



Welcome to the first newsletter for North Falls, an offshore wind project now under development

North Falls is a proposed offshore wind farm development with its offshore site in the southern North Sea and its onshore infrastructure likely to be located in North Essex. The offshore site is between 22 and 43 kilometres from the coast and is split across two zones that together total 150 km².



The location of the onshore infrastructure is dependent on a grid connection from National Grid but the location where the projects' offshore cables would come to shore is likely to be between Frinton-on-Sea and Clacton-on-Sea.

North Falls is an extension project to the existing 504MW Greater Gabbard Offshore Wind Farm and is owned in an equal joint venture by two major energy companies: SSE Renewables and RWE Renewables.

Development started in late 2020 when the manager of the seabed, The Crown Estate, awarded the project with what is called an 'agreement for lease'. Since that time the project team has appointed consultants and contractors, carried out onshore and offshore surveys, engaged statutory consultees and held an initial introductory online consultation.

Development work will continue into 2023, with the application due to be submitted later that year.

Consultation is key

North Falls undertook an introductory consultation in late 2021, with the information and a summary of the feedback received now available to view on our website. Also on the website is a new 'frequently asked questions' page, which covers topics and issues that were brought up by numerous consultees during the consultation.

To the broad offshore wind-related questions, there was an overwhelming majority in favour of renewables, including offshore wind, and its key role in the UK's energy security and in combatting climate change. There were common queries around ecology and the environment, including birds, marine life and ancient woodlands, as well as around impacts of the project during construction and the need for ongoing consultation and the importance of being kept

informed. There was also a large interest in ensuring that jobs, skills training and supply chain opportunities have a strong local focus.

The introductory consultation was only the first of at least three consultation phases for the project, with the below programme setting out when local communities will next be able to take part in the process.

Autumn 2022

Pre-application Consultation 1

Prior to commencing the Preliminary Environmental Information Report

2023

Pre-application Consultation 2 and Final Pre-application Consultation

In between consultations, we welcome questions and insights via the contact details listed on the last page.

The Project Onshore



Scoping the project

The North Falls Scoping Report, presenting early project proposals and describing the development process, is now on the project website. Submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for consultation and stakeholder feedback last year, it details the proposed approach to development including how potential impacts to the existing environment will be assessed.

Included in the report is the project's onshore scoping area, where the onshore infrastructure is likely to be located. Since its publication, the project team has narrowed down options within the wide scoping area for the landfall location, onshore cable corridor and permanent substation site.



1

Number of onshore substations



18m

Maximum onshore substation height



Up to 70m

Estimated onshore cable route width



200m x 250m

Maximum onshore substation footprint



High voltage alternating current
Electrical connection type

Surveying the environment



Local wildlife including butterflies such as this Brown Argus will be surveyed for the project.

Onshore environmental surveys, the basis of the project's environmental impact assessment (EIA), are well underway.

The EIA is a systematic approach to understanding the wind farm's potential environmental, social and economic impacts and to setting out how to reduce any adverse impacts. EIAs aim to protect the environment by ensuring that planning authorities, when deciding whether or not to grant planning permission, are fully aware of potential effects and take these into account in their decision making.

Collecting data is a vital part of an EIA and over the past 18 months North Falls has carried out initial onshore bird and ecology surveys, with further surveys now underway and due to be completed by September this year. The survey data will be used to help refine the project proposals and also to identify mitigation measures, which will be included in the Environmental Statement that will be submitted with the planning application.

The Project Onshore

Locating the landfall

Identifying the location of the landfall – where the wind farm's offshore export cables would come to shore – will be a key activity for the project in 2022.

The initial landfall search area, between Clacton-on-Sea and Frinton-on-Sea, was defined after thorough engineering and environmental reviews and surveys. These considered constraints including offshore designated sites, nature reserves, land use, historic features and technical feasibility.



Beach huts at Frinton-on-Sea.

Consultation feedback and the assessment of further data will ensure that the project team is well placed to identify the most suitable site. During construction there will be work compounds located near the landfall but there will be no visible infrastructure in the longer term.

Landowner Liaison

As a key stakeholder group, landowners potentially impacted by the onshore element of the project will receive requests for access, information and details direct from our appointed land agents, Dalcour Maclaren. If you are a landowner and would like to discuss the project, their details can be found on the last page.

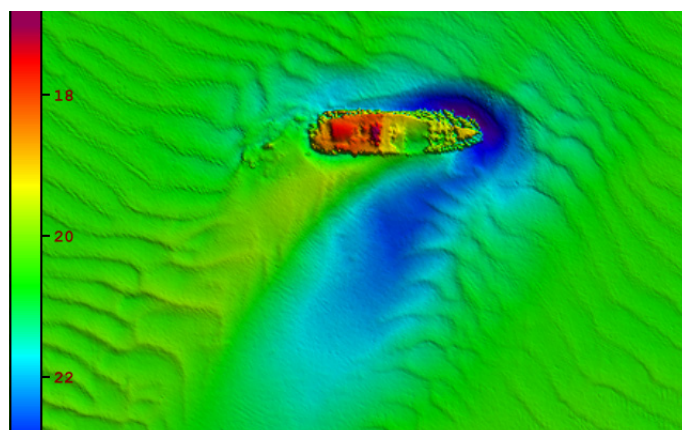
The Project Offshore



Geo-data specialist Fugro carried out seabed surveys at the array site and along the proposed export cable routes.

Offshore surveys identify wrecks

Offshore surveys have been underway since March 2019, with two years of bird and marine mammal surveys completed along with around four months of geophysical and benthic assessments. The geophysical surveys identified numerous ship and submarine wrecks that will be avoided, including the HMT Resono (pictured below), a trawler from Grimsby that was hired in 1914 as an auxiliary patrol vessel, but hit a mine and sank in 1915.



Surveys this year will include offshore vessel traffic to review the types and numbers of vessels sailing in the area near the project's proposed arrays, and the export cable route. The data will feed into the planning process to help design the offshore cable route, location of the offshore substation and turbines, and construction methodologies.

The Project Offshore

Up to 70 turbines across two sites

North Falls will comprise up to 70 offshore wind turbines located in an offshore array that is split into two separate areas taking into account existing major shipping routes. All the offshore infrastructure, including the turbines, the substation and the array cables connecting them, would be located within the boundaries of the northern site, covering approximately 21 km², and the larger southern site of 130km².

The electricity generated by North Falls will be transmitted to shore by export cables which will be located within an offshore export cable corridor that has been narrowed down to an area north of the Margate and Long Sands Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Kentish Knock East Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ), with a small overlap with the Outer Thames Estuary Special Protection Area (SPA) as it nears land.



150km²

Total area of turbine arrays



Up to 70

Maximum number of wind turbines



0.5 – 3m

Target minimum cable burial depth where buried



2

Max number of offshore substation platforms

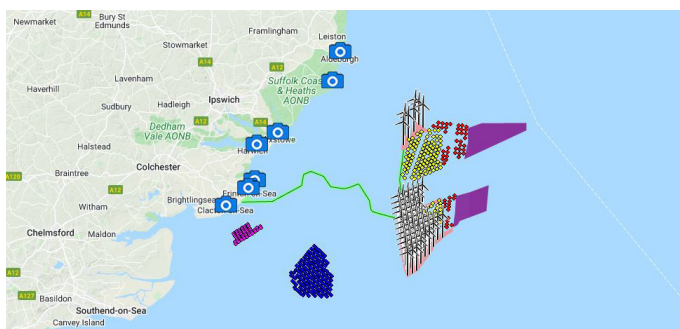


22.5km

Distance to shore (closest)

3D visualisation of the offshore wind farm

To see how the wind farm could look from various coastal viewpoints and in different weather conditions, North Falls commissioned a 3D visualisation model. To view the model visit the Development page of the project website.



Fisheries Liaison



The local fisheries industry is a key stakeholder group for the project and so the project has appointed dedicated fisheries consultants, Brown & May Marine Ltd.

Any fisheries-related stakeholders who would like to discuss the project, can contact them via the details on the last page.

North Falls The Project

Why build another offshore wind farm?

As well as helping to protect the environment and contributing to the UK's net zero ambitions, North Falls will play a role in helping to stabilise the nation's energy prices and improving its energy security.

By generating more electricity from offshore wind, the UK will be less reliant on international energy imports, for example oil and gas, and therefore more self-sufficient. It will also become less susceptible to global price fluctuations in such commodities, which should lead to reduced costs for consumers. The project will also bring numerous local benefits by way of jobs, skills support, use of local supply chain and community involvement.

As an extension project, North Falls would aim to emulate the initiatives of its sister project Greater Gabbard and therefore create similar, if not greater, socio-economic benefit which included:

- A total investment of around £1.5 billion and a new facility was constructed in Lowestoft, Suffolk for the project's operations and maintenance base.
- Creation of around 100 long-term, skilled jobs to operate and maintain the wind farm, with 95% of those recruited from the local area.
- Hundreds of jobs created during construction.
- Recruitment of 10 apprentices, eight pipeline trainees and junior engineers and engagement of ex-fishermen on crew transfer vessels as part of the drive to find locally skilled people to fill roles.
- Investment of more than £250,000 in community funds and local training initiatives.



Greater Gabbard Offshore Wind Farm, operational since 2012.

Potential benefits



More than £1.5bn

Potential investment in
UK energy infrastructure



50GW by 2030

Contributing to the UK government's
ambitions of 50GW offshore wind by 2030



400,000

Homes equivalent to be provided
with clean green energy

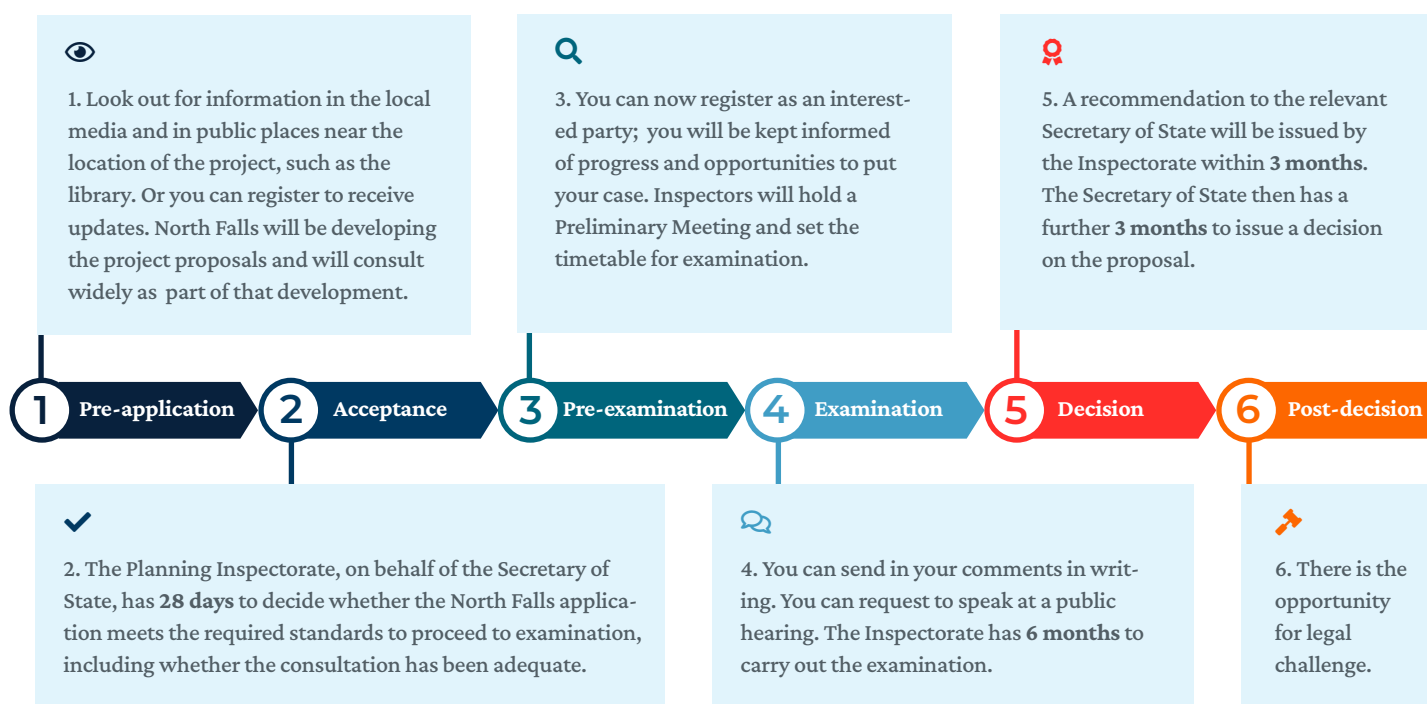
A nationally significant infrastructure project

As a large-scale energy project, North Falls is classified as a nationally significant infrastructure project (NSIP) which means it will need a 'development consent' under procedures governed by the Planning Act 2008. Where a development consent is granted, it is made in the form of a development consent order (DCO).

The agency responsible for operating the planning process for NSIPs is the Planning Inspectorate (PINS). PINS examines applications for development consent and will make a recommendation to the Secretary of State, who will make the decision on whether to grant or to refuse development consent. For North Falls this will be the Secretary of State at the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

There are six steps to the NSIP planning process, with North Falls now in stage one or 'pre-application'. This will continue until the project application is submitted to, and accepted by, PINS, anticipated to be the last half of 2023.

Application Process The Six Steps



Contact North Falls

To sign up for future newsletters or email updates please email your details to contact@northfallsoffshore.com; call (24/7) **0800 254 5340** or post to: **Freepost North Falls**, indicating your preference for electronic or printed copy.

Landowners

Landowners should contact the project's land agent: Dalcour Maclaren, 20 Hollingworth Court, Turkey Mill, Ashford Road, Maidstone, Kent ME14 5PP
E: northfalls@dalcourmaclaren.com
T: 01622 623025

Fisheries

Fisheries related queries can be directed to our fisheries consultants: Brown & May Marine Ltd, Progress Way, Mid Suffolk Business Park, Eye, Suffolk, IP23 7HU
E: northfalls@brownmay.com
T: 01379 772871

For more information about North Falls visit the project website: www.northfallsoffshore.com