

Somerset Council

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Somerset
Council

By email to [REDACTED]

Please ask for: [REDACTED]

E-Mail: [REDACTED]

Direct Line: 01823 219527

Date: 22 March 2024

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your e-mail and the letter received on Monday 11 March 2024 concerning the proposal by Hecate Offshore Wind Limited to seek a Direction from the Secretary of State under s35 of the Planning Act 2008, to allow the proposal for the Ice Wind Hinkley Point Project to be considered as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project, rather than as a planning application under the Town and Country Planning Act. I apologise for the delay in responding, but you will appreciate that I first needed consider your current proposal for a Direction in association with colleagues.

I am now able to confirm that the Council could support your proposal for a Direction from the Secretary of State under section 35, subject to Hecate entering into a separate agreement under s106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. This is a process that would be denied to the Council if you proceeded with the project as a NSIP with a view to getting consent as a DCO. The difficulty the Council has is that, whilst it would like to encourage and support the proposal, we do not really know enough about the scheme to know exactly what is being proposed and what measures might be needed in order to mitigate any impacts. The type of application you adopt will have a direct bearing on the Council's ability to address these issues. Whichever route is taken the LPA would be looking to a planning performance agreement to ensure that there is dedicated officer input into the proposals at the pre-application stage and to be able to give you the level of assistance that you will need with this project. In this regard, the Council would welcome further discussions and negotiations about the project, so that we can determine how best to support you in the application.

You will appreciate that the Council has not yet been able to consider the planning merits of the proposal, and this will need to follow in due course. That said, the Council welcomes your client's decision to base its proposal in Somerset and the Council looks forward to working with you as the proposals are developed. If I can be of any further assistance in this matter, please do not hesitate to get in touch with either myself or my colleague [REDACTED].

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

Head of Planning
Somerset Council