



Statement to Parish Council Meeting 24th October 2023

Chair, Councillors

This statement is in respect of Agenda Item 6a - Planning Application 77576 Whitecross Offshore Windfarm onshore infrastructure

Love Braunton supports sustainable renewable energy generation including offshore wind farms.

So we are disappointed to find ourselves objecting to this application as it cannot be described as sustainable given the impact it will have on our economy, environment and social well being.

This application is driven solely by the applicant's agreement for a grid connection at Yelland having requested either Yelland or Alverdiscott.

It is not clear why either of these connection points were requested given the location of the offshore site. Nor is it clear as to why the applicant is progressing the Yelland substation given its capacity limitations. This would be a significant constraint on the applicant given that the [Crown Estates Celtic Sea has three Project Development Areas](#) each capable of generating 1.5GW.

The applicant states this is currently a pilot project. So what happens when their pilot is deemed successful and they seek to increase energy and revenue generation capacity?

Given the development cost implications of the current proposal it is not unreasonable for us to assume that the applicant will look to develop further the proposed onshore infrastructure.

The applicant is using a Project Design Envelope - an approach used where the nature of the proposed development means that some details of the whole project are not confirmed (for instance the precise dimensions of structures) when the application is submitted. It is more commonly used for designated Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects – which this proposed project is not.

[Planning Advice guidance](#) states that where this approach is used it is explained clearly for the purpose of consultation and publicity at the Pre-application stage.

This approach was certainly not made public or raised in public consultations during the pre - application stage.

It apparently was agreed by the applicant with NDC which means that many aspects of the proposal are in effect an outline application. Outline applications seek agreement in principle to a proposed development so there is no certainty at this stage as to what will actually be constructed.

Clear examples being no detailed design of: the proposed substation at East Yelland, pre construction drainage activity or the construction of the proposed haul route from Saunton Road to the White House with its numerous cable link pits.

The applicant repeatedly states the impact of all aspects of construction activity is minimal or negligible. From submitted online responses to date and views that are being expressed tonight it is clear that this proposal does have significantly adverse impacts.

It is extremely naive to accept that the numerous potential impacts being identified could or would be managed through the use of conditions. Experience tells us that enforcing adherence to planning conditions does not have a good track record.

For our Parish this application does not meet the criteria of sustainability given its impact upon our economy, environment and social well being during the construction period in excess of 24 months and with the potential for further construction activity should the offshore pilot project be successful.

This application must be refused.