

NORTHCONNECT
CONNECTING RENEWABLES



Ornithological Surveys

Bird surveys for the onshore HVDC cable route are on-going, these have a particular focus on the Buchan Ness and Collieston Coast SPA. The understanding of bird activity will help to inform the design layout and installation techniques, so that the effects on the bird population can be minimised during the installation of the cables.



Ecological Surveys

Ecological surveys have been undertaken for otter, badger and water vole to determine their presence within the onshore cable route search area and surroundings. The appropriate cable installation technique and mitigation measures will be identified to take account of the survey findings.

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*The NorthConnect Team
would like to wish you
A Very Merry Festive Season
and All the Best for 2017*



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For more information on the project please visit: www.northconnect.no

NorthConnect Update

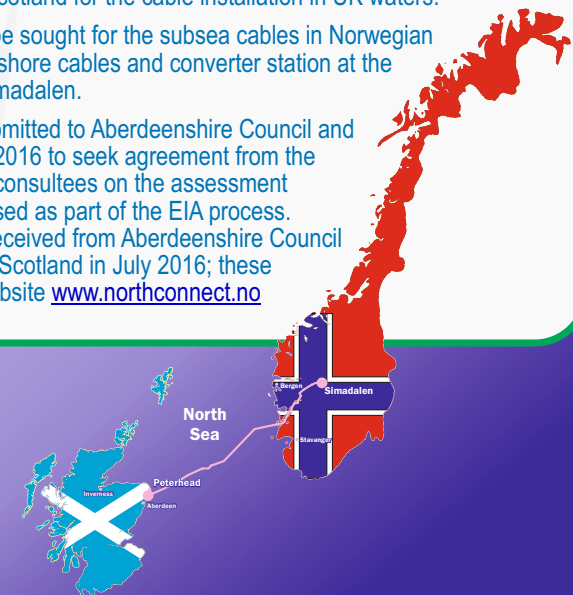
In early 2016 we provided you with an update regarding the NorthConnect project. This was after we received planning consent for the Interconnector Converter Station on the 'Fourfields' site near Boddam, and the onshore High Voltage Alternating Current (HVAC) cable route.

We are now starting the planning consent and marine licence application process for the High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) cables, that will transmit electricity between Scotland and Norway, under the North Sea.

As part of this process, we will be undertaking a programme of public consultation and completing a voluntary Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). An application for planning permission will be made to Aberdeenshire Council for the onshore HVDC cable route to the converter station, and a Marine Licence will be sought from Marine Scotland for the cable installation in UK waters.

Similar permissions will be sought for the subsea cables in Norwegian waters, as well as the onshore cables and converter station at the Norwegian landfall, in Simadalen.

A scoping report was submitted to Aberdeenshire Council and Marine Scotland in April 2016 to seek agreement from the regulators and statutory consultees on the assessment methodologies to be utilised as part of the EIA process. Scoping opinions were received from Aberdeenshire Council in May 2016 and Marine Scotland in July 2016; these can be viewed on our website www.northconnect.no



Offshore Cabling

The cables will make landfall in Scotland in the vicinity of Long Haven Bay; the exact location will be determined through the detailed design process, and will be informed by surveying and stakeholder consultation.

Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) will be utilised to provide ducted cable runs from the cliff top near Long Haven Bay out into the North Sea in order to connect the onshore and offshore cable routes. The HDD exit point will be located on the seabed between approximately 200m – 800m offshore depending on the geological conditions encountered, and the equipment utilised.

The cables will be protected from scour and fouling predominantly through trenching to a depth of approximately 1.5m. Where trenching is not possible due to ground conditions or existing infrastructure, physical protection will be installed to protect the cables.

The design of any physical cable protection will be informed by the ground conditions present, and consultation with marine stakeholders.

Onshore HVDC Cables

There will be two onshore HVDC cables approximately 2km long between the landfall point near Long Haven Bay and the Converter Station. They will in general be buried in a single trench. The land along the cable trench will be returned to its original condition, following the installation of the cables.

Where obstacles are to be crossed such as the A90, and where open trenching is either unacceptable or not feasible, it is proposed to utilise HDD. In this case the cables would be separated for the drilled sections, but returned to a single trench after the obstacle.

Subsea Surveys

A corridor between the UK and Norway has been identified taking a number of aspects into consideration. The exact route that the cables will take within the corridor across the North Sea to Simadalen in Norway has yet to be determined. The final cable route design will take into account input from stakeholders and results of a detailed subsea survey.

UK nearshore subsea survey work, within the Buchan Ness to Collieston Special Protection Area (SPA) which is designated for breeding seabird assemblages, will be undertaken in winter 2016/17 to avoid the bird breeding season. Offshore surveying is anticipated to commence in summer 2017.

The cable route survey will provide information to support the assessment of potential impacts on commercial fisheries, benthic and marine ecology, archaeology, seabed and water quality. The outputs of the survey will also aid in the identification of offshore cable protection requirements and appropriate installation technique selection.



Further information regarding the subsea survey will be provided on www.northconnect.no.

Surveys

In order to complete the EIA and the detailed design, a number of surveys will be undertaken which will consider a full range of geotechnical, environmental, and socio-economic impacts, including seabed surveys, ecological and ornithological surveys, as well as detailed stakeholder consultation. This information will be used to determine the exact route that the onshore and offshore cables will take, and assess the potential environmental impacts of the construction, operation, and decommissioning of the NorthConnect interconnector.

