

Project	MaresConnect Interconnector		
Subject	Introductory meeting with Natural Resources Wales		
Date	22/11/22	Venue	Teams Meeting
Level of Issue	Rev 0	File Reference	P2578_AGDEC06_Rev0
Attendees	Name (& initials)	Company	
	Rowland Sharp (RS)	Natural Resources Wales (NRW)	
	Tom Brinicombe (TB)	MaresConnect	
	Vicky Fisk (VF)	Intertek	

Minutes

- The meeting was arranged to give Natural Resources Wales (NRW) an introduction to the MaresConnect Interconnector project.
- The three landing points for the MaresConnect Interconnect were shared with NRW.
- Rowland Sharp (RS) asked how the project was looking to route past the constraints on land, including housing estates and cliffs.
- Tom Brinicombe (TB) confirmed that there will be horizontal directional drilling (HDD) at the landfall, then the project will look at road routes. The onshore feasibility assessment will look at possible shortening of the cable route by going across agricultural land.
- There is a large hill in Abergele which could pose an issue to land routes, similarly there are granite cliffs in Colwyn Bay which could be challenging for routing.
- TB said the onshore feasibility assessment is providing the project with route corridors and are focusing on roads, therefore the route will not go under any houses
- The route may potentially go from field to field and need to cross the A55 and railway line, for which a HDD would be used.
- RS said there was a gap in the houses in Towyn but this has already been utilised by the Rhyl Flats Offshore Windfarm.
- In this area is a SSSI but a HDD would not cause any problems to the protected features as there is no protected feature on the intertidal area
- RS confirmed there is a road that goes under the A55, past several garages and the route would then consist of farmland straight to the substation.
- TB confirmed the marine survey corridor would be 500m wide.
- There are currently three potential landings
- The survey permit applications may identify two routes for survey.
- The Liverpool Bay SPA at the landing sites starts at low water, but the protected feature is the shingle ridge not the intertidal area. This means the intertidal area can be trenched whilst a HDD can be utilised under the shingle ridge.
- There is one patch of *Sabellaria* on the beach in front of the caravan site to the east of the river at Llanddulas which will need to be avoided.

- TB confirmed that the project are aiming to conduct marine surveys in October/November 2023 and so are looking to submit the survey permit applications in February 2023.
- To the north of Anglesey is an area of horse mussel reef to be aware of during routeing, there will be no trenching permitted here as the recovery time for the reef is lengthy.
- Marine mammals regularly use the area and Liverpool Bay.
- RS said slow moving vessels are not usually an issue for birds.
- The Liverpool Bay SPA is designated for wintering birds, including the red throated diver.
- The Conway Bay SAC contains mobile sandbanks which the project should be aware of as this will affect cable burial in the area. Any installation may need to be buried deeper and any rock protection could cause a major impact on the coastal processes in the area.
- There is a high sediment flow from Anglesey towards the Wirral, resulting in issues with cable deburial of early wind farm export cables in the area due to the sediment movement.
- The noise effects and impacts on marine mammals should be considered as usual.
- RS confirmed it is important to ensure any vessels used on the project are cleaned and defouled to remove any invasive non-native species. There will need to be a schedule for this provided before the licence is issued/it will be a condition of the licence to provide this schedule.
- TB confirmed MaresConnect are happy to share iterative routes with NRW
- RS said horse mussel reef is very difficult to compensate for.
- RS confirmed NRW have a couple of hours of free advice available for every project, and that he can provide the project with advice on any queries as he has a good knowledge of the local area. As a result, it is not believed that a Discretionary Advice Service meeting will be needed at this stage.

Project	MaresConnect Interconnector		
Subject	Meeting with Natural Resources Wales to discuss the MaresConnect Interconnector marine survey		
Date	03/04/23	Venue	Teams Meeting
Level of Issue	Rev 0	File Reference	P2578_AHMAY19_Rev0
Attendees	Name (& initials)	Company	
	Rowland Sharp (RS)	Natural Resources Wales (NRW)	
	Tom Brinicombe (TB)	MaresConnect	
	Vicky Fisk (VF)	Intertek	

Minutes

- The meeting was requested by Vicky Fisk (VF) to discuss the possibility of arranging pre-application advice for the Marine Licence application MaresConnect Interconnector marine survey.
- Rowland Sharp (RS) confirmed the project would be likely to need a European Protected Species licence for the survey works but the requirements could be attached to the conditions of the Marine Licence, so would not be a separate requirement.
- Mussel beds and reef locations were discussed around the north of Anglesey. RS confirmed the project would be asked to avoid these if possible as they are an Annex I habitat but they are not the qualifying feature of an SAC in this location.
- Tom Brinicombe (TB) asked if it was possible for the project to share data with Natural Resources Wales (NRW) in real time regarding surveys around the reef and mussel beds, which had been done on a previous project. RS confirmed this was possible if required, however the reef on the previous project was a qualifying feature of an SAC so the requirements were different.
- The *Sabellaria* reef will recover as long as it has appropriate habitat to recover to.
- NRW are likely to ask for an alternative route or compensation measures if the project crosses a reef but this is advice for the project rather than a requirement.
- Vicky Fisk (VF) asked if the marine licence would attach any seasonal restrictions to the survey. RS said as the survey will consist of a slow moving vessel for a short period of time seasonal restrictions are not expected.
- If the landfall option at Traeth Pensarn is selected, a SSSI Notice will need to be submitted and include an assessment of the project impact on the vegetated shingle as it is a protected feature of the SSSI. During installation, it would require horizontal directional drilling (HDD) to go underneath the shingle ridge, however either side of the ridge is not designated so could be a potential option.
- The application will need to consider the possibility of invasive and non-native species.
- For installation, RS confirmed the project would need to provide information such as rock type and invasive and non-native species for any rock armour that will be used.
- The area to be surveyed contains highly mobile sandbanks, which have left older cables in the area suspended between banks due to their movement. RS confirmed the sandbanks towards Llandullas are not as mobile as the more central banks.
- Sandbank movement is not as common on the beach and happens more in the offshore area.

- As the project has no further questions regarding the Marine Licence application for the marine survey, it was decided further Discretionary Advice would not be necessary.