Issue 4 – October 2013

Rampion Offshore Wind Farm

Newsletter

London Array Offshore Wind Farm. For illustrative purposes only.

Hello and welcome to our fourth newsletter, bringing you up to date with some survey work we're planning to do along our proposed onshore cable route this autumn.

The work will start this month and will be carried out at various sites along the cable route, from Brooklands Pleasure Park, to our proposed substation site next to National Grid's existing Bolney substation in Twineham. It will help us work out the best way to lay our onshore cable, if the wind farm is given consent to go ahead. Read on to find out more.

Why is the survey work needed?

We'll be able to:

- refine the width of the construction corridor needed to lay our onshore cable from 40 to 30 metres (m). In our Development Consent Order (DCO) we proposed that the corridor would be 40m wide to allow for micrositing. The survey work will help us do this and plan the cable route in more detail.
- find out more about the ground conditions, such as the depths of soils, so we can use the right materials and construction methods to install the cable.
- work out where closer archaeological monitoring will be needed during construction, to protect areas of archaeological importance.

What will it involve?

Trial pits

The work will include digging a number of small trial pits along the cable route, so we can study the ground conditions. The majority of these pits will be dug by machine and will be between 0.5 and 4m deep to help us understand the make up of the soil and the impact our construction vehicles will have on the ground when they're fully loaded.

Boreholes

We'll also need to drill some trial boreholes. This is because we'll be using a specialist construction method known as Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) to install parts of the cable. The majority of the cable route will be laid using the standard construction technique of 'trench and backfill'. However, in sensitive areas or where the cable needs to cross a major road, river or railway, we'll use HDD to feed the cable underneath these areas, so we won't need to disturb anything on the surface. The HDD method will be used to cross the A27, A259, the railway and River Adur to minimise impact on transport and the environment.

Archaeology trench

Archaeological trenches

We'll also be digging archaeological trenches to find out more about archaeology along the route. We've studied the area to work out where archaeology has the most potential to be located within our onshore development boundary and we'll be digging the trenches in these locations, as agreed with county archaeologists from West Sussex County Council and South Downs National Park Authority.

The trenches will be dug under supervision, using a machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket to protect any archaeological finds. If we discover anything, it will be recorded by archaeologists.

How long will the works last?

The onshore survey works are due to start at the end of October and are expected to take six to eight weeks, depending on the weather. If the weather is poor, we may have to stop work and restart when conditions improve.

What are we doing to reduce the impact of the works?

To lessen the impact of our survey work on local people, landowners and the environment, we're:

- doing all the works at the same time to keep disturbance to a minimum
- digging archaeological trenches and boreholes in the same locations where feasible
- making sure we restore the areas we're surveying as soon as possible
- using specialist contractors with experience in this type of work
- providing matting to protect land in bad weather, as well as equipment to keep mud off the roads
- working in daylight hours
- using existing accesses to fields.

Rampion seed bank

We've also been out over the summer collecting native seeds from the local area to create a seed bank. This will help us restore ecologically sensitive areas along the cable route if we're given consent and construction work goes ahead.

What are we doing to make sure everyone knows about the survey work?

Landowners

We already have land agreements in place with many landowners enabling us to carry out survey work. Recently, we've been in touch with them to arrange things like access and to let them know what we'll be doing on their land. Our Site Liaison Officer will be working with landowners throughout the survey work, to help keep any disruption to a minimum.

Local authorities and statutory organisations

We've written to all the relevant local authorities and statutory organisations we're consulting with and we'll be keeping them up to date with our progress once the work gets underway.

Local communities

As well as delivering this newsletter to people living near the survey works, we'll also be keeping communities up to date through local media. We'll be emailing environmental and community groups throughout the area too, as they're well placed to help us share our plans with local people.

→ **To make sure people can get in touch with us during the survey work, we've set up a telephone hotline on 01273 603 721. You'll be able to talk to us from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday. Outside working hours, you can leave a message on our 24 hour answerphone and we'll get back to you as soon as we can.**

Update on our DCO application

The Examining Authority appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government will continue to examine our DCO application. The examination, which started this summer, is expected to finish in mid January 2014 after which the Examining Authority has three months to report to the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change. The Secretary of State then has another three months to decide whether or not to give us consent. Either way, we expect a decision to be made in July 2014.

Our final proposals at a glance

Offshore location – 13km to 23km off the Sussex coast.

Site area – up to approximately 139km^2.

Water depth – 19m to 50m.

Installed electrical capacity – up to 700MW.

Turbine size – each turbine will have a generating capacity of between 3MW and 7MW with a respective maximum height to tip of 180m and 210m.

Turbine numbers – 100 to 175 turbines, depending on the turbine size selected. For larger turbines, the number of turbines needed to generate the maximum output of 700MW would vary, eg 140 x 5MW or 116 x 6MW turbines.

Onshore works – a 26.4km underground cable route from landfall (where the electricity cable comes ashore) to the 400 kilovolts (kV) substation (owned by National Grid), around 2km south-west of Bolney village.

Power output – based on our current expectations of the area's wind resource over the long-term, we estimate the site could generate more than 2,100 gigawatt hours (GWh) of electricity each year*. This is enough to power the equivalent of around 450,000 homes†, more than two-thirds of the homes in Sussex#, including the city of Brighton and Hove.

*Based on wind speed data from our existing offshore wind farms in UK waters. This will be updated as Rampion site specific data is gathered.

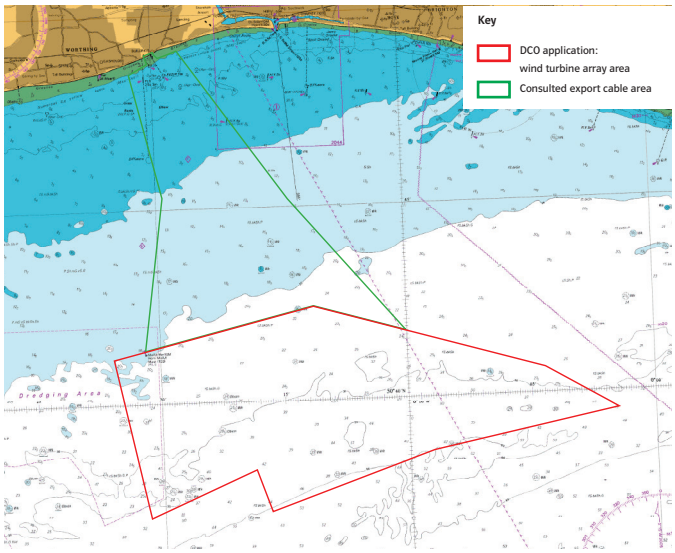
†Based on an average annual domestic household electricity consumption of 4,700kWh (DECC).

#Office of National Statistics census data.

Offshore surveys

To help us find out more about the ground conditions under the seabed on our proposed offshore site, we've been carrying out geotechnical investigations since the middle of August. We've also been taking soil samples to see what ground conditions are like along our planned offshore cable route. These studies will help us work out the best installation techniques to use if construction goes ahead, including how deep we'll need to bury our offshore cables. They'll also help us confirm the right design for our wind turbine foundations and the best way to layout the turbines.

The work is being done on our behalf by a specialist company called Fugro and involves a number of vessels working off the Sussex coast. We're hoping the surveys will be finished by the end of January 2014, depending on the weather.



Opportunities for local businesses, training and education

We're working with local authority partners on a supply chain initiative to seek to maximise opportunities for local businesses from the Rampion construction, if it goes ahead. Along with members of the Rampion Supply Chain Steering Group, we've identified businesses in Sussex, Kent, Surrey and Hampshire who could supply products and services to Rampion, and we've held a number of information events and workshops to let them know about the opportunities. 227 people have come along to these events so we're really getting to know businesses from across the region. We've also set up a website (**sussexwindenergy.org.uk**) where businesses can register on our supply chain database and stay up to date with all our news.

New 'Meet the Buyer' event

We're planning to hold a 'Meet the Buyer' event this winter, so local businesses can meet us and our potential 'Tier 1' suppliers like turbine, cable and foundation manufacturers. Because 'Tier 1' suppliers have very specialist areas of expertise, it's unlikely we'll be able to source them locally, but there'll be opportunities for local businesses to work with them further down the supply chain.

Wind energy: Your questions answered

In each edition of the newsletter, we answer a question we're frequently asked about wind energy.

Q: Is renewable and offshore wind energy popular?

A: The latest research from the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC), published on Tuesday 30 April 2013 says: "support for renewable energy sources to provide the UK's electricity, fuel and heat rose to 82%, from 79% in the previous poll published in February 2012" showing that support for renewable energy is growing.

Support for offshore wind is at 76%, based on a UK wide poll of a representative sample of 2,051 households in the UK. You can read more on the polling here: **https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/193079/Summary_of_Wave_5_findings_of_Public_Attitudes_Tracker.pdf**

Contact us

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