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Volume 7A Overview Chapter Appendices

Appendix 6-2 2km Onshore Cable Corridor Appraisal RAG
Criteria

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

%	Per Cent
BGS	British Geological Society
HDD	Horizontal Directional Drilling
km	kilometre
LDP	Local Development Plan
MOWEL	Moray Offshore Wind Farm East Ltd
RAG	Red Amber Green
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SEPA	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
SPA	Special Protection Area
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest

1 Criteria for RAG Assessment

1.1.1.1

The development of the 2 kilometres (km) onshore cable corridor options considered the following parameters provided by Ocean Winds:

- Encompass all three likely landfall points and two onshore substations in the vicinity of New Deer;
- Take the most direct corridor from the landfall where possible;
- Avoid settlements;
- Avoid environmentally designated or sensitive areas (SSSIs);
- Avoid areas of Ancient Woodland Inventory woodland;
- Avoid areas of Ancient woodland., if not possible then areas of tree felling to be minimised;
- Avoid area identified as safeguard for minerals;
- Avoid areas of steep terrain;
- Avoid onshore wind farms; and,
- Minimise crossings of other infrastructure including gas pipelines.

1.1.1.2

It considered the following;

- Cultural heritage – Priority to known designated heritage assets such as World heritage Sites, Listed Buildings (Category A, B and C), Scheduled Monuments and Inventory gardens and Designated Landscapes and inventory Battlefields. Buried archaeological records shown within the Historical Environmental Record would not be acquired as part of this appraisal as these records are not publicly available;
- Hydrology – proximity to areas of flood risk and the need for watercourse crossings;
- Geology and soils – proximity to Geological Conservation review sites, geological SSSIs and the potential for deep peat and priority peatland;
- Planning policy/development planning – potential conflicts or synergies with permitted planning applications and local authority adopted/proposed planning allocations; and
- Marine environment and marine fauna and coastal processes – proximity to designated sites and protected areas Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Marine Protected Areas (MPAs).

1.1.1.3

The information above was obtained from freely available sources and requested from Aberdeenshire council. However some data could not be obtained. These are listed below:

- Salmon river crossings could not be access via available data;
- Areas of forestry / plantation were not possible to access; and
- Overhead lines and underground power cables.

- 1.1.1.4 The Red Amber Green (RAG) assessment was used to determine the more or less favourable corridors for development. The assessment was undertaken for each of the identified routes.
- 1.1.1.5 Green represents the corridors that are more favourable in terms of the various parameters, and subsequently more likely to be selected for development progression. Amber indicates that the corridor may have features that hinder its suitability for the proposed development, although the corridor still presents as a viable option for development with appropriate mitigation and design.
- 1.1.1.6 It is important to recognise that a corridor being marked as red does not make it unsuitable for development, it is a flagging system to note there are higher risks based on that parameter. Where a red is noted, under the particular parameter being used in this assessment, other corridors would appear to be more appropriate. The RAG assessment allows corridors to be compared under the same parameters, simplifying how conclusions can be drawn. This allows the efficient delivery of the best practice approach to provide advice on corridor suitability for the proposed development.
- 1.1.1.7 The RAG criteria used is presented in Table 1-1.

Table 1-1: RAG Criteria Used for 2km Onshore Cable Corridor Appraisal

Parameter	Criteria	Source of information	Rationale for Inclusion in assessment
Historic Environment (Cultural Heritage)			
Proximity to National Designations: Category A Listed Buildings Conservation Area Scheduled Monuments Inventory Battlefields Gardens and Designed Landscapes	Red = within	Designations Map Search (Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Conservation Areas, Historic Battlefield Inventory, Gardens and Designed Landscapes):	Construction works inside the boundary of a National Designation may require further consenting considerations. Presence of National Designations within the 2km corridor will reduce optionality in later-stages of the route development process.
	Amber = <1km		
	Green = >1km		
Proximity to Regional and Local Designations and Sensitive Areas Category B and Category C Listed Buildings	Red = within	Designations Map Search (Listed Buildings)	Construction works inside the boundary of a regional and local Designation may require further consenting considerations and require mitigation during the design stage. Presence of National Designations within the 2km corridor will reduce optionality in later-stages of the route development process.
	Amber = <1km	CANMORE (Canmore Points)	
	Green = >1km		

Parameter	Criteria	Source of information	Rationale for Inclusion in assessment
Core Paths and Cycle routes		NatureScot Local Path Networks (Core Paths)	
Cemeteries / Burial Grounds			
Biodiversity			
Proximity to European Designations: Special Protection Areas (SPA) Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) RAMSAR	Red = within Amber = <15km Green = >15km	MAGIC Defra / NatureScot (SPA, SAC, Ramsar)	Construction works inside or nearby a protected area may cause disruption to the surrounding biodiversity. Construction works inside the boundary of a European Designation may require further consenting considerations. Designations within the 2km corridor will reduce optionality in later-stages of the route development process.
Proximity to National Designations: Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) National Parks	Red = within Amber = <1km Green = >1km	MAGIC Defra / NatureScot (SSSI, National Parks, National Nature Reserves MPA)	Construction works inside the boundary of a National Designation may require further consenting considerations. Presence of National Designations within the 2km corridor will reduce optionality in later-stages of the route development process.

Parameter	Criteria	Source of information	Rationale for Inclusion in assessment
Geological Conservation Review Sites			
Proximity to Ancient Woodlands	Red = within	MAGIC Defra (Ancient Woodlands and Ancient Veteran Trees)	It is unlikely that consent would be permitted through an ancient woodland designation or through ancient trees. The impact can be direct or indirect through increasing noise pollution and ecosystems changing the biodiversity of the woodland. Designations within the 2km corridor will reduce optionality in later-stages of the route development process.
	Amber = <1km		
	Green = >1km		
Hydrology and Hydrogeology			
Proximity to Drinking water protected areas	Red = within	Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) Flood Hazard and Flood Risk	Drinking water quality in Scotland is regulated by the Drinking Water Quality Regulator, which is responsible for monitoring water quality and enforcing regulations.
	Amber = <1km		
	Green = >1km		
Proportion of site impacted by flood risk:	Red = > 80 per cent (%) within flood risk zone	SEPA Flood Hazard and Flood Risk	Areas of flood risk can have a detrimental impact on development impacting subsurface and overground utilities. Mitigation in flood risk zones would be implemented to minimise impact.
Fluvial flood risk	Amber = >20% <80% within flood risk zone		
Pluvial flood risk			

Parameter	Criteria	Source of information	Rationale for Inclusion in assessment
Coastal flood risk	Green = < 20% within flood risk zone		
Likelihood of the project impacting a main river	Red = > 2 main river within the site	SEPA Flood Hazard and Flood Risk	River crossings hinder potential routes and can increase costs and time depending on the scale and frequency of crossings.
	Amber = < 2 main river within the site		
	Green = no main rivers within the site		
Geology and Soils			
Ground conditions at surface	Amber = Made Ground or Soft Ground (peat, alluvium)	British Geological Society (BGS) Geo Index, SEPA, aerial imagery, environment Scotland, map scans	Subsurface material may impact design and impact costs and delays in programme.
	Green = Glacial strata		
Topography	Red = >30 degree slope	Aerial imagery, lidar data, map scans	Access difficulties to steeply sloping areas during construction.

Parameter	Criteria	Source of information	Rationale for Inclusion in assessment
	Amber = <15 degree slope, or boggy ground		
	Green = relatively flat		
Surface water feature	Red = River, burn, pond, flooding, well on site	Aerial imagery, BGS Geo Index, SEPA, aerial imagery, environment Scotland, map scans	Surface water features can hinder the development process impacting the design and programme timeline of a project. Surface water bodies within the 2km corridor will reduce optionality in later-stages of the route development process.
	Amber = field drain on site boundary or water feature <200m from site		
	Green = >200m from site		
Areas of Safeguarded Minerals	Red = within	Aberdeenshire Council Data	LDP defines Areas of Mineral Safeguarding as important sites <i>"where other forms of development should not generally be allowed."</i>
	Amber = <1km		
	Green = >1km		
Historic Land Use and Development			
	Red = within	Aberdeenshire Council Data	

Parameter	Criteria	Source of information	Rationale for Inclusion in assessment
National Grid locations; HP Gas Pipelines Gas Sites Moray Offshore Wind Farm East Ltd (MOWEL) Cable route	Green = Offsite		It is unlikely that development would be allowed through these areas, any development may incur increased costs or mitigation. Locations within the 2km corridor will reduce optionality in later-stages of the route development process.
Wind Farms and Wind-turbine Applications	Red = Onsite Green = Offsite	Aberdeenshire Council Data	
Local Development Plan	Amber = Onsite Green = Offsite	Aberdeenshire Council Data	Construction works within Local Plan allocations may require further consenting considerations. Presence of Local Plan allocations within the 2km corridor will reduce optionality in later-stages of the route development process.

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