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**To:** [Drew J \(Jessica\)](#)  
**Cc:** [Aires C \(Catarina\)](#); [Bain N \(Nicola\) \(MARLAB\)](#); [MS Marine Renewables](#); [ann.ramsay@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:ann.ramsay@aberdeenshire.gov.uk); [Sue Lawrence](#)  
**Subject:** EOWDC - SNH advice on cable laying strategy  
**Date:** 07 March 2017 17:21:11  
**Attachments:** [RE Aberdeen Offshore Wind Farm - Discharge of Conditions \(Intertidal surveys cable laying\).msg](#)

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Dear Jessica,

Thank you for consulting us on this cable laying strategy for the European wind offshore deployment centre (EOWDC) at Aberdeen Bay. This plan covers both the intra-array cabling and the export cable up to mean high water springs.

- **Intra-array cabling**

SNH has no major comment on the intra-array cabling: we are satisfied with the proposed installation process and intended level of cable burial, including no anticipated requirement for cable protection materials (see section 9.3 and chapter 10).

The intra-array cables are to be buried to a target depth of 1.0m and this should be sufficient to mitigate any electromagnetic effects (EMF) – see the assessment provided in chapter 8. Any EMF from the cabling will not be greater than baseline (i.e. the earth's magnetic field) and will not give rise to any significant impacts on fish or benthic interests.

- **Export cable**

As indicated in previous advice, SNH would prefer the use of horizontal directional drill (HDD) to install the export cable where it comes ashore. This means we'd prefer the cable to come ashore at location 2, where it's proposed to use HDD for installation (see overview in section 6.2.1 and further detail in section 9.2.2). That said, we've no objection to use of cable trenching at location 1 as long as it can be demonstrated that this will not interfere with coastal processes.

In this regard, our main concern relates to potential requirements for cable protection in nearshore coastal waters. This can be avoided by burying the cable sufficiently deeply so that it will not become re-exposed over the life of the wind farm (a design life of 25 years). We recommend the developer reviews the outputs from Scotland's Coastal Change Assessment to help inform their understanding of any potential changes in beach level in this area and thus the target depth for cable burial:

<http://www.dynamiccoast.com/>

Furthermore, **if the developer is able to commit to re-burying any cable potentially re-exposed by erosion, and confirms no use of cable protection, then this removes all SNH concerns in relation to either HDD or cable trenching.** If this mitigation is adopted then there will be no interference with coastal processes and no impacts on Foveran Links SSSI lying up the coast.

As previously advised (see attached email), we are satisfied with the inter-tidal survey work carried out to inform the choice of cable landfall options – the results of survey work are presented and discussed in section 5.3 of the plan. We can therefore confirm that installation of the export cable (either at location 1 or location 2) will not give rise to any significant impacts on benthic or other ecological interests.

If you've any queries about this advice please don't hesitate to get in touch. I've copied it to Aberdeenshire Council for information.

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**Subject:** RE: Aberdeen Offshore Wind Farm - Discharge of Conditions (Intertidal surveys & cable laying)

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Dear Victoria,

Apologies, as Sue & myself have been in and out of the office the past few weeks and I'm not sure if we've managed to get back to you about this.

Further to the teleconference held 10 October, I'm confirming that SNH do not require any further intertidal survey work to be undertaken in respect of the export cable / landfall point for Aberdeen Bay offshore wind farm. We confirm that the work undertaken to date is of a good standard and it has not flagged any significant ecological interest in this area. Therefore we don't need any further information in this regard, to support any discharge of onshore planning or marine licence conditions.

We would, however, be interested in any information you may have gathered in relation to coastal processes in this area. You correctly summarise that:

"SNH's primary interest is related to the dynamic nature of the southern portion of [Aberdeen] bay, and specifically ensuring that the Project has sufficient information available to ensure that cables are buried to a suitable depth to avoid exposure in future."

Going forward, this will be the key locus for any further advice we provide on the cable landfall in relation to the relevant consultations (i.e. discharge of planning condition 5 and Section 36 condition 25). In this regard, we mentioned that outputs from Scotland's Coastal Change Assessment have recently become available, and may be informative. Please see the website for further information:

<http://www.dynamiccoast.com/>

Hopefully, this summarises SNH's input on these matters going forward. If anyone has any further queries in this regard, please contact Sue in relation to onshore planning or myself in relation to marine licensing / Section 36 aspects.

Yours sincerely,

**Catriona Gall**

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