



Newsletter

Autumn/Winter 2021

This is the third newsletter from Sofia Offshore Wind Farm, one of the world's largest offshore wind farms. Published each quarter, this edition will cover the latest news about project construction works, upcoming plans and community activity. More information can be found at www.sofiawindfarm.com.

Wilton site works pick up pace

The enabling works at the converter station site have continued at pace over the summer with activity on track for the site to be handed over to the converter station contractor early in 2022.

Civil engineers Jones Bros Civil Engineering UK have spent the past few months establishing the site with temporary welfare facilities and access roads, levelling the ground, creating drainage and establishing the platform that will form the base for both the Sofia and Dogger Bank C converter stations.

A focal point of the work has been reshaping the mounds between

the village of Lazenby and the construction site, to screen the upcoming construction activity and, in the longer term, to minimise the visual impact of the completed converter stations on local residents.

To date the first phase of re-profiling has been completed and initial seeding is underway, with tree planting to be carried out during the winter.

The screening height of the northern landscape mound is now fixed although more material from the site will be placed on its north side during the converter station construction. Similarly more material will be placed on the southern mound, further increasing its screening effect.

In early 2022, construction and infrastructure services company Kier, contracted by GE's Grid Solutions, will move onto the site to begin the installation of the Sofia converter station. More details about their work will follow in future editions of the newsletter.



Work being undertaken on the construction site adjacent to Wilton International, Teesside.

Official visitors for the ground-breaking

In summer the project’s official ground-breaking took place on-site with (from left): project directors Steve Wilson (SSE/Dogger Bank C) and Matthew Swanwick (RWE/Sofia), Tees Valley Mayor Ben Houchen, Redcar MP Jacob Young, and Sembcorp’s Andy Koss.

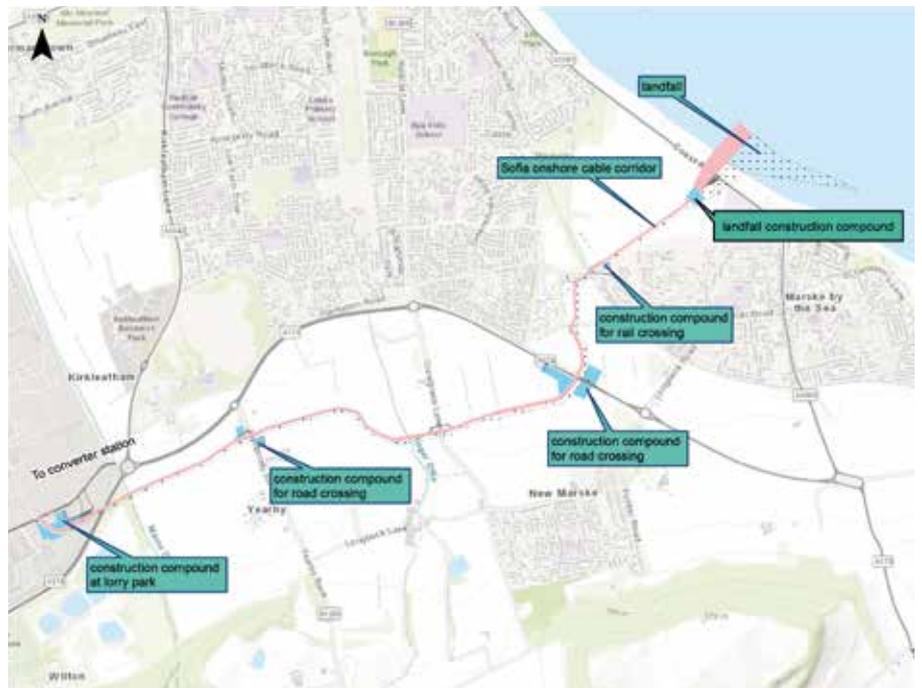


From shore to site cable works programme

The contractor that will carry out the preparatory works for the onshore cable route for both the Sofia and Dogger Bank C offshore wind projects, from the landfall at the coast to the converter station site at Wilton, is due to be finalised later this year once the tendering process is complete.

That contractor will start work in early 2022 to create the corridor along which the ducts and cables will be installed. Towards mid-2022 they will establish the construction compound by the coast. As part of the work there will be monthly drone surveys to monitor the activity and record progress.

The planned programme of those works can be found below, however some timings may change depending on the project progress:



Map of the cable corridor route, including locations of the temporary construction compounds.

Indicative programme of cable route works	Start	End
Enabling works along the onshore cable route from landfall to the converter station site to prepare for the installation of the export cables.	Early 2022	Late 2023
Establishment of the temporary construction compound at landfall.	Early 2022	Mid 2022
Horizontal directional drilling from the construction compound under the coast road (A1085) and beach to install ducts for the export cable.	Mid 2022	Late 2023
Installation of the export cables along the cable route.	Mid 2023	Mid 2024
Removal of temporary construction compounds and access tracks and reinstatement of the cable route.	As sections are completed	End 2024
Removal of the temporary landfall construction compound and reinstatement the site.	Mid 2024	End 2024

Sofia is 100% owned by RWE, and Dogger Bank C is a 50/50 joint venture between SSE Renewables and Equinor. Although they are owned by different companies, the developers will aim to work jointly wherever feasible including on the early site preparation works both at the converter station and along the onshore cable route.

Checking for unexploded ordnances

Early autumn saw the start of the project's investigations into unexploded ordnances (UXO) in the nearshore area, just off the Redcar coast, to identify and check any potential UXOs, along with possible offshore archaeological features.

Coastal visitors may have seen survey vessel Voe Vanguard

(pictured) in the area as it traversed the site where the project's export cables will come to shore.

A remotely operated underwater vehicle was deployed to identify potential UXOs which, if found, are likely to be British buoyant mines or German ground mines from WW2.

Any UXOs identified will be marked and removed in 2022 prior to the start of nearshore works, and in particular before the installation of ducts via horizontal directional drilling.

Sofia has chosen an innovative approach to UXO removal should it be necessary. Known as low order deflagration, the technique reduces the underwater noise which can affect marine mammals and fish, thereby minimising environmental impacts.

The investigations, undertaken by James Fisher Renewables, also included checking for archaeological features to be avoided during the cable works. Several potential archaeological objects were pinpointed during last year's offshore site investigation, so they will be further investigated, with the data reviewed by the project's retained archaeologist.



Survey vessel Voe Vanguard off the coast at Redcar

News in brief

• Supply chain webinars now online

Sofia has now held four meet-the-buyer webinars in partnership with our major contractors to highlight the type of contracting opportunities that the project will bring in the coming years. If you work for, or know of, any business that would like to get involved with the project the webinars can now be replayed via the Sofia website (under Suppliers / Events).

• Teesside supplier event

Working with North East business organisations: NOF, Energi Coast and Tees Engineering Network, Sofia will

host an event to let Teesside companies know about potential opportunities on the project. The event is being planned for late early 2022. If you are interested in attending, please email comms_sofia@rwe.com with your contact details to be added to the invitation list.

• Careers in offshore wind

To highlight careers in offshore wind, Sofia attended Redcar & Cleveland jobs fairs at the Grangetown United Community Hub in summer, where more than 170 attended the full day event, and at Redcar & Cleveland College in conjunction with contractor Jones Bros.

Later this year the team will attend similar events at Bydales Outwood Academy and Newcastle University. If you have a jobs or skills event and would like information about careers in offshore wind, please get in touch.



Sofia and Jones Bros at the Redcar & Cleveland College Jobs & Training Fair

Digging local archaeology

Contributing to the UK's archaeological knowledge is a side benefit from the offshore wind energy sector due to the requirements for projects to document local archaeology prior to construction works being undertaken.

As well as potential marine archaeological features now being investigated just off the Teesside coast, Sofia has a team of onshore archaeologists from Durham University's Archaeological Services (DUAS) carrying out excavation and recording work at locations along the cable route, from landfall near the coast to the converter station site.

At the coast, the team uncovered World War I practice trenches in the vicinity of what was an airfield at the time - set up as a 'finishing school' for pilots to learn combat flying.

The site is now a modern housing estate known as The Landings, with streets named after people and aircraft connected with World War II, despite the airfield not being used during that conflict.

History students from neighbouring



Archaeologist Rebecca Hercock excavates the remains of a Roman-British field system.

Outwood Academy Bydales were able to get a glimpse of their local area's past with a visit to the dig which was just a 200m walk from their school. Archaeologists talked to them about the archaeological works on the site, why they are necessary for an offshore wind farm and how the information is recorded and analysed.

Further along the cable route

towards Lazenby village, the DUAS team have been undertaking digs that shows signs of being Roman agricultural fields, with broken pottery pieces found in some trenches.

The archaeologists record and analyse their findings, with the data helping to enrich the wider knowledge of the local area's past and the nation's history.



Broken pieces of pottery found during the archaeological works



Bydales students visit the excavations at the old WWI airfield.

Primary school resources now online



Teesside youngster Billy narrates three videos produced as part of the primary educational materials.

by Sofia's education support team from UK STEM, who will engage with the Teesside primary schools closest to the project's onshore infrastructure and offer online teacher workshops and other support.

The first of the continuous professional development sessions was held in late October and around 20 teachers from 17 local primary schools attended to learn about how to best use the resources in the classroom with their own students.

The resources can be accessed via the Sofia website: <https://sofiawindfarm.com/community/education-and-skills/primary-school-teaching-resources/#Primaryresources>

**Teesside primary school trust
Tees Valley Education (TVE),
joined forces with Sofia to
launch a series of online
education resources to teach
young people about renewable
energy, and to prepare them
for the North East's predicted
growth as one of the UK's
leading offshore wind energy
hubs.**

renewables projects around the world, as well as teacher sessions to give students experience in planning a wind farm and science investigation techniques.

The curriculum materials will be disseminated to a wider network

Two of TVE's five primary schools are those closest to the project's onshore works – Wilton and Dormanstown – giving a natural link between the school and the wind farm.

The joint initiative included the production and trialling of offshore wind teaching resources that are now available online for teachers and others with an interest, to download and use.

The resources, developed by Spark Tees Valley, include: three engaging videos narrated by local youngster Billy; Google Earth Voyage highlighting



This constraints map is used as part of a classroom exercise to show students how to plan a wind farm.

Grants awards from Sofia fund

Nine local community groups and charities from East Cleveland have so far received grants from the Sofia Construction Community Fund managed and distributed by Tees Valley Community Foundation (TVCF). The funds have gone to numerous worthwhile organisations and activities including:

Riding for Disabled Cleveland:

Catering for people with complex disabilities, this grant will support their reintroduction to the riding centre following the pandemic.

Yearby Community Association:

Funding a 'kissing gate' that will help to make the countryside surrounding Yearby village more accessible to all.

Bridge2Bamboo at the Festival of Thrift:

Bringing a national participatory art project Bridge2Bamboo to Redcar to tie in with the annual Festival of Thrift.

Kirkleatham Hall School (KHS)

Friends: Providing a bespoke outdoor mobile sensory garden for pupils with profound and



Bamboo2Bridge at the Festival of Thrift

multiple learning difficulties, and visual and hearing impairments.

Marske Sports and Recreation

Partnership: Funding to extend a walking football and social sustainability initiative at Marske United, encouraging those who have been isolated or lost loved ones, to socialise and improve fitness.

Tees Valley Wildlife Trust: Enabling volunteers to maintain, monitor and build the population of barn owls in East Cleveland via

a network of nest boxes and to engage young people in learning more about this protected bird through supporting workshops.

There is still some funding available for 2021 so to find out more or apply visit www.teesvalleyfoundation.org and follow the 'apply for a grant' links specifying the 'Sofia Offshore Wind Farm Construction Community Fund'.

Sofia Newsletter distribution

Printed copies of this newsletter have been delivered to addresses closest to the onshore converter station site plus those who requested copies. Postcards advising of publication were delivered to

addresses within 500m of the full cable corridor. If you received a postcard and would like to remain updated about Sofia, please send your details and request to be included on the distribution list to comms_sofia@rwe.com.

For hard copies please send your name and postal address, for electronic versions please only send your email address. You can also call us on: **0330 122 9670**.

To follow the project online, including to view the latest news and updates, visit sofiawindfarm.com

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