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PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DEFENCE
 AND MINISTER FOR VETERANS

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S. 40(6)

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December 2006

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I am responding to [REDACTED] letter of 18 August, about issues relating to the deployment of wind turbines and radar.

S. 40(2)

I fully recognise the part the Ministry of Defence (MOD) has to play to help achieve UK energy targets for 2010 and beyond and I appreciate the work being done by our departments to do this.

Research has been carried out by the MOD over the last two years on the effects of wind turbines on radar and I am pleased to be able to tell you that the results indicate that there may be areas where mitigation measures could be used to reduce the problems caused.

This Department is aware of the significance of the Air Defence radar replacement program to the deployment of Offshore Round 2 wind farms and in the recent procurement process for replacement radar, wind turbine mitigation was included as a desirable requirement. Unfortunately the process has reached a far too advanced stage to now make the requirement for wind farm mitigation mandatory.

You will be pleased to hear, however, that wind turbine mitigation will be included as a mandatory requirement in future radar replacement programs but much will depend on the success and lessons learned from the radar the MOD is currently buying.

There is a reasonable level of confidence that digital replacement radar should have the ability to provide Air Defence cover in the presence of wind farms but this will not be proved until the first new radar can be tested prior to operational deployment.

While I understand your concern that the radar upgrade may delay the development of the offshore projects in the Greater Wash, the positions of the three radars are currently undecided. Your Department is being updated on the progress and status of the MOD programme and I can assure you that my Department will continue to work with the DTI to resolve any issues which still exist.

Lord Truscott
 Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (Energy)



I believe that further work is ongoing between our departments to determine the feasibility for an additional fill-in sensor to be placed in the Greater Wash area as a temporary solution to the problem. Although the work is at an early stage, it has been shown that an additional radar could be tilted in such a way to look "over" the wind farms. This could provide coverage that may be able to be fused with the main radar display to give a more acceptable level of surveillance. As soon as technical issues have been cleared to ensure there will be no interference with other systems, an appropriate site found, and funding for capital and ongoing maintenance assured, MOD will lift its objection to the Offshore Round 2 wind farms.

Finally I would like to reassure you that we will not delay the progress of the Offshore Round 2 process for any longer than necessary and we remain committed to arriving at a solution whereby our Air Defence radar and wind farms on and offshore can coexist in harmony.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Derek Twigg'.

A second handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Derek Twigg'.

DEREK TWIGG MP