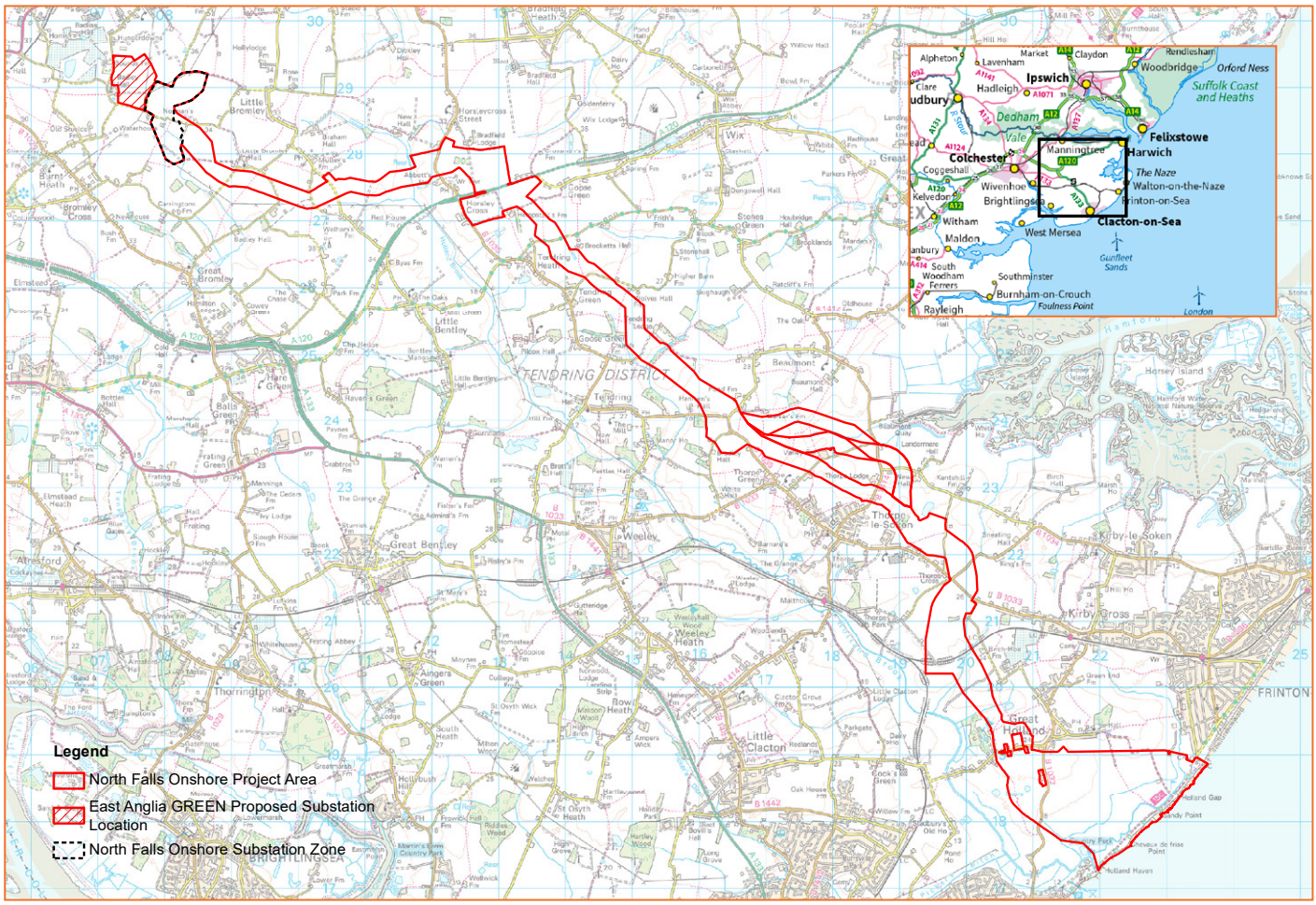
North Falls

Factsheet for landowners

This factsheet has been prepared to answer questions specific to landowners and those with an interest in the land who may be impacted by the project during its development, construction and operation, assuming it proceeds with an onshore grid connection. It includes the key relevant facts and figures about the project and answers the questions asked to date. There are contact details on the back page if further information is required.



Project description

The route the onshore cables will take from landfall at the coast to the project substation will be approximately 24 kilometres. The cables will be buried to minimise visual and environmental impact. During construction a temporary construction corridor mostly 60 metres in width will be needed. Wider sections may be included when crossing certain features such as railway lines, main roads or large hedgerows. Additional areas for temporary construction compounds and site accesses will also be required. Generally, these temporary areas will be adjacent to the cable corridor.

North Falls will mitigate its impacts as far as practicable, however there will be some temporary disruption during construction. Once the cables have been installed, the land used during construction will be restored to its former agricultural or other use. Where the cable route crosses features such as roads, watercourses and ecologically sensitive areas, the aim will be to cross them using horizontal directional drilling (HDD) to avoid impacts on these features.

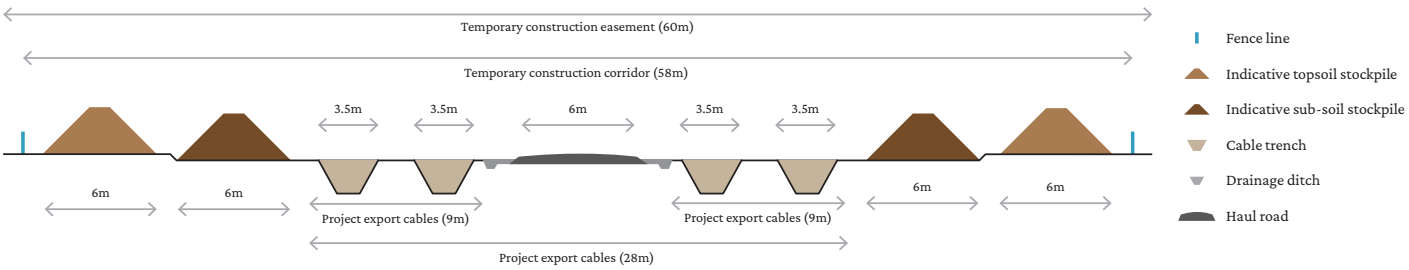
CABLE CORRIDOR

Why must the cable corridor be so wide?

Up to four trenches will be required to accommodate up to four circuits, each containing individual cables and fibre optics to enable communications between the wind farm and the control system. During construction, each trench could be up to 3.5m wide at the surface reducing to 1.2m at the bottom. An area is taken on either side of the permanent cable corridor for subsoil and topsoil storage.

The circuits must be spaced out to minimise the mutual heating effect. This spacing enables the cables to effectively carry the large power volumes required without overheating and damaging the cables. The final location and width of each trench will be determined closer to the construction phase.

Diagram showing a cross-section of a cable corridor for four circuits during construction



How is the route being defined?

The project has undertaken ecology surveys along with engineering assessments and ongoing consultation to help define its route. In addition to this, landowner meetings will be ongoing as well as the section 42 consultation. The feedback received from these meetings and consultation activities also contributes to how the route is refined.

CONSTRUCTION

How will the land required be fenced off?

Accommodation works will be agreed, including the location and type of fencing required for the construction period. If needed, crossing points can be put in place where suitable to allow for continued access.

What methods are available to lay the cables?

Typically, the onshore cables will be installed into ducts that will be laid in a mechanically excavated trench using an open cut method. The ducts are placed in trenches initially and then the cables pulled through after the trenches have been backfilled. A layer of stabilised backfill material is generally used to ensure a consistent structural and thermal environment for the cables.

Backfilling a trench with cable ducts laid (Sofia Offshore Wind Farm)

CONSTRUCTION

If trenching is not suitable, for example if there are ecological or other features to avoid, an alternative method will be implemented. This may include horizontal directional drilling (HDD), which is a steerable trenchless method of installing underground cables over relatively short distances with minimal or no impact on the surface above.

How deep will the cables be laid?

The cables will generally be buried at a depth not shallower than 1.2m below ground level depending on ground conditions. Where necessary, for example if there is rock, concrete or another obstacle close to the surface, the cables may need to be laid at a shallower depth of not less than 0.9m. Cable protection and marker tape will be installed above the buried cables.

How will the cables interact with existing utilities on my land?

Statutory undertakers will be consulted to agree preferred methods of crossing existing utilities on land. Typically, HDD will be used under utilities, but where appropriate clearances (through consultation with other utilities) are available and the minimum depth of 0.9m can be achieved, the cables may be laid over other utilities.

What will happen to existing hedgerows and trees?

All efforts will be made to minimise the extent of hedgerow disturbance by utilising existing gaps in field boundaries. Additionally, trees which have been identified for retention will be worked around using techniques to safeguard the root protection zone.

Wherever a hedgerow crossing is unavoidable and requires removal, this work will be undertaken prior to topsoil removal. The width of the hedgerow removed will be limited to the minimum required to safely carry out the construction work. All removed hedgerows and trees will be replaced with locally appropriate native species. Plans identifying the extent of the required hedgerow and tree removal will be included within the development consent order application.

What is a site compound?

A site compound is a secure, fenced, temporary area along the cable route which will help to facilitate construction.The area will be hard standing for suitable storage of materials, vehicles and to site a welfare unit. The areas will be fully reinstated following completion of construction.

Example of a construction compound for onshore cable installation works (Sofia and Dogger Bank C)

CONSTRUCTION

How will soils be managed to ensure functionality of existing drainage systems?

A Schedule Of Condition will be carried out to accurately record the condition of the land prior to entry. North Falls will also undertake pre- and post-construction soil sampling to assist in bringing the soil back to its previous condition. Sub soil and top soil will be extracted and stored separately to prevent contamination.

Contractors will abide by DEFRA's 2009 Construction Code of Practice for the Sustainable Use of Soils on Construction Sites PB13298 or latest relevant available guidance, ensuring the working area will be reinstated to its pre-existing condition as far a reasonably practical.

Drainage systems will be maintained before, during and post construction by appointing a Drainage Consultant to undertake an assessment of the existing drainage system in place. If alterations are to be made to the existing drainage system, the Drainage Consultant will prepare a design and scheme for the required drainage works on the land affected by the construction works and subsequent restoration.

Can land be accessed during onshore construction works?

Access to, and use of, retained land temporarily severed by the construction corridor will be maintained through accommodation works including the installation of gateways or water troughs to land which may otherwise be subject to severance. Landowners will be consulted to discuss and agree suitable access requirements and arrangements.

How long will the onshore construction works last?

The installation of the onshore export cable is a linear construction project with an expected overall construction duration of from 18 to 24 months. As the construction works are comprised of a variety of activities, the duration of each activity at any location being dependent on the nature of the construction activity being undertaken.

POST-CONSTRUCTION

What happens once the construction works are complete?

On completion of the main activities, the cable corridor will be reinstated and handed back to the landowner. Such activities will include but not be limited to the removal of haul roads, installation of further drainage if necessary, reinstatement of topsoil and removal of fencing and temporary access arrangements in place. Reinstatement works are weather dependent and will only be carried out where the weather permits.

Cable route before/during reinstatement and after (Rampion)

POST-CONSTRUCTION

Before cable construction started, during and after (Triton Knoll)

How is the trench reinstated following cable installation?

Once the cable has been laid, the remainder of the trench is backfilled with the excavated material. Hard protective tiles, and marker tape are also installed in the cable trenches to ensure the cable is not damaged by any third party. Once the cables are installed and the trenches backfilled, the stored subsoil and topsoil will be replaced, and the land reinstated to its previous use.

Will North Falls require any land permanently?

An onshore substation site will be needed with the freehold acquisition required to secure future access and any maintenance. To mitigate the visual impact of the substation on any surrounding land, the substation will be sympathetically designed and screened with appropriate planting and fencing.

Example of revegetation underway at converter station site (Sofia and Dogger Bank C)

PROCESS

How will the necessary rights be acquired?

North Falls will look to acquire underground cable and surface rights through voluntary agreements which will permit the construction, operation and maintenance of assets through an easement in perpetuity.

The terms and conditions of the rights North falls wishes to acquire will be detailed in Heads of Terms. The Heads of Terms detail the obligations between both parties and note any stipulations which help to draft an option agreement. An option agreement is entered into between the landowner and North Falls for the ability to start construction works during a specified period in return for an option fee. A further payment will be made upon taking entry for construction and a final payment made once the easement has been granted.

Landowners who are directly affected by the cable route through their land in two elements will be compensated. A consideration will be payable for the easement to be granted and compensation will also be paid for any reasonable and substantiated losses and damage arising as a result of construction works. All compensation will be assessed on a case by case basis subject to the production of evidence and proof of loss.

Where a voluntary agreement cannot be reached, compulsory acquisition powers are afforded within the DCO application so that we can acquire any necessary land rights for the project to be developed.

Will you pay for any professional fees incurred?

Fair and reasonable land agency fees incurred in connection with general consultation, negotiation of the Heads of Terms, the formalisation of the easement documentation and for the negotiation and settlement of any compensation claims will be reimbursed. Likewise, fair and reasonable legal fees incurred to complete legal agreements will also paid. Professional costs incurred objecting to the project would not be reimbursed.

CONTACT

For land-related queries, please contact the project's land agent Dalcour Maclaren:

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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.

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