sandlings, and the decline of the health and well-being of those rural communities whose lives will never be the same. It is needless destruction when it is clear that there are more appropriate brownfield or industrialised sites such as Bradwell or Grain, which are better aligned with government policy.”

With respect to the cumulative effect of National Grid’s plans to turn Friston into an Energy Hub, we draw again the Examiners’ attention to the fact that the Applicant has failed to carry out a robust Cumulative Impact Assessment of these additional projects, claiming that “there remains insufficient information to undertake the assessment requested.” As SEAS have pointed out “this argument is not credible when one considers the evidence in the public domain on these projects. This evidence has been clearly documented by SEAS... and others.” (See SEAS submission of new evidence from National Grid that Friston is destined to become an 'Energy Hub' should EA1N and EA2 be approved Deadline 11 - 7 June 2021).

We remind the Examiners’ that research commissioned by the Suffolk Coast Destination Management Organisation (DMO), concluded that the new energy projects on the Suffolk coastline would damage the local tourist economy by up to £40 million per annum. Aldeburgh can only be accessed by the roads that will bear the heavy traffic and disruption the works will bring. Visitors will be off put by clogged roads and the perception of massive construction and go elsewhere. The disruption already caused by the pre-application works in recent weeks does not bode well.

Finally we quote the submission of our MP Dr Therese Coffey at the final issue-specific hearings of the Planning Inquiry: *“In short, in order for the Applicant’s proposals to adhere to the emerging government policy of greater offshore coordination to protect our environment – which has been backed again at the highest level in Parliament this month, the onshore aspects of these projects must be rejected in favour of a grid connection which offers the capacity to integrate multiple projects without having a devastating impact on local communities and our precious landscapes.”*

So once again we close by repeating that the cumulative effect of these proposals, and also in particular with EDF’s proposed large nuclear power station development at Sizewell C, would be too much for this fragile and highly prized area to bear.

In view of the above, we reiterate our view that the Planning Inspectorate should split its consideration of the DCO applications as between the offshore elements and the onshore installations

The Aldeburgh Society remains firmly of the view that SPR’s proposed onshore installations – together with the cumulative effect of projected additional grid connections and the Sizewell C project - would be excessively damaging to our area, its natural and built environment, its inhabitants, its businesses, and its visitors. Green energy cannot be allowed to wreak such seismic trauma in our collective march towards net zero.

5 July 2021