

## Subsea Surveys

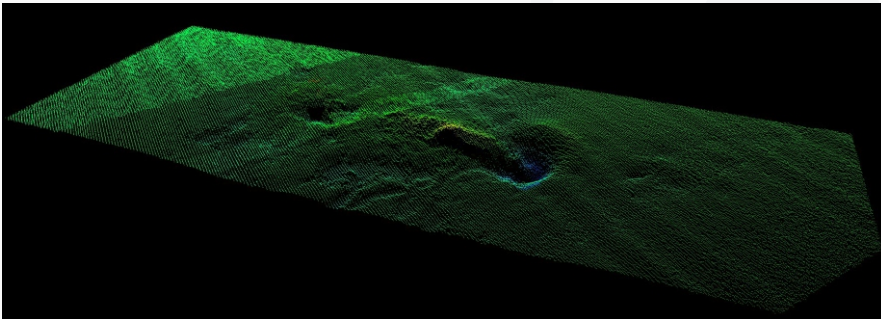
Marine projects require detailed survey work to develop the best possible design, whilst minimising potential impacts on the environment. The proposed cable route is around 655km long. The same distance as between Peterhead and London. The marine survey corridor is approximately 500m wide, the length of 10 football pitches.

Survey work began last winter and is due to conclude by the end of 2017 including:

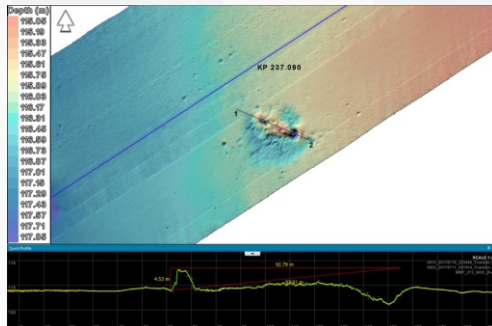
- >> UK Nearshore Survey off the Boddam coast was completed last December (to avoid the bird breeding season);
- >> The North Sea Geophysical Survey was conducted this summer to understand the depths, geology, and other submarine features along the corridor; and
- >> Underwater cameras and seabed samples used to provide an understanding of the habitats and creatures living there, known as the 'benthic ecology'.

The North Sea Geophysical Survey identified six potential sites of archaeological interest, including three confirmed and three possible shipwrecks (two of the confirmed sites correlate to previously charted wreck sites). All six sites will be investigated utilising a Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) during the ongoing geotechnical and subsea infrastructure crossings survey, to better understand their significance.

The survey results will be used to help identify the best possible route and installation techniques for the subsea cables. This involves ensuring that the cable route and installation will not interfere with other seabed infrastructure, will minimise environmental impact and, once installed, that the cables will not affect fishing.



Multi beam echo sounder profiles of a confirmed wreck identified within the NorthConnect marine survey corridor



## Onshore Surveys

A detailed vegetation survey is underway, to add to our understanding of the onshore ecology gained through bird, otter, badger and water vole surveys. The vegetation survey will focus on the coastline around the HVDC landfall near Longhaven Bay, an area designated for vegetated sea cliffs as part of the Buchan Ness to Collieston Special Area of Conservation.

Archaeological walkovers are also ongoing and base line noise surveys are planned for the construction noise assessment.

Ground Investigations to understand the local geology and hydrogeology will be undertaken in the coming weeks. This will help us plan the onshore cable route and the best location for drilling ducts under the cliffs and out to sea.



Rotary Drilling Rig that may be utilised for Ground Investigations

## Converter Station Construction – Access Management

NorthConnect recognises that access to the Fourfields converter station site and the surrounding area is of great value to the local area, and that there may be concerns regarding restriction to this access during and after the construction works. NorthConnect has addressed these concerns in the project design and incorporated the planning feedback received during the consultation process.

Between now and construction, due to commence in 2019, survey work will continue on site. This will not affect access to the Stirlinghill Path Network.

The safety of all users, especially during construction periods, is of paramount importance to us. To ensure safety, access during periods of construction work will be managed in line with the relevant Health & Safety and Access legislation, through consultation with Aberdeenshire Council and local user groups. The 450m path that bisects the Fourfields site will be closed for the majority of the construction works (30 months). It will then be rerouted around the converter station prior to reopening for use by walkers. Access to the core paths around the site may be closed for a few hours at a time during the initial ground works if blasting is required. Short sections of paths to the south and east will be closed or locally re-routed during onshore cable laying (1-3 weeks).

All path closures and diversions will be publicised in advance and an alternate route signposted. Path closures will be minimised as much as possible.

The construction phase will see the creation of a shelter and interpretation panels, which will be maintained over the lifetime of the project, and a 540m increase to the current path network. This equates to a significant ongoing investment to local recreational amenity.

## The NorthConnect Legacy Fund

NorthConnect is working with Foundation Scotland, one of Scotland's leading organisations in the distribution and management of community funding, to provide the local area with a Legacy Fund to support the community to bring lasting benefits to the local area.

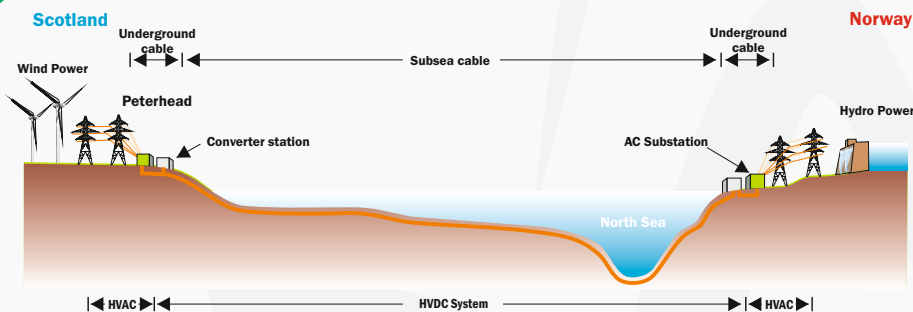
The area of support stretches in a 10 mile radius around the NorthConnect project.

The aims of the fund include:

- >> To provide sustainable support to the communities living, working and playing in the vicinity of the NorthConnect infrastructure including the converter station, HVAC and HVDC cabling both on and offshore;
- >> To support sustainable energy use and production;
- >> To support sustainability, energy, environment, health and wellbeing education;
- >> To increase participation in, and access to, contemporary culture, events and recreational activities in an environmentally sensitive manner; and
- >> To preserve and enhance the natural environment for residents and visitors to the area.

To find out more about how the fund will work please visit:

<https://www.foundationscotland.org.uk/programmes/northconnect/>

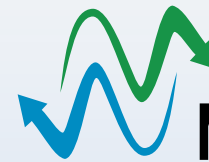


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For more information on the project please visit: [www.northconnect.no](http://www.northconnect.no)



**NORTHCONNECT**  
CONNECTING RENEWABLES

Autumn 2017

## NorthConnect Update

The NorthConnect Interconnector project, linking the UK and Norwegian energy grids at Peterhead and Simadalen, Norway, has had a busy year so far.

In our previous update, we let you know we are working on planning consent and marine license applications for the High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) cables. These will transmit the power to and from the previously consented Converter Station at Fourfields, near Boddam.

Surveys in the water and on land are required to help the Project Design and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). The Design and EIA will support the planning application to Aberdeenshire Council, and the Marine Licence application to Marine Scotland.

We are also very excited to have launched our Legacy Fund, which will support community projects around the proposed development area.

