THE CROWN ESTATE

Cable Route Identification & Leasing Guidelines

Transmission Assets for Offshore Renewable Installations

Version 6.0 – November 2026

Contents

Abbreviations 4

Glossary of terms 5

2.0 Introduction FOR PUBLIC USE **13**

2.1 The Crown Estate's role in cable routing 14
2.2 Key stakeholder interactions 15
2.3 Celtic Sea Floating Offshore Wind Leasing Round 5 16

3.0 Connecting to the National Electricity Transmission System (NETS) 17

4.0 Cable Route Protocol (CRP) 18

5.0 Cable Route planning and principles 21

5.1 Principles of cable routing and spacing (evidence-based study) 21
5.2 Cable Route planning – overarching principles 21

6.0 Early dialogue and conflict checking 24

6.1 Proximity Check process 24

7.0 Cable Route Identification and Approval (CRIA) 25

7.1 Initial technical assessment of the proposed Cable Route 25
7.2 Contents of the CRIA application 25
7.3 Formal review and approval of the Cable Route 26

8.0 Entering into the Transmission Asset Agreement for Lease (TA AfL)/Option Agreement 27

8.1 Formalising the Cable Route 27
8.2 Rights of protection in the Transmission Asset Agreement for Lease or Option Agreement 28

9.0 Entering into the Transmission Asset Lease (TA Lease) 30

9.1 Formalising the Cable Route for entering the TA Lease 30
9.2 Rights of protection in the TA Lease 32

10.0 As-laid coordinates and potential adjustments to the route 34

11.0 Delineation of leases after the generator-OFTO split 35

APPENDIX 36

Appendix 1 37

Cable Route Protocol (CRP) 37
Requirements 37
Initial Area of Search(AoS) 38
Detailed Cable Route planning 40

Appendix 2 – CRP compliance 42

General requirements 42
Initial Area of Search 44
Detailed cable route planning 46

Appendix 3 – CRIA information submission 49

Summary Information 49
Part 1 – Project Specification & Justification 50
Part 2 – Planning and third party interests 53
Part 3 – Commercial set-up and Guarantor 54

Appendix 4 – Document control 55

Document Details 55

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Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Definition / Explanation
AC	Alternating Current
AfL	Agreement for Lease
AoS	Area of Search
ASSI	Areas of Special Scientific Interest
BCA	Bilateral Connection Agreement
BEGA	Bilateral Embedded Generation Agreement
CRIA	Cable Route Identification and Approval
CRP	Cable Route Protocol
DA	Designated Area
DC	Direct Current
GIS	Geographic Information System
HND	Holistic Network Design
HNDFUE	Holistic Network Design Follow-Up Exercise
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment
m	Metre
MCZ	Marine Conservation Zone
MDE	Marine Data Exchange
NETS	National Electricity Transmission System
NESO	National Electricity System Operator
NGET	National Grid Electricity Transmission
OFTO	Offshore Transmission Owner
OREI	Offshore Renewable Energy Installation
PDA	Project Development Area
PEIR	Preliminary Environmental Information Report
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SNCB	Statutory Nature Conservation Body
SPA	Special Protection Area
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
TA AfL	Transmission Asset Agreement for Lease
WF AfL	Wind Farm Agreement for Lease

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Glossary of terms

The following provides a description of terms used in this guidance. Some of these terms are defined in the Agreement for Lease (AfL), Option Agreement and Lease documents where applicable:

Term	Definition
Act	A written statute or law passed by a legislative body.
Agreement for Lease (AfL)	An agreement with The Crown Estate for the use of the seabed. The Agreement for Lease allows a developer to enter into a Lease to construct assets on the seabed provided certain conditions are met (including the granting of statutory development consents).
Annex I Habitats	Habitats listed in Annex I of the Habitats Directive. This Annex lists habitats of Community Interest for which Special Areas of Conservation can be designated.
Area of Search	An area of seabed within which site selection for a preferred Cable Route is being undertaken.
Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI)	A site designated under the Environment (Northern Ireland) Order 2002 (as amended).
Authority	An authority whether statutory, public, local, binding, European, international or otherwise, government department or agency, regulator or a court of competent jurisdiction.
Cable Route	An area of the seabed laid out by the developer to allow the passage of a number of Supply Cables from an OREI to the shore or to a Substation Site used for the transmission of electricity generated by the OREI. By the time the Cable Route is established in the Agreement for Lease or Option Agreement, it forms part of the Option Site or Option Area which later becomes a DA Route (applicable to Transmission Asset Agreement for Lease only) and ultimately a Designated Area in the Lease.
Cable Route Identification and Approval (CRIA)	A document submitted by a developer to The Crown Estate as part of an application for a Transmission Asset Agreement for Lease or Option Agreement.
Cable Route Protocol (CRP)	This comprises a set of requirements developed by The Crown Estate, detailed in Appendix 1, to help developers establish transmission system infrastructure, including export cabling.

Term	Definition
Compensatory Measures	Under the HRA, compensatory measures are required when an adverse effect on integrity cannot be ruled out on a feature of a protected site from impacts associated with a plan or project. These measures are put forward as part of a derogation designed to deliver the same ecological value or compensate for the loss of the same feature, habitat or species to ensure the coherence of the UK National Site Network.
Cross-border OFTO	An OFTO or Transmission Entity which is looking to secure rights for a Cable Route from The Crown Estate, where the OREI rights are not leased nor licensed by The Crown Estate.
Designated Area Route (DA Route)	A section depicted on the lease plan, located inside the Option Site, where the Designated Area(s) will be placed and extending to the Maximum Depth. The location and width of the DA Route is to be approved by The Crown Estate (under the Transmission Asset Agreement for Lease) based on the developer's justified requirements and determined by the number of cables and their granted spacing.
Designated Area (DA)	The part of the foreshore (where applicable) and seabed in which a Supply Cable is to be located, being a strip running from the boundary of the Substation Site to another Substation Site (if applicable) and/or to the shore, having a width of 30m and extending to the Maximum Depth.
Development Consent Order	An order granting development consent for a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project pursuant to and as defined in the Planning Act 2008 (as amended).
Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)	An assessment of the biological, physical, social, and other environmental effects of a project or a development, which is to be used to prepare an Environmental Statement in support of a formal application for a Development Consent Order or equivalent.
Environmental Statement	Prepared by a developer detailing the outcomes of an Environmental Impact Assessment in support of planning applications for major infrastructure projects.
European Sites	European Sites include Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Sites of Community Importance (SCIs) and candidate SACs. Government policy also requires proposed SACs, potential SPAs, Ramsar sites and areas identified or required to compensate for damage to a European site

Term	Definition
	to be treated as if they are designated European sites. These sites are protected under the Habitats Regulations.
Generator Cables	The cables in or under the Wind Farm Lease area for the passage of electricity generated by each of the turbines connecting to a substation or other point of connection and/or the transmission of telecommunications in connection with the offshore wind farm installed, pursuant to the Wind Farm Lease.
Geographical Information Systems (GIS)	A computer system for capturing, storing, checking and displaying spatial and geographic data.
Habitats Regulations	Collectively the most recent statutory instruments (as amended) that transpose or originally derive from the transposition of the requirements of the Habitats Directive and Birds Directive into legislation in England, Wales and Northern Ireland including the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), The Conservation of Offshore Marine Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and The Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended).
Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)	A step-by-step process by which a competent authority, as required by the Habitats Regulations: ~~a)~~ determines whether a project or plan is likely to have a significant effect on a European Site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects); and ~~b)~~ if so, undertakes an appropriate assessment of the implications of that project or plan for the affected sites having regard to their conservation objectives. In cases where an adverse effect on the integrity of a European Site cannot be excluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt, the competent authority should not agree to the plan or project unless it considers that the plan or project should proceed, relying on a "derogation" under the Habitats Regulations.
Habitats Regulations Sites	European sites and those treated as European sites as a matter of government policy.
Holistic Network Design (HND)	The Holistic Network Design was the Electricity System Operator's (now NESO) first system-wide strategic network planning output under the UK's Offshore Transmission Network Review (OTNR). Published in 2022, the HND targeted delivery of ~50 GW of offshore wind by 2039, and provided a coordinated onshore and

Term	Definition
	offshore transmission design that would enable the UK's offshore wind ambition. The HND moved away from a traditional radial, project-by-project approach toward a unified design that optimises network infrastructure across multiple wind farms and regions, considering cost, deliverability, operability, environmental impact and community impact together.
Holistic Network Design Follow-Up Exercise (HNDFUE)	Holistic Network Design Follow-Up (HNDFUE) is the Electricity System Operator's (now NESO) process for applying the Holistic Network Desing's strategic, system-wide transmission planning principles to specific offshore wind geographies or leasing rounds, producing an indicative coordinated onshore and offshore network design to inform market delivery
Lease	An agreement between a Project Company or Transmission Entity and The Crown Estate granting the Project Company or Transmission Entity certain property interests and/or rights over a relevant area of the seabed in order to carry out a project.
Lowest Astronomical Tide	The lowest level which can be predicted to occur under average meteorological conditions and under any combination of astronomical conditions; this level will not be reached every year. Note that highest astronomical tides and Lowest FAstronomical Tides are not the extreme levels which can be reached as storm surges may cause considerably higher and lower levels to occur.
Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ)	A site designated under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (as amended) that protects a range of nationally important, rare or threatened habitats and species.
Maximum Depth	A depth in metres beneath the surface of the foreshore (if applicable) and seabed that the rights for the DA Route, Designated Area and Substation Site are granted to.
Mean High Water	The average height between mean high water springs and mean high water neaps.
Mean Low Water	The average height between mean low water springs and mean low water neaps.
Mitigation Measures	Protective measures forming part of a project that are intended to avoid or reduce any impacts that may be caused by a plan or project.

Term	Definition
National Energy System Operator (NESO)	Great Britain's independent, publicly owned system operator, responsible for planning the electricity and gas networks and operating the electricity system in real time to deliver a secure, affordable path to net zero.
National Policy Statements	Produced by government to provide a policy framework for each infrastructure sector. They give reasons for the policy set out in the statement and must include an explanation of how the policy takes account of government policy relating to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change.
National Electricity Transmission System (NETS)	Great Britain's high-voltage transmission network; covering England, Wales, Scotland and adjacent offshore waters; comprising mainly High Voltage (HV) lines, substations and associated plant owned/operated by licensed transmission owners; operated by NESO.
National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET)	The licensed transmission owner that owns and maintains the high-voltage electricity transmission network in England and Wales; it supports grid connections by assessing and delivering the transmission works for new projects, while NESO manages customer connection applications and offers.
No Dredging Zone	Where applicable, an area extending within a stated distance, either side of a Designated Area, within which The Crown Estate will not grant licences or consents to third parties for the dredging or removal of materials.
Offshore Renewable Energy Installation (OREI):	The offshore renewable energy project and in this instance an offshore wind farm means an offshore wind farm or floating offshore wind farm associated with the proposed Cable Route and subsequent Transmission Asset Agreement for Lease, Option Agreement and Lease.
Offshore Transmission Owner (OFTO)	A company appointed and licensed by Ofgem to acquire or install and own the Supply Cables and ancillary equipment forming part of the offshore electricity system for an OREI.
Option Agreement	An agreement with The Crown Estate for the use of the seabed. The Option Agreement allows a developer to enter into a TA Lease to construct assets on the seabed provided certain conditions are met.
Option Area	An area of the seabed as established in the Option Agreement to allow the passage of Supply Cable(s) for a specific project upon which the Cable Route will be located within. The location and area of the Option Area are to be approved by The Crown Estate based on the

Term	Definition
	developer's justified requirements set out in the CRIA. The Option Area may also contain an area for a Substation Site where it is located outside of the OREI.
Option Site	An area of the seabed as established in the Transmission Asset Agreement for Lease to allow the passage of Supply Cables and installation of substation(s), for a specific project upon which the Cable Route will be located within. The location and area of the Option Site are to be approved by The Crown Estate based on the developer's justified requirements as set out in the CRIA. The Option Site also encompasses the passage of Supply Cables between the Substation Site and the edge of the OREI (which area is otherwise part of the Wind Farm Agreement for Lease). The Option Site may therefore overlap with the Wind Farm Agreement for Lease and contain the area for the Substation Site itself.
Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR)	The report providing information on the project and emerging environmental impacts used to support and inform the pre-application consultation process prior to a formal application for a Development Consent Order or equivalent.
Project Company	A special purpose limited liability company established specifically for the objective of developing a particular project, which will enter into (as and when required) the Wind Farm Agreement for Lease and the Wind Farm Lease, , and may also be the Transmission Entity, for the purposes of the Transmission Asset Agreement for Lease, Option Agreement and the Transmission Asset Lease with The Crown Estate.
Protected Sites	Sites that receive protection by means of certain legislation in recognition of their biodiversity and/or geological value.
Proximity Check	A check over a proposed shape or area against the spatial data held by The Crown Estate in its GIS database.
Ramsar	A site designated in accordance with the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance.
Security and Quality of Supply Standard (SQSS)	The electricity industry document that sets out the criteria and methodology for planning and operating the National Electricity Transmission System (NETS).
Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	A site designated under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

Term	Definition
Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)	A site designated under the Habitats Directive.
Special Protection Areas (SPA)	A site classified under the Wild Birds Directive.
Statements of Common Ground	A written statement prepared jointly by the applicant and any interested party, which contains agreed factual information referred to in the consent application.
Statutory Nature Conservation Bodies (SNCB)	A statutory body with the responsibility to manage conservation sites and advise on impacts. This includes any or all of Natural England, Natural Resources Wales, Scottish Natural Heritage, Northern Ireland Department for the Environment, Agriculture and Rural Affairs and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee.
Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)	A system of incorporating environmental considerations into policies, plans, programmes and strategies.
Substation Site	The area of the seabed circular in shape situated in the Option Site and Option Area (if applicable), with a diameter of 200m and extending to the Maximum Depth, in which an offshore substation or an offshore converter station is to be erected, usually within an OREI.
Supply Cable	A cable to be installed in the Designated Area with each cable having its own Designated Area for the conveyance or passage or transmission to shore of electricity generated by the OREI or otherwise required for the operation of the OREI (but excluding the Generator Cables).
Transmission Asset Agreement for Lease (TA AfL)	The Agreement for Lease granted to a Transmission Entity or Project Company for the associated OREI in relation to the Option Site and eventual installation of the Transmission Asset Infrastructure.
Transmission Asset Infrastructure	The Supply Cables, the Substation Site (if applicable) and ancillary equipment owned by the Transmission Entity and forming part of the offshore electricity transmission system.
Transmission Asset Lease (TA Lease)	A lease to be entered into between The Crown Estate and a Transmission Entity in respect of an offshore transmission route, in accordance with the relevant Transmission Asset Agreement for Lease or Option Agreement.

Term	Definition
Transmission Entity	The counterparty to a Transmission Asset Agreement for Lease, Option Agreement or Transmission Asset Lease, which may be an OFTO, or the Project Company.
UK National Site Network	The national site network within the UK territory comprising the Protected Sites already designated under the Habitats and Wild Birds Directives and any further sites designated under the Habitats Regulations.
Wind Farm Agreement for Lease (WF AfL)	The initial Agreement for Lease granted to the wind farm developer for the OREI which is situated within English, Welsh or Northern Irish waters and granted by The Crown Estate.
Wind Farm Lease	The Lease granted to the wind farm developer for the OREI which is situated within English or Welsh waters and granted by The Crown Estate.
Works Restriction Zone	An area of the foreshore (if applicable) and seabed within 235m either side of the Designated Area in water depths up to 55m below chart datum and an area of the foreshore (if applicable) and seabed within 485m either side of the Designated Area in water depths greater than 55m below chart datum within which TCE won't grant rights without the tenant's consent.

2.0 Introduction

This document offers comprehensive guidance to developers preparing applications to The Crown Estate for Cable Routes associated with Offshore Renewable Energy Installations (OREIs). The content has been updated specifically for developers aiming to secure rights for standalone Cable Routes, while remaining applicable to projects under the Celtic Sea Floating Offshore Wind Leasing Round 5 (Round 5). This guidance will be periodically reviewed to maintain its relevance for the wider transmission sector, aligning with The Crown Estate's whole of seabed strategy, marine delivery routemap, and overarching strategic objectives.

This guidance aims to inform developers about The Crown Estate's requirements for granting property rights related to Cable Routes and specifies the details of Transmission Asset Infrastructure needed for approval. It explains the steps involved in applying, assessing, and approving (or rejecting) Cable Route applications, and introduces the Cable Route Identification and Approval (CRIA) submission process.

The guidance is generic and therefore suitable for all Transmission Asset Infrastructure in relation to OREIs, although the terms "wind farms", " Round 5" and "cross-border OFTOs" are referred to from time to time.

This guidance recommends that developers, The Crown Estate, and relevant authorities start discussions early to help secure a suitable Cable Route, with careful consideration for both the environment and other sea users. It lays out several broad principles offering best practice advice for planning cable routes, including consideration of key technical factors such as burial feasibility, thermal performance, cable spacing and interactions with existing infrastructure. Developers are required to follow these principles during Cable Route planning.

This document includes reference to a desktop study entitled "Principles of Cable Routing and Spacing, The Crown Estate (UK) 2012" commissioned by The Crown Estate to assess appropriate spacing between Supply Cables placed adjacent to each other within a Cable Route. The study is further described in Section 4 and can be downloaded from the Marine Data Exchange (MDE).



Cable laying vessel with a full drum of cable

This document explains how to formalise the Cable Route and Transmission Asset Infrastructure within a Transmission Asset Agreement for Lease (TA AfL) or Option Agreement, as well as what levels of protection are available during this phase. It also outlines the conditions for starting construction and how to exercise the option to move forward with the Transmission Asset Lease (TA Lease).

The guidance should be reviewed alongside the relevant Agreement for Lease, Option Agreement and Lease documents issued by The Crown Estate as a number of the terms and definitions herein correspond with those found in these agreements. Given variations in legal

drafting across different agreements, such as those arising from distinct leasing rounds, this guide remains general in nature. In cases of discrepancy or conflict between this document and the legal agreements, the latter will always take precedence.

For Cross-border OFTOs, developers require rights for a Cable Route as they are connecting into the National Electricity Transmission System (NETS) within England and Wales. However, the rights for a Wind Farm Agreement for Lease (WF AfL) or Wind farm Lease (WF Lease) are not provided by The Crown Estate as the OREI is not situated within The Crown Estate's jurisdiction. Whilst this guidance provides information on the rights granted for a Cable Route, it does not cover all aspects of the process to secure such rights.

2.1 The Crown Estate's role in cable routing

For the avoidance of doubt, this document relates to leasing of the offshore section of the Cable Route, extending from the generating site (if leased by The Crown Estate) to Mean Low Water (or Mean High Water where The Crown Estate owns the foreshore at the landfall location). It does not provide guidance on the planning or implementation of the onshore cable route. However, adoption of the procedures outlined in the Cable Route Protocol (CRP) is highly recommended for onshore cable planning.

The Crown Estate may grant a WF AfL to a developer for an OREI. These WF AfLs are options that provide developers with an appropriate framework to assess whether a specific seabed area is appropriate for developing an OREI. The WF AfL does not grant the right to construct and operate an OREI; such rights are only conferred by The Crown Estate once a Lease has been signed, after the developer has secured all of the necessary consents and satisfied conditions and obligations set out in the WF AfL.

The WF AfL will usually cover the proposed OREI area only and not the Cable Route. As the feasibility of developing the project progresses, desktop studies followed by survey work are typically carried out and a Cable Route is identified. After identifying this route, the developer can request a TA AfL from The Crown Estate that includes the chosen Cable Route and offshore substation locations, which are generally found within the OREI area.

It is a requirement of The Crown Estate that an application for a Cable Route is accompanied by a CRIA, further detailed in Section 7. This requires information to be submitted on project specification and justification, planning and third-party interests, commercial set-up and guarantors, and must demonstrate compliance with the requirements set out in the CRP (Appendix 1). The CRIA provides the evidence required for The Crown Estate to make its decision on granting the TA AfL or Option Agreement.

Round 5 developers seeking a TA AfL must engage with The Crown Estate as per the requirements of the WF AfL before making an application for statutory development consents.

Cross-border OFTOs are not contractually required to consult The Crown Estate before seeking statutory development consents, but early engagement is recommended to address potential proximity issues as routes develop.

It should be noted that the TA AfL or Option Agreement will cover only the Cable Route and the area within which the Substation Site(s) (if applicable) may be located and, depending on the extent of The Crown Estate's ownership, will generally extend from the OREI to Mean High Water. If The Crown Estate does not own the foreshore at the landfall location, the rights granted in the TA AfL or Option Agreement will ordinarily only extend to Mean Low Water. In some counties or locations, The Crown Estate's ownership may only extend to the level of Lowest Astronomical Tide.

2.2 Key stakeholder interactions

The identification and leasing of Cable Routes and Transmission Asset Infrastructure for an OREI involves multiple stakeholders including, but not limited to, offshore renewable energy developers, The Crown Estate, NESO and Offshore Transmission Owners (OFTOs).

The diagram below provides a summary of how developers, TCE, NESO, and OFTOs interact during cable-route planning, and at what stage in the process.

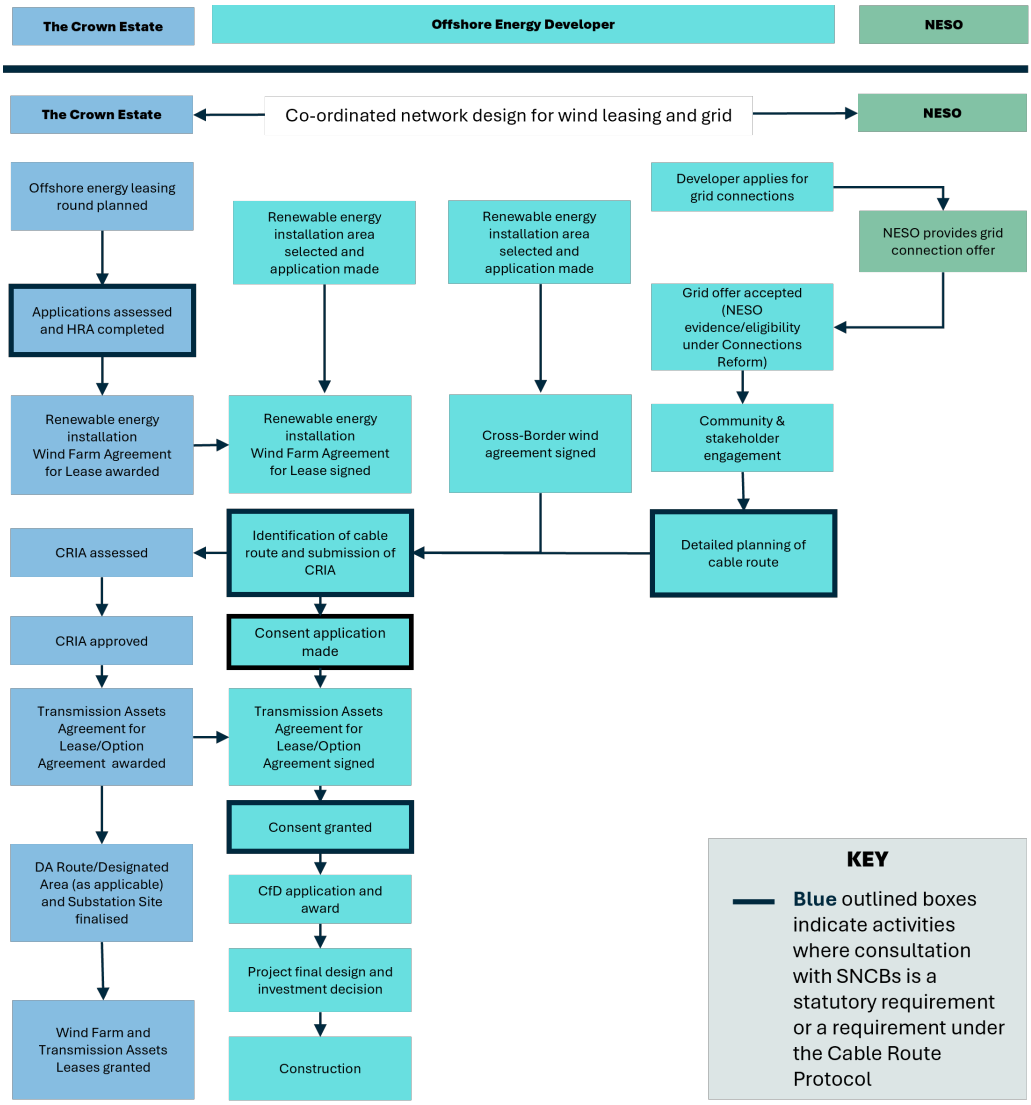


Figure 1 Key interactions relevant to typical Cable Route identification and leasing

Land option agreements for the onshore cable route will be negotiated separately by the developer with onshore landowners (or, where The Crown Estate is also an onshore landowner, separately with the relevant land agent).

To submit a CRIA and apply to The Crown Estate for a TA AfL or Option Agreement, it is a prerequisite to provide evidence consistent with NESO's revised connections process (such as a connection offer, queue status or indicative Gate 2 timing), and indicative onshore cable route information showing offshore and onshore route interaction.

2.3 Celtic Sea Floating Offshore Wind Leasing Round 5



Floating wind turbine at Kincardine Offshore Wind Farm

(Photo: courtesy of Principle Power

Celtic Sea Floating Offshore Wind Leasing Round 5 (Round 5) seeks to establish new floating wind projects off the coasts of South Wales and South West England. It is expected to be the first phase of commercial development in the Celtic Sea, bringing an exciting opportunity to create up to 4.5GW of renewable energy capacity, while acting as a springboard for new social, economic and environmental opportunities. Round 5 total capacity is spread across three project development areas (PDAs), each with an individual capacity of up to 1.5GW. Project Companies have the flexibility to develop each PDA in distinct projects or phases using a stepping-stone approach to suit developer risk appetite and to allow the supply chain to build its capacity and capability to serve this new market.

For Round 5 the NESO developed a holistic network design for how projects should connect to the onshore network: Beyond 2030: Celtic Sea. For further information on the Holistic Network Design (HND), see Section 3.0 below.

The WF AfLs entered with developers as a result of Round 5 set out the contractual basis for entry into a TA AfL, a process that is described in Section 8. A key part of this contractual requirement is the fulfilment of the Cable Route Identification and Approval (CRIA) process, described in Section 7.2, to obtain The Crown Estate's written approval of the Cable Route. As such, this document is key for the Round 5 developers to understand the detail of the process that must be followed to obtain the necessary land rights for the offshore Cable Route and Substation Site which will be granted under the TA AfL.

3.0 Connecting to the National Electricity Transmission System (NETS)

Developers seeking a grid connection apply to NESO under the reformed connections process, where developers progress via a gated application process managed by NESO, while queue management remains in place and offer timelines and evidence windows are set. This reformed connections regime prioritises projects based on delivery readiness and system need rather than order of application. Further information on the connections process is available on Ofgem's website here, and details on NESO's connections reform can be found on their website here.

In Great Britain, the Holistic Network Design (HND) and its successor Holistic Network Design Follow-Up Exercise (HNDFUE) were system-wide planning exercises led by the NESO that moved grid planning for offshore wind away from a project-by-project radial approach toward a coordinated offshore/onshore design to support strategic delivery of capacity out to 2030 and beyond.

In parallel, the Ofgem-approved Connection Reformprocess governs how and when projects secure and retain their connection offers, whereas HND/HNDFUE provides the strategic design of the network

The decision to submit an application to the NESO for a grid connection is made by the developer independently of their negotiations with The Crown Estate for an AfL.

The onshore grid connection location is confirmed when a grid offer from NESO is received and accepted by the developer, typically a Gate 2 offer. Only at this point will the developer be in a position to start considering in detail the potential Cable Route and onshore cable route options to connect the OREI to the onshore grid. Following a process of Cable Route optioneering, the developer will then be in a position to make an application to The Crown Estate for a TA AfL or Option Agreement.



Cable laying from a beach

It is important to note that following acceptance of a grid connection agreement, it is still possible that a connection point may change before or after a TA AfL/Option Agreement has been granted. Where this happens, the developer must notify The Crown Estate so we can understand the implications for the Option Site/Option Area and work with the developer to agree the most appropriate way forward.

4.0 Cable Route Protocol (CRP)

OREI export transmission cabling has the potential to cause impacts in marine and coastal environments. In addition to the requirement to install cables, there is often a need for seabed preparation (possibly including sand wave clearance) and post-installation cable protection (which may include rock dumping). Direct impacts from these activities may be particularly significant for those sensitive coastal and offshore habitats which are permanently changed, or lost, as a result of cabling. Indirect impacts on marine mammals, birds and fish may also occur as a result of impacts on the habitats which support them.

The Crown Estate has identified that the following pressures from export transmission cabling (without appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures) have the potential to impact upon habitat and species features of Protected Sites (both marine and terrestrial (where relevant)):

- Habitat loss
- Habitat gain
- Direct physical damage
- Indirect physical damage
- Toxic contamination
- Temperature (for some habitats)
- Suspended sediment
- Introduction of invasive non-indigenous species

The Crown Estate Act 1961 (as amended) places a general duty on The Crown Estate to maintain and enhance the value of the estate with due regard to the requirements of good management. As a public, competent, or managing authority or public body under various Acts (outlined in Table 1), The Crown Estate has statutory duties in relation to the marine (including the foreshore) environment in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. These duties co-exist with The Crown Estate Act but place more specific responsibilities on The Crown Estate.

Under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, public authorities have a duty to ensure that, in exercising their functions, they best further or (if that is not possible) least hinder the achievement of the conservation objectives of Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs).

In practical terms, this means that when entering into, or changing a seabed agreement, The Crown Estate must consider the potential effects of that agreement on the habitats and species for which MCZs have been designated.

Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981/Environment (Northern Ireland) Order 2002 (as amended) and Wildlife and Natural Environment Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, The Crown Estate has a duty to take reasonable steps consistent with the proper exercise of its functions to further the conservation and enhancement of the special features of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSIs). The Crown Estate is obliged to consider the impacts of its activities on SSSIs/ASSIs and give notice to the relevant Statutory Nature Conservation Bodies (SNCBs) before carrying out or authorising operations which are likely to damage the features for which SSSIs/ASSIs are notified.

As a Competent Authority under the Habitats Regulations, The Crown Estate may be required to conduct a plan-level Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) for any leasing/licensing activity that constitutes a 'plan', assessing impacts on the Habitats Regulations Sites before any seabed rights can be awarded.

Table 1 – The Crown Estate's role as a public, competent, or managing authority or public body under relevant legislation

Role	Legislation	Statutory Duty
Public Authority	Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009/Marine Act (Northern Ireland) 2013	Have regard to Marine Plans and the Marine Policy Statement and consider MCZs in decision making
Competent Authority	Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017; Conservation of Offshore Marine Habitats and Species Regulations 2017	Requirement to undertake plan-level HRA for any leasing/ licensing activity that constitutes a 'plan' where the potential for likely significant effects on European Sites cannot be excluded
Public Authority	Environment (Wales) Act 2016	Maintain and enhance biodiversity
'Section 28G' Authority/Public body	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981/ Environment (Northern Ireland) Order 2002	Notify SNCBs of impacts on, and change of occupation in, SSSIs / ASSIs
Public Authority	Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (as amended by the Environment Act 2021)	Have regard to conserving and enhancing biodiversity

In order to fulfil its statutory obligations, The Crown Estate has developed a Cable Route Protocol (CRP) as an avoidance and mitigation measure for potential cabling impacts to Protected Sites, both marine and terrestrial (where relevant).

The CRP is set out in Appendix 1. It has evolved over the delivery of plan level HRA's for multiple offshore wind leasing rounds, and adherence with the CRP is a prerequisite for being granted a TA AfL / Option Agreement.

The CRP comprises a set of requirements for developers which are designed to manage the offshore export cable planning process with the aim of minimising impacts to Protected Sites. The CRP must be followed by developers as they progress project planning and they will be required to demonstrate compliance with the CRP within the CRIA provided to The Crown Estate as part of the TA AfL/Option Agreement process. If a developer is unable to demonstrate compliance, a TA AfL/ Option Agreement will not be granted.



Cable laying vessel with jacket wind turbine and substation

The CRP has had regard to other relevant planning policy documents and consenting processes that cover offshore aspects of wind farm development, and is intended to complement these and remain relevant to all offshore energy developments. This includes consideration of the Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1), the National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3), statutory marine plans, the UK Marine Policy Statement, the fourth Offshore Energy Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and the pre-application consultation requirements of the Planning Act 2008 (as amended).

While the CRP does not mandate a particular network layout, developers may reuse evidence prepared for grid connection processes to demonstrate CRP compliance where it addresses the same environmental/engineering considerations. This avoids duplication while keeping the CRP's avoid–reduce–mitigate emphasis intact.

5.0 Cable Route planning and principles

5.1 Principles of cable routing and spacing (evidence-based study)

The Crown Estate commissioned a cable spacing study in March 2012 with the objectives of identifying, reviewing and assessing the factors affecting the routing and spacing of transmission cables for offshore wind farm developments. The study provides assistance to developers in planning Cable Routes for offshore wind farms, as well as to The Crown Estate in assessing developers' proposals.

The findings, conclusions and recommendations from the study are compiled in a report: 'Principles of Cable Routing and Spacing, The Crown Estate (UK) 2012' which can be found on the MDE.

The report provides a technical, environmental and commercial overview of the effects of routing transmission cables in proximity, and as such, remains relevant to all offshore energy developments. The contents of the report form a point of reference that may assist developers when planning Cable Routes for offshore energy projects. Whilst directed primarily at developers, the report also provides useful and relevant information and is an important reference source to the wider investment, insurance, OFTO, stakeholder and regulatory communities and offers a better appreciation of the matters influencing the spacing between transmission cables.

The report contains a number of worked examples designed to illustrate the conclusions from the study. Rather than being prescriptive, the distances quoted therein provide an indicative spacing between cables to give developers an appreciation of various scenarios. A risk-based approach is expected to guide cable spacing decisions during route development.

The report identifies four important issues that will have a defining influence on the routing and spacing of transmission cables:

1. Route design and development
2. Cable spacing to meet the requirements of the Security and Quality of Supply Standard
3. Installation, operation and maintenance of existing and future transmission cables
4. The effects of electromagnetic fields on navigation and ecology.

The CRIA is expected to provide evidence that developers have duly considered the recommended overall routing and cable spacing principles outlined in this study, where relevant.

5.2 Cable Route planning – overarching principles

This section sets out overarching principles that provide best practices for how cable route planning should be undertaken to ensure good management of land and seabed, and to avoid or minimise environmental impacts. Developers must follow these principles in planning their Cable Routes. The specific requirements of the CRP are set out in Appendix 1.

Principle 1

It is anticipated that planning of Cable Routes and onshore cable routes will be undertaken concurrently. Use of the approach set out in the CRP for onshore cable planning is strongly encouraged. Where applicable, onshore cable planning should have regard to relevant National Policy Statements and national and local terrestrial planning policy frameworks.

Principle 2

Where elements of offshore cable route planning take place before a developer enters into a WF AfL with The Crown Estate, or in the case of Cross-border OFTOs, evidence of the use of the approach to offshore cable route planning set out in the CRP is required.

Principle 3

The CRP applies to all Protected Sites, both marine and terrestrial (where relevant), and known sensitive habitats. In planning the Cable Route and the onshore cable route, the emphasis should be on avoiding impacts on Protected Sites. If this is not possible, effects should be reduced to a minimum through design. Mitigation should be the last resort following the 'avoid, reduce, mitigate' hierarchy. If it is not possible to avoid all Protected Sites, and known sensitive habitats outside of Protected Sites, developers must demonstrate to The Crown Estate that they have selected the least damaging route.

Principle 4

Planning of Cable Routes and onshore cable routes must be undertaken in close consultation with SNCBs such as Natural England, Natural Resources Wales and, where appropriate, the Joint Nature Conservation Committee. Other non-statutory consultees should also be included in the consultation where appropriate (including, but not limited to, The Wildlife Trusts and Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and other users of the sea or their representatives, including fisheries and navigational safety). Consultation must continue from the earliest stages of route planning through to consent application, and consultees should be kept informed about how their advice has or has not been incorporated into the cable route planning process. It may be helpful to agree an engagement plan at the outset with any consultees to set expectations and ensure that required timescales are met, but the fundamental requirement is for consultees to be given the opportunity to provide advice. The developer should discuss management of confidential information with the consultees, and to enable timely consultation, may wish to seek Non-Disclosure Agreements.

Principle 5

Where it is necessary to mitigate the effects of cabling at project level, appropriate measures should ideally be agreed with statutory stakeholders and be capable of being secured within project design and/or consents. Mitigation measures will also need to be acceptable to competent authorities.

Principle 6

Developers must have regard to the current best practice advice provided by the SNCBs (such as Natural England's Environmental considerations for offshore wind and cable projects advice). Developers must also have regard to other cabling guidance and advice produced by SNCBs from time to time, including 'lessons learned' reports, cabling sensitivity documents and research reports from projects relevant to the impacts of cables on the environment.

Principle 7

Cable Routes and onshore cable routes must be identified and planned in conjunction with other infrastructure and developers, where necessary sharing routes and landfalls in order to minimise land use (offshore and onshore) and impact to land, the environment and stakeholders. This principle of proactive coordination should be applied not only in route identification, but throughout the lifecycle - so should also manifest in engagement with stakeholders, in making consent applications, in acquiring land, in developing construction and installation techniques. In project design, development, construction and operation it is important that the principle of proactive coordination is applied.

Principle 8

To ensure efficient land take and deployment, cable route and landfall planning must anticipate, and not constrain, future development needs, especially at restricted locations. Developers must demonstrate a logical, ordered and sequenced approach to routes and landfall sites, as well as spacing of cables, accordingly.

Principle 9

Developers must demonstrate that they have sought and applied feedback to their Substation Site (where appropriate) and offshore and onshore cable route plans from previous projects and existing OFTOs in order that improvements can be continuously applied from previous construction and operational experience.

Principle 10

Developers must seek to apply common or standard design approaches and philosophies for their transmission assets and associated infrastructure unless there is a specific reason to deviate from these approaches. This is in order that the supply chain can be engaged and enabled on a more holistic basis, especially on a local, regional and temporal basis.

6.0 Early dialogue and conflict checking

Ongoing communication between the developer and The Crown Estate allows early discussion of Cable Route issues before a formal application is submitted.

This dialogue aims to address several key issues concerning the proposed route, including the anticipated consenting process and how the developer's approach to cable routing and spacing (using evidence-based studies or similar methodologies) will facilitate mutually agreeable cable spacing, ensuring acceptable risk levels for the cables, while supporting the continued development of other commercial enterprises. The Crown Estate must ensure that the legitimate interests of all relevant stakeholders are safeguarded, particularly during periods of elevated developer uncertainty regarding their Cable Route.

6.1 Proximity Check process

The Crown Estate must perform a Proximity Check on the geographical aspects of the proposed Cable Route to identify any existing assets, interests or plans that could be affected by the proposed Cable Route. The Crown Estate sets sector-specific trigger distances to assess spatial interactions, with distances assessed on a sector by sector basis. For the Proximity Check, the developer must provide the proposed Cable Route geographical data to the relevant OFTO asset manager at The Crown Estate for assessment in its GIS database. The data should be supplied in ESRI shape file or file geodatabase format in a geodetic WGS1984 (EPSG:4326) projection with Marine Environmental Data and Information Network standard (v.2.3.7) metadata.

The data will be retained as confidential information in the GIS database and used to enhance The Crown Estate's understanding of the developer's likely Cable Route. The Crown Estate will share the initial findings of the Proximity Check with the developer, highlighting any spatial interactions (subject to any confidentiality restrictions).

Developers may need to resubmit a proposed Cable Route after The Crown Estate's feedback. Proximity Check results are also only valid for three months, meaning the check is often repeated with revised routes during the TA AFL/Option Agreement entry process.

The Crown Estate will classify the proposed Cable Route as a 'registered interest' in the GIS database (i.e. an initial indication of a preferred route before it has been worked up sufficiently to be incorporated into the TA AfL/Option Agreement).

Recording the proposed Cable Route in the GIS database enables The Crown Estate to identify and address any spatial interactions or competing interests.

7.0 Cable Route Identification and Approval (CRIA)

After a developer identifies a Cable Route for review, the proposed route can be submitted to The Crown Estate for consideration as an Option Site under a TA AfL by initiating the CRIA process. For Cross-Border OFTOs, submission would be as an Option Area under an Option Agreement. Once The Crown Estate approves the CRIA, the TA AfL/Option Agreement process for the Cable Route and Substation Site (if applicable) can begin. Further clarification on the process for entering into a TA AfL/Option Agreement is provided in Section 8

7.1 Initial technical assessment of the proposed Cable Route

Before submitting the complete CRIA, developers are required to provide The Crown Estate with the proposed Cable Route coordinates in the form of a shape file. The Crown Estate will then perform a Proximity Check as outlined in Section 6.1. In addition, developers should submit a draft CRIA for preliminary evaluation, enabling The Crown Estate to assess the adequacy of the technical documentation and, if necessary, request further information prior to the full application.

7.2 Contents of the CRIA application

Before submitting an application to The Crown Estate for a proposed Cable Route, the developer must have completed a careful analysis of the cable routing, spacing issues and preliminary survey activity. The application should demonstrate that the developer has taken into consideration the cable route planning principles in Section 5.2, any cable spacing principles as detailed in The Crown Estate's study report 'Principles of Cable Routing and Spacing, The Crown Estate (UK) 2012' (where applicable), and confirm that the actions undertaken satisfy the requirements as set out in the CRP (Appendix 1).The contents of the CRIA application should follow the template provided in (Appendix 3), which has three main sections:

- Part 1 – Project specification and justification
- Part 2 – Planning and third-party interests
- Part 3 – Commercial set-up and Guarantor

In Part 1 of the CRIA, the developer must present the proposed Option Site and justify the chosen Cable Route. When advocating a specific spacing between adjacent cables, the developer will need to assess the operational and technical risks against their own commercial interests and those of the investors and other stakeholders. The description should include the issues the developer has considered in arriving at the proposed Cable Route, using cable spacing principles suggested in the evidence-based study report (or similar). The developer must also provide details of any consultants involved in selecting the proposed Cable Route. The application must include a draft specification of the works, i.e. a list of the equipment proposed to be installed on the site for the cable project (for specific details refer to Appendix 3).

The developer may not necessarily have clear details of cable spacing, number of Supply Cables and equipment requested in Part 1 at the time of application. This can result in more than one proposed Cable Route. In all circumstances, developers must justify their proposed Option Site/Option Area, which is typically the extent of the area required for detailed survey investigations.

The developer will then have an opportunity to work further with the technical layout in order to provide the specific information required under the TA AFL/Option Agreement before entering the TA Lease, as outlined in Section 8 and Section 9.

The developer must provide a GIS shape file in WGS84 format to show the extent of the proposed Option Site/Option Area. It is expected to be an irregular shape/polygon thereby allowing some flexibility to avoid known spatial interactions, and will form the red line boundary area over which the TA AfL/ Option Agreement is granted.

The developer must demonstrate compliance with the CRP and ensure the proposed Cable Route is compliant with certain criteria requested in Part 2, such as planning restrictions and any potential consequences for third party interests Furthermore, the developer must show they have addressed existing parties' needs and engaged in discussions to reach a mutually acceptable solution. In some cases, formal consent from the third party may be required under the TA Lease.

When demonstrating compliance with the requirements of Part 2, it is acceptable to signpost to other relevant documentation, such as chapters of an Environmental Statement. Supporting documents should be provided alongside the CRIA or via a working hyperlink if available online. Where signposting is used, the CRIA must still summarise how compliance has been achieved and include the relevant chapter, section and paragraph references. Reference solely to a chapter of a draft Environmental Statement will not be sufficient.

Part 3 deals with the anticipated corporate set-up of the proposed Transmission Entity and the developer should provide information on the proposed guarantor(s) for the TA AfL/Option Agreement.

7.3 Formal review and approval of the Cable Route

Following the initial feedback from The Crown Estate on the draft CRIA, the developer will prepare the full CRIA application in compliance with the template set out in Appendix 3. The completed application is submitted for formal review and approval to The Crown Estate via the relevant OFTO asset manager .The Crown Estate will provide written confirmation regarding their decision of the CRIA and may request that the developer re-submit the CRIA with alternative Cable Route options.

8.0 Entering into the Transmission Asset Agreement for Lease (TA AfL)/Option Agreement

If the CRIA is assessed as acceptable and that compliance with the Cable Route planning principles in Section 5.2 and the requirements of the CRP have been adequately demonstrated, The Crown Estate shall confirm approval, in writing, to the developer.

Following approval by The Crown Estate, the process of entering the TA AfL/ Option Agreement with the Transmission Entity will begin. In addition to satisfying the requirements of the CRIA and CRP, entering into the TA AfL will also be subject to the Transmission Entity complying with all necessary and proper requirements as defined in the WF AfL.

Where there is no requirement for the export cables of an OREI to be owned and operated by an OFTO (i.e. where the export cable voltage is less than 132kV), the process followed to grant rights for the Cable Route following approval of the CRIA may be different to that described in Sections 8-11. This typically applies to small test and demonstration OREIs, and the wording in the AfLs of these projects sets out the required process which should be followed.

8.1 Formalising the Cable Route

Once the Cable Route has been agreed between the developer and The Crown, the Cable Route and future location of the Substation Site (if applicable) can be formalised in the TA AfL in the form of an Option Site or for Cross-border OFTOs, in the Option Agreement in the form of an Option Area.

The Option Site/Option Area must include all seabed that will be required for the installation of the Supply Cable(s), Substation Site(s) (if applicable) and any other associated installations. The Option Site is likely to overlap in full or in part with the WF AfL area. The Option Site/Option Area must include any foreshore under the ownership of The Crown Estate, if applicable.

The Option Site/Option Area may be large enough for multiple proposed Cable Routes. If The Crown Estate approves more than one route after reviewing the developer's CRIA submission, the TA AfL/Option Agreement will be granted subject to the Transmission Entity reducing the number of Cable Routes within which all Supply Cables must be located ahead of TA Lease entry. More than one Cable Route will only be approved if the developer provides The Crown Estate with sufficient evidence and justification that this is the sole viable option.

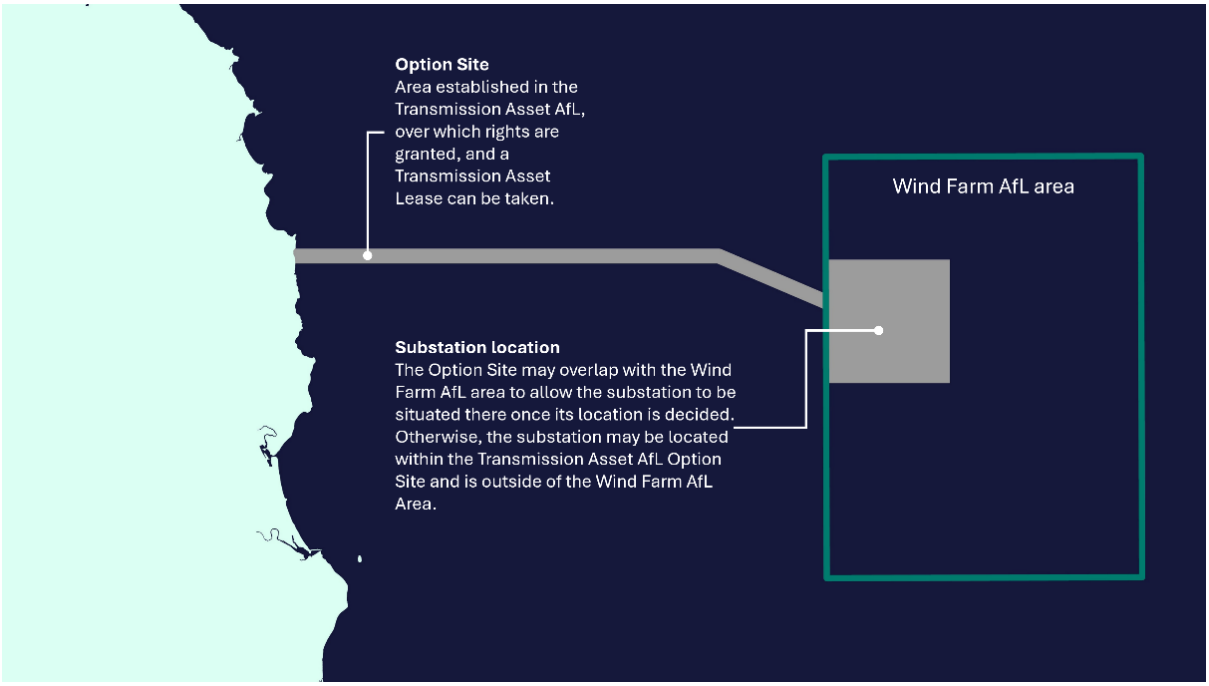


Figure 2 – Agreement for Lease

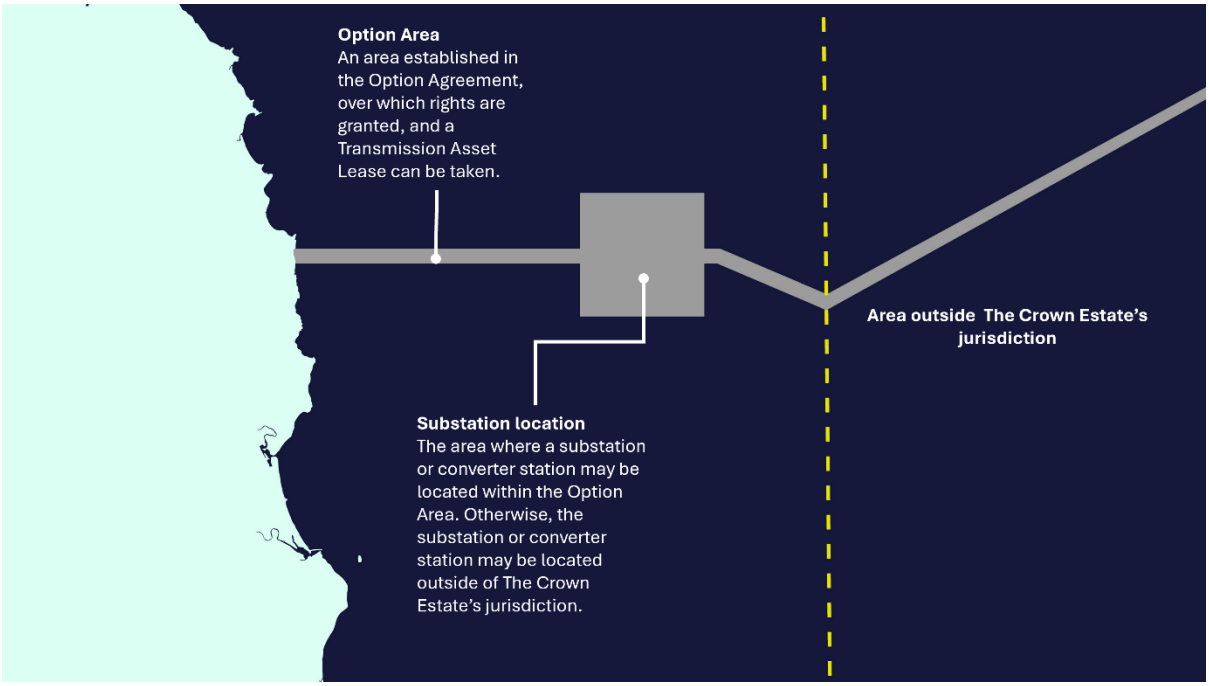


Figure 3 - Option Agreement

8.2 Rights of protection in the Transmission Asset Agreement for Lease or Option Agreement

The Transmission Entity receives only limited protection over the Option Site under the TA AfL, and the same applies for the Option Area under the Option Agreement; in both instances, only a non-exclusive right to obtain a TA Lease is secured. The Crown Estate is entitled to grant non-proprietary rights to third parties to carry out works which cross or otherwise conflict with the

Transmission Entity's Option Site/Area, provided The Crown Estate notifies them before and after. The third-party lease or licence must reserve rights for grant of the future TA Lease without needing the third-party's consent.

The TA AfL and Option Agreement also allows The Crown Estate to grant rights to third parties for dredging or removing or injection of materials (including of gas) within the Option Site/Option Area. However, any rights related to dredging or the removal of materials must end before the TA Lease commences to the extent that the area of the Option Site/Option Area over which these rights have been granted are to form part of the DA Route, or for Cross-border OFTOs, the Designated Area.

On exchange of the TA AfL/Option Agreement, the area of the Option Site/Option Area shall be entered into The Crown Estate's GIS database. This enables The Crown Estate to be alerted to any potential future interactions with the Option Site/Option Area and determine the appropriate course of action to manage such interaction, in line with the obligations under the TA AfL/Option Agreement. The Crown Estate will ensure that any subsequent interests from third parties over an Option Site/Option Area are brought to the Transmission Entity's attention and will work to facilitate co-operation between the parties in order to resolve any possible conflicts of interest.

9.0 Entering into the Transmission Asset Lease (TA Lease)

Once the project has received all necessary consents and the Transmission Entity is ready to serve notice to take the TA Lease, the DA Route or Designated Area and Substation Site (if applicable) must be submitted to The Crown Estate for review prior to formalising the TA Lease documentation, as set out in the TA AfL/Option Agreement.

It is highly advisable for the Transmission Entity to provide regular updates on the DA Route, Designated Area, and Substation Site (where applicable) throughout the TA AfL/Option Agreement period. As the definition of the DA Route or Designated Area evolves, these updates will help to minimise the risk of non-approval.

9.1 Formalising the Cable Route for entering the TA Lease

At this stage, following completion of all front-end engineering design studies, The Transmission Entity under the TA AfL or Option Agreement is required to supply The Crown Estate with information regarding the DA Route, Designated Area and Substation Site, including their intended locations. Additionally, specific information concerning the cable designs and any associated infrastructure planned for installation must be provided.

The specific requirements are set out in the TA AfL or Option Agreement. The legal documents will always take precedence over the information in this document. Below is a list of information that is typically required but it is not exhaustive:

i. The final proposed width of the DA Route or Designated Area (as applicable) by reference to co-ordinates and a plan
ii. The proposed Substation Site (if applicable) by reference to co-ordinates and a plan
iii. A plan showing the distance between the centre-point of the proposed Substation Site and any international boundary (if applicable)
iv. The number of Supply Cables
v. The requested spacing between the Supply Cables
vi. The proposed depth of the DA Route. Designated Area and Substation Site (as applicable)
vii. Evidence that the specification of the works will use an asset management system that will be capable of being certified to, or commensurate with ISO 55000.
viii. Details of any environmental mitigation works
ix. Specification of the works, i.e. an exhaustive list of the equipment to be installed on the site for the cable project. The list will be appended to the TA Lease and typically includes:

- Maximum number and working voltage of cables (AC or DC)
- Offshore Substations (including details of foundation type and dimensions of structure)
- Offshore Converter stations (including details of foundation type and dimensions of structure)
- Any ancillary equipment

- Any anemometry equipment
- Any scour protection materials
- Any temporary works for the installation of the cables
- Communications equipment or cables
- Cable protection (e.g. anticipated burial depths, matting, rock dumping, inshore protection)
- Number and details of third-party asset crossings on the route
- Cable joint chambers (relevant for the foreshore)
- Conduits

The cable spacing study mentioned in Section 5 will be used to assist the Transmission Entity and The Crown Estate in agreeing, on an evidence basis, the appropriate spacing between Supply Cables to be applied in the TA Lease.

For those with a WF AfL or WF Lease, the Cable Route will be defined in the TA Lease as a DA Route shown on the lease plan with a red line, within the approved distance of which the Designated Area(s) must be situated. The Designated Area(s) are each 30m wide and as a requirement of the TA Lease, the position of the Designated Area(s) must be approved by The Crown Estate after entering TA Lease.



Figure 4 – TA Lease (pre-construction) for OREIs leased by The Crown Estate

Key for Figure 4 - TA Lease (pre-construction) for OREIs leased by The Crown Estate		
Key	**Depicting**	**Description**
	DA Route	Refined area situated within the Option Site and within which the Designated Area(s) will be situated. The DA Route will include the foreshore if it is owned by The Crown Estate.
	Designated Area	The part of the foreshore and seabed in which a Supply Cable is to be located, being a strip running from the boundarty of the Substation Site to another Substation and/or the shore, having a width of 30m.
	No Dredging Zone	A dredging restriction zone extending 250m from the centre of the Supply Cable.
	Supply Cables	All cables and ancillary equipment to be installed in the Designated Area and Substation Site for the conveyance or passage or transmission of electricity generated by the renewable energy installation or otherwise required for the operation of the renewable energy installation (but excluding the Generator Cables).
Note: In the TA Lease, the Cable Route will be defined as a DA Route and can comprise one or more Designated Areas, each30m wide, within a distance of the centreline shown on the lease plan.		

For Cross-border OFTOs, there is no DA Route and the Designated Area must be approved by The Crown Estate as part of the TA Lease entry process. Please refer to Figure 5 immediately below, and to Figure 6 on page 34.

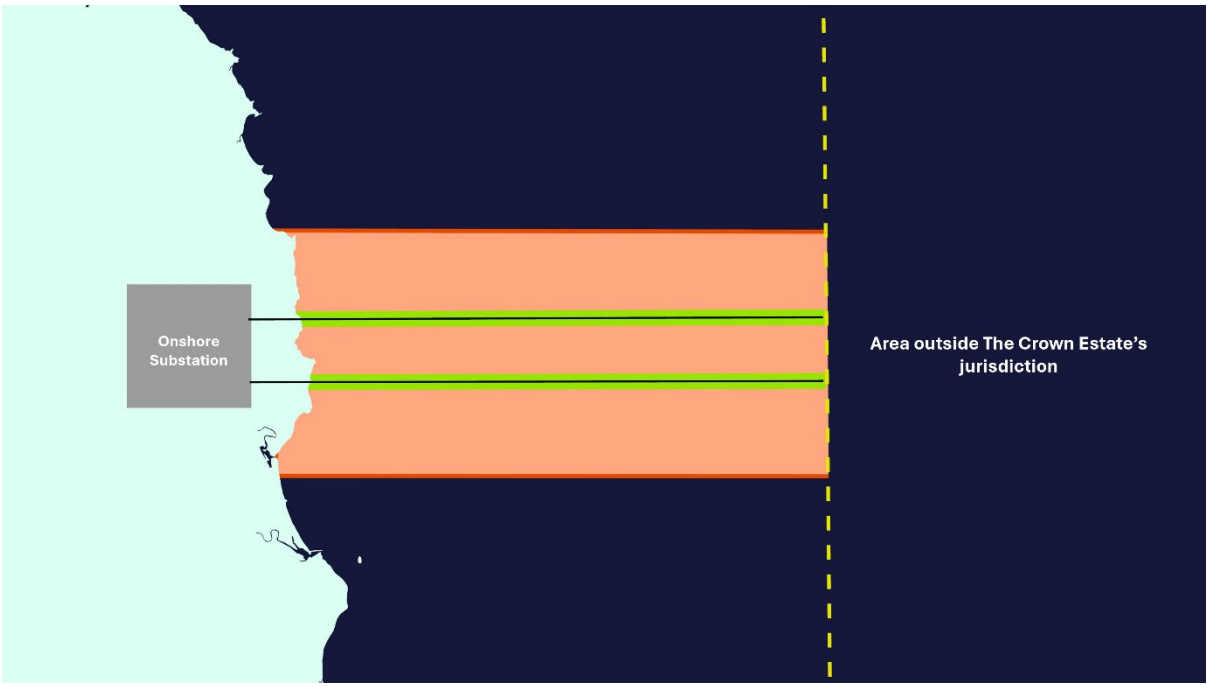


Figure 5 - Cross-Border OFTO Lease (pre-construction)

9.2 Rights of protection in the TA Lease

Once the TA Lease has been granted, more extensive rights of protection are introduced. The consent of the Transmission Entity is required before The Crown Estate grants any new leases or licences which were not contemplated by the TA AfL or Option Agreement, which cross or intersect with the Designated Area(s) and/or Works Restriction Zone, or grants any new rights for conduits or cables within the Substation Site.

The consent of the Transmission Entity is not required for the installation within the Substation Site or Designated Area of the Generator Cables of the connected OREI. Rights for the Generator Cables from the OREI to connect into the Substation Site are reserved in the TA Lease.

Depending on the type of agreement, there may also be a No Dredging Zone extending 235m on either side of each Designated Area; in effect a No Dredging extending 250m from the centre line of each Supply Cable. Please see Fig 6 on the next page.

The Crown Estate will be entitled to grant rights to third parties, without restriction, outside of the Designated Area, No Dredging Zone and Works Restriction Zone.

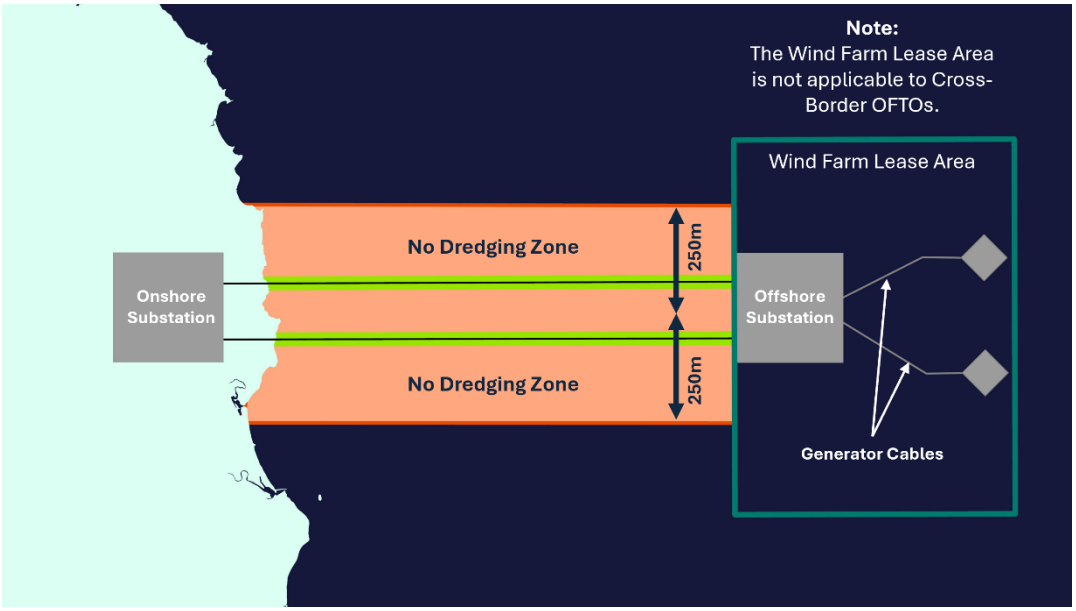


Figure 6 – Round 5 Additional Terms

Key for Figure 6 - Round 5 Additional Terms		
Key	**Depicting**	**Description**
	No Dredging Zone	A dredging restriction zone extending 250m from the centre of the Supply Cable.
	Designated Area(s)	The part of the foreshore and seabed in which a Supply Cable is to be located. The Designated Area(s) are each 30m wide and as a requirement of the Transmission Asset Lease, the Designated Area(s) must be approved by The Crown Estate. As-laid coordinates must be submitted to The Crown Estate once the construction of the route has been completed in order that the GIS database can be updated accordingly with the final cable position and any relevant Dredging Restriction Zones.

10.0 As-laid coordinates and potential adjustments to the route

The Cable Route established in the TA Lease and displayed on the lease plan will show the DA Route. The Designated Area(s) will only come into being once approved by The Crown Estate under the relevant clauses of the TA Lease. Once approved, a Land Registry compliant plan of the Designated Area(s) is annexed to the TA Lease.

For Cross-border OFTOs, the Designated Area(s) will be approved as part of the TA Lease entry process.

Any required amendments to the Designated Area(s) – including cable repairs which result in cable being re-laid outside of the existing Designated Area(s) - will require the prior consent of The Crown Estate.

As-laid coordinates must be submitted to The Crown Estate once construction has been completed, to enable the GIS database to be updated with the final Designated Area(s), as well as, where applicable, any No Dredging Zones, Works Restriction Zones, and Substation locations. The Crown Estate reserves the option to require evidence, to its reasonable satisfaction, of works being completed in accordance with the agreed specification including as-laid plans and co-ordinates.

A clear process will be agreed between The Crown Estate and the Transmission Entity to ensure this data is obtained from the Transmission Entity following completion of any works. The Crown Estate needs this information to ensure the Transmission Entity interests are accurately flagged during its Proximity Check process for other seabed developments.

The same applies to post-installation cable protection, the coordinates for which The Crown Estate will require for proximity checking. It should be noted that rock protection along the Cable Route is not permitted unless it has been approved by The Crown Estate as part of the specification for the TA Lease.



Cable laying plough on a beach

11.0 Delineation of leases after the generator-OFTO split

The TA Lease tenant will assign the TA Lease and ownership of the Transmission Asset Infrastructure to the OFTO following conclusion of Ofgem's OFTO tender process. If an OFTO was appointed in advance of construction, the OFTO will already be the tenant of the TA Lease so assignment will not be required. Further detail about the OFTO tender process can be found on Ofgem's website: Welcome to Ofgem | Ofgem.

The remainder of this section is only relevant for a Project Company who has a WF Lease and a TA Lease with The Crown Estate. The information below isn't applicable to Cross-border OFTOs as the rights granted by The Crown Estate will only be for a TA Lease in relation to the Transmission Asset Infrastructure.



4 Full drum of cable on a cable laying vessel

The Designated Area(s) will overlap the area of seabed within the WF Lease where the Supply Cables have been laid - i.e. from the edge of the wind farm site to and including the Substation Site. The WF Lease contains a reservation which allows the Designated Area(s) to be placed here without any requirement for consent from the wind farm tenant. The TA Lease will generally include the site of the offshore substation(s) and any other offshore converter stations, even though they may sit within the bounds of the wind farm site. Where a Substation Site is within the boundary of the wind farm site, that part of the seabed will be removed from the WF Lease, to avoid an overlap of leased areas.

The rights of the wind farm tenant to manage its Generator Cables in the Substation Site are subject to the rights of the TA Lease, whilst the TA Lease gives the OFTO rights to run Supply Cables within the Substation Site as well as between the Substation Site and the shore.

APPENDIX

Appendix 1

Cable Route Protocol (CRP)

The CRP comprises a set of requirements for developers in the planning of offshore Cable Routes. Compliance with these requirements is a prerequisite of entry into a TA AfL/Option Agreement and must be demonstrated within the CRIA document which will accompany an application to The Crown Estate for a TA AfL/Option Agreement.

Much of the activity contained within the CRP requirements is aligned with the pre-application consultation that developers will need to undertake as part of preparing for submission of an application for development consent (including any evidence plan requirements). It is therefore anticipated that many developers will incorporate the requirements of the CRP into their pre-application consultation process. Where evidence of consultation is required within the CRIA, this will therefore be equivalent to the evidence that developers will need to submit as part of their application for development consent.

Requirements

Requirement 1

Where elements of Cable Route planning have taken place before a developer has entered into a WF AfL with The Crown Estate or for Cross-border OFTOs, before they've entered into a Cross-border Agreement these must be clearly set out within the CRIA. For developers with a WF AfL, The Crown Estate can only enforce compliance with the requirements of the CRP after the developer has entered into the WF AfL.

Requirement 2

Under the CRP, developers must undertake consultation with SNCBs throughout the route selection and refinement process (see Figure 1). The nature of this consultation will vary from project to project, but to be effective the consultation should be ongoing throughout the process and both parties must provide clear information and advice within the agreed timeframes.

Developers must demonstrate within the CRIA that clear information on the proposed Cable Route has been provided for SNCBs at appropriate stages in Cable Route planning and that SNCB advice has been sought at appropriate stages (whether through formal or informal consultation). A summary of engagement to date and SNCB views on information shared by the Applicant must be included in the CRIA, including how they have been considered and incorporated. It is acknowledged that some elements of the cable planning process are time-constrained and that delays in receiving input from consultees can result in difficulties for developers. Development of an engagement plan is strongly encouraged. If difficulties have been encountered in engagement, these should be clearly stated within the CRIA and taken into consideration by The Crown Estate.

Requirement 3

In planning survey work on potential Cable Routes (or exploratory works within a Cable Route (AoS)), developers might require a Seabed Survey Licence from The Crown Estate as part of any proposed survey works. Information on what activities require a Seabed Survey Licence can be found on our website here.

Through the process, developers must have early and ongoing engagement with the relevant Statutory Nature Conservation Body (SNCB) on the proposed survey scope, methods, seasonality, mitigation measures and sensitive features. Where a licence is also required from

another authority, evidence of the licence and the SNCB input into the proposed survey area must also be provided.

Requirement 4

Developers must demonstrate within the CRIA that planned Cable Routes are in alignment with the relevant policies and, where applicable, the principles within the applicable National Policy Statements and relevant marine plan(s) (including draft marine plans). Particular note should be taken of cable-specific policies within marine plans. When doing so, developers must demonstrate they have considered all policies within the relevant marine plan(s) - this can be provided in tabular form. If particular policies are considered not relevant a brief justification should be provided. The Marine Management Organisation has provided guidance on the Marine Plan Policy Assessment process which may be useful.

Requirement 5

Developers must demonstrate within the CRIA that planned cable corridors have taken into account the outcomes of any relevant plan-level HRA (where applicable). This includes any specific requirements on cable planning, any geographically-specific findings and the examples of appropriate project-level cable mitigations.

Requirement 6

Developers must demonstrate within the CRIA that they have had regard to documents and advice produced by SNCBs in relation to offshore export cabling, including current best practice guidance.

Developers must also consider the outcomes of relevant research programmes which are available at the point of submitting the CRIA. This may include (amongst other things) research into the impacts of cabling, the recovery of habitats and the efficacy of mitigation measures.

Initial Area of Search(AoS)

A developer will usually commence the process of Cable Route planning with reference to the offshore Substation Site and onshore grid connection point agreed with NESO and then consider a broad AoS for the possible onshore cable route and offshore Cable Route.

Until a grid connection agreement between the developer and NESO has been signed by both parties, the developer can engage in early discussions with The Crown Estate on a Cable Route but the developer is not in a position to commence a CRIA regarding entry into a TA AfL or Option Agreement.

The aim of Requirements 8 to 10 (below) is to ensure that, through consultation, the developer has identified the environmental sensitivities within the offshore AoS and that consultees understand the engineering constraints within the AoS before detailed Cable Route optioneering commences. The consultation will necessarily be on high-level information; the aim is not to have all possible information and to pin down all the details of cable planning, but to ensure that both developers and SNCBs are starting from the same point at the outset of the cable planning process.

It is anticipated that Requirements 8 and 9 can be discharged in a single consultation which should ideally take place as soon as possible after the grid connection location is known. This will probably precede formal Environmental Impact Assessment scoping. Provided it is well documented, the consultation could be undertaken through a written report or an interactive workshop session.

Requirement 7

The developer must request a Proximity Check of its proposed AoS and have regard to the

findings of this check in Cable Route planning. This includes identification of any requirement for minimum separation distances from existing assets and any potential requirement to negotiate proximity agreements with other tenants. Iterative checks on refinements of the AoS are recommended but are only a requirement where there is a change in location or an increase in size of the AoS.

Requirement 8

Within the offshore AoS the developer must identify (and map where possible) the following, which are to be given significant weight in Cable Route planning:

- Habitats Regulations sites (SACs, SPAs and Ramsar sites, whether fully designated or not)
- MCZs and SSSIs/ASSIs (whether fully designated or not)
- Features of these Protected Sites (including priority habitats and species), including the sensitivities of each of these to impacts from export cabling (either through consultation with SNCBs or by use of the information available from conservation advice packages for sites)
- Protected Sites with conservation objectives to recover features to favourable condition
- Areas of known Annex I habitat outside protected areas but within the AoS
- Habitats that are known to be irreplaceable unique, rare, and/or fragile (either through consultation with SNCBs or by using the information available within SNCB reports).

Having completed this exercise the developer must consult with SNCBs (and, where appropriate, other relevant non-statutory consultees) to ensure that the best available evidence about the environment and specific sensitivities have been incorporated into the AoS mapping, and that the consultees have the opportunity to provide additional narrative about particularly sensitive areas or areas of concern to them. Evidence of this consultation, including a summary of the outcomes and the way in which SNCB concerns have been addressed, must be provided in the CRIA.

Requirement 9

Developers must prepare an outline view of the possible cabling infrastructure requirements (acknowledging that this may change as the design of the project evolves). The outline should include the potential number and capacities of the export cables with their indicative spacing requirements and the additional structures (e.g. offshore substations and converter stations) which the project is likely to require. Where there are uncertainties in the required infrastructure these should be set out (with reasons).

Within the AoS, developers must identify (and where possible, map) hard engineering constraints such as existing infrastructure or licence areas, challenging ground conditions and sections of the coast where landfall is not possible. If possible, developers should also form an initial view on the likely areas within the AoS where cable preparation works and/or cable protection may be needed (noting that this information is likely to change or not be available until survey work has been undertaken). Where possible, this information should be presented alongside the environmental information from Requirement 8.

The developer must consult with SNCBs (and, where appropriate, non-statutory consultees) to ensure they understand the likely infrastructure requirements and constraints and that they have the opportunity to raise any areas of concern about placement of infrastructure (including

cable protection) and any specific Protected Sites or habitats outside of the Protected Sites network. Evidence of this consultation, including a summary of the outcomes and the way in which SNCB concerns have been addressed, must be provided in the CRIA.

Detailed Cable Route planning

Following identification of an AoS, developers will typically work through a Cable Route planning process which narrows down options to a shortlist and then a final route (which will be submitted to The Crown Estate for inclusion in a TA AfL/Option Agreement).

Requirements 11 to 13 aim to ensure that this process is undertaken in close consultation with SNCBs. Consultation need not be through formal reporting; however, it is expected that regular and iterative communication is undertaken as cable optioneering progresses and that consultees have ample opportunity to provide input to the process well before a final route is selected. Essentially, consultees should be given sufficient opportunity to provide input to the process well before a final route is selected, and are kept informed about how their input is being considered in optioneering.

Requirement 10

Developers must demonstrate in the CRIA that they have undertaken regular consultation with SNCBs as the Cable Route selection process progresses. In line with the requirements for pre-application consultation, communication should be comprehensively documented but need not take the form of formal reporting. The frequency of communication is a matter for agreement between developers and consultees, taking into account consultee resource constraints.

The consultation must encompass the entire process from AoS to final route selection and should include communication of the evolving understanding of cabling infrastructure requirements (including cable protection) as well as the evolving understanding of environmental and technical constraints on the Cable Route. Evidence of this consultation, including a summary of the outcomes and the way in which SNCB concerns have been addressed, must be provided in the CRIA.

Requirement 11

Where SNCBs provide advice and guidance during the Cable Route planning process this must be clearly documented and considered in Cable Route decision-making. The way in which SNCB advice has been incorporated into the Cable Route plan must be documented in the CRIA.

If a developer chooses not to follow SNCB advice, or where a developer disagrees with the conclusions of the SNCB, it must provide clear and detailed justification of this in the CRIA. The level of justification should be similar to that which will ultimately be required within Statements of Common Ground with the SNCB(s).

Developers must include within the CRIA, copies of any formal advice on the Cable Route received from SNCBs or non-statutory consultees. Where such advice is not yet available (for example where the CRIA is submitted in advance of formal consultation on the Cable Route), developers must either request that SNCBs provide a letter to accompany the CRIA which sets out their position on the Cable Route, or develop a joint statement with SNCBs for inclusion in the CRIA, setting out the areas of agreement and disagreement over the Cable Route.

Requirement 12

Where applicable, the expectation (set out in Principle 3 in Section 5.2) is that the Cable Route should avoid the risk of harm to Habitats Regulations sites and other Protected Sites. Where

this is not possible and a developer seeks to rely on mitigation measures and / or compensatory measures for engineering or commercial reasons, the developer must be able to demonstrate within the CRIA that appropriate weight has been given to environmental considerations in the Cable Route evaluation process. In practice, this means that within the CRIA the developer must demonstrate that careful consideration has been applied to the potential impact of the route on Protected Sites throughout the process and that all reasonable efforts have been made to avoid environmental impacts and adverse effects on the integrity of sites.

If avoidance is not possible, this must be clearly justified (including reasons why alternative Cable Routes are unsuitable); only then can mitigation be considered. If mitigation is included in a Cable Route option, the CRIA must present sufficient evidence to The Crown Estate that suitable mitigation approaches have been considered and can be employed on the project to avoid environmental impacts and adverse effects on the integrity of Habitats Regulations sites. Advice given by SNCBs on the efficacy of proposed mitigations and compensatory measures should be provided where available and the mitigation and / or compensation must be capable of being secured in project consents.

Requirement 13

Within the CRIA the developer must either demonstrate that the following activities have been undertaken, or present a coherent programme for their completion:

- Consultation on a Preliminary Environmental Information Report which includes the Cable Route or wider Area of Search; and
- A full assessment of the environmental impacts of the Cable Route within an Environmental Statement and/or separate report to inform the HRA.

Appendix 2 – CRP compliance

The Cable Route Protocol (CRP) has evolved over the delivery of plan level HRAs for multiple offshore wind leasing rounds and comprises a set of requirements for developers in the planning of Cable Routes. Compliance and adherence to the CRP is a prerequisite for granting a TA AfL/Option Agreement.

The table below represents guidance on how to fill out the CRP, a blank version of which can be found here: Cables & pipelines | The Crown Estate. This form should be used to demonstrate compliance with each CRP requirement; it is acceptable to reference where this information has been provided in the main CRIA information submission or other available project documentation such as PEIR document or Environmental Statement chapters. When cross-referencing, specific details must be provided - functional document link, document name, page and paragraph or section number. Some requirements are linked and it may be preferable to address more than one requirement in the same cell of the table and/or body of text in the CRIA, with appropriate cross-referencing.

Developer	Tender / Leasing Round	Project Name

CRP Requirement	Information required in italics. Developer to populate accordingly.

General requirements

Requirement	The italics represent an explanation of what the developer should include, when filling out the CRP Compliance template.
Requirement 1 Early offshore Cable Route planning	*Where elements of Cable Route planning have taken place before a developer has entered into an Wind Farm Agreement for Lease with The Crown Estate or a Cross-Border Agreement, these must be clearly set out within the CRIA.* *DEVELOPER TO POPULATE HERE*
Requirement 2 Consultation with SNCBs throughout the route selection	*Demonstration that clear information on the Cable Route has been provided for SNCBs at appropriate stages in Cable Route planning, and that SNCB advice has been sought at appropriate stages. Development of an engagement plan is strongly encouraged. If difficulties have been encountered in engagement these should be*

Requirement	The italics represent an explanation of what the developer should include, when filling out the CRP Compliance template.
and refinement process	*clearly stated, and this will be taken into consideration by The Crown Estate. (Note: link to Requirement 11) Please provide a summary of how SNCB views have been addressed and, if not addressed, provide the relevant justification.* *DEVELOPER TO POPULATE HERE*
Requirement 3 Consultation with SNCBs in planning survey work	*Please provide evidence that SNCBs have been consulted as part of planning survey work on potential Cable Routes (or exploratory works for an Area of Search), and that they have had the opportunity to provide feedback on the scope and adequacy of the overarching survey plan. Please provide a summary of how SNCB views have been addressed and, if not addressed, provide the relevant justification.* *DEVELOPER TO POPULATE HERE*
Requirement 4 Alignment with National Policy Statements and relevant marine plan(s)	*Demonstration that planned Cable Routes are in alignment with the relevant policies and principles within the applicable National Policy Statements and relevant marine plan(s) (including draft marine plans). Particular note should be taken of cable specific policies within marine plans.* *Please include consideration of all policies within the relevant marine plan(s). Where policies are considered not relevant a brief justification is to be provided. For those considered relevant confirm that these have been given due regard and that the project is aligned with these as a whole. Any aspect that does not align with a policy should be highlighted / discussed in more detail.* *DEVELOPER TO POPULATE HERE*
Requirement 5 Alignment with outcomes of the relevant Plan-level HRA (where applicable)	*Please demonstrate that the planned Cable Routes have taken into account the outcomes of any relevant Plan-level HRA (where applicable), including any specific requirements on cable planning, any geographically-specific findings and the examples of appropriate project-level cable mitigation.* *DEVELOPER TO POPULATE HERE*

Requirement	The italics represent an explanation of what the developer should include, when filling out the CRP Compliance template.
Requirement 6 Regard to SNCB documents, advice and best practice guidance	*Demonstration that regard has been given to documents and advice produced by SNCBs in relation to export cabling, including best practice guidance and the outcomes of relevant research programmes which are available at the point of submitting the CRIA. (Note: Link to Requirement 11)* *DEVELOPER TO POPULATE HERE*

Initial Area of Search

Requirement	The italics represent an explanation of what the developer should include, when filling out the CRP Compliance template.
Requirement 7 Request Crown Estate GIS Proximity Check of proposed AoS	*Please demonstrate that a Proximity Check has been requested and its findings have been considered in Cable Route planning, including identification of any requirement for minimum separation distances from existing assets, and any potential requirement to negotiate proximity agreements with other tenants of The Crown Estate.* *DEVELOPER TO POPULATE HERE*
Requirement 8 Identification of key environmental sensitivities within the offshore AoS	*Please provide evidence that within the offshore AoS the following have been identified (and mapped where possible), and given significant weight in Cable Route planning:* – *Habitats Regulations sites (SACs, SPAs and Ramsar sites, whether fully designated or not);* – *MCZs and SSSIs/ASSIs (whether fully designated or not)* – *Features of these Protected Sites (including priority habitats and species)* – *Protected Sites with conservation objectives to recover features to favourable condition; and*

Requirement	The italics represent an explanation of what the developer should include, when filling out the CRP Compliance template.
	– *Areas of known Annex I habitat outside protected areas but within the AoS* – *Habitats that are known to be irreplaceable or very difficult to replace (e.g. chalk reef).* *Please provide evidence that consultation with SNCBs (and other relevant non-statutory consultees where considered appropriate) has been undertaken, and that consultees have had the opportunity to engage and provide information about particularly sensitive areas or areas of concern to them.* *DEVELOPER TO POPULATE HERE*
Requirement9 Outline of possible cabling infrastructure	*Please provide an outline view of possible cabling infrastructure requirements (acknowledging that this may change as the design of the project evolves). The outline should include the potential number and capacities of the export cables with their indicative spacing requirements and the additional structures (e.g. Substations and converter stations) which the project is likely to require. Where there are uncertainties in the required infrastructure these should be set out (with reasons).* *DEVELOPER TO POPULATE HERE* *Within the AoS, please identify hard engineering constraints such as existing challenging ground conditions and sections of the coast where landfall is not possible. Please provide an initial view on the likely areas within the AoS where cable preparation works and/or cable protection may be needed (noting that this information is subject to change as survey work is undertaken). (Note: where possible, this information should be presented alongside environmental information from Requirement 8)* *Please provide evidence that consultation with SNCBs (and where considered appropriate, other non-statutory consultees) has been undertaken so that they understand the likely infrastructure requirements and constraints, and that they have had the opportunity to raise any areas of concern about the placement of infrastructure (including cable protection) and specific Protected Sites or features.* *DEVELOPER TO POPULATE HERE*

Detailed cable route planning

Requirement	The italics represent an explanation of what the developer should include, when filling out the CRP Compliance template.
Requirement 10 Regular consultation with SNCBs through Cable Route selection process	*Please provide evidence that regular consultation with SNCBs has been undertaken as the Cable Route selection process progresses. Consultation must encompass the entire process from AoS to final route selection and should include communication of the evolving understanding of cabling infrastructure requirements (including cable protection) as well as the evolving understanding of environmental and technical constraints on the Cable Route. Consultees must be given the opportunity to comment on proposals.* *Recognising that the CRIA may be submitted at different stages of a development's planning and consenting process, plans for ongoing and future engagement should also be highlighted.* *(Note: Link to Requirement 2)* *DEVELOPER TO POPULATE HERE*
Requirement 11 SNCB advice and guidance provided during Cable Route planning process	*Please document where SNCBs have provided advice and guidance during the Cable Route planning process, and how this has been considered in Cable Route decision-making. The way in which SNCB advice has been incorporated into the Cable Route plan must be documented. If the SNCB advice has not been followed, or where there the developer disagrees with the conclusions of the SNCB, please provide clear and detailed justification of this. The level of justification should be similar to that which will ultimately be required within Statements of Common Ground with the SNCB(s).* *Please provide copies of any formal advice on the Cable Route received from SNCBs or non-statutory consultees. Where such advice is not yet available (for example where the CRIA is submitted in advance of formal consultation on the Cable Route), developers must either request that SNCBs provide a letter to accompany the CRIA which sets out their position on the Cable Route, or develop a joint statement with SNCBs for inclusion in the CRIA which sets out the areas of agreement and disagreement over the Cable Route.*

Requirement	The italics represent an explanation of what the developer should include, when filling out the CRP Compliance template.
	(Note: Link to Requirement 6) *DEVELOPER TO POPULATE HERE*
Requirement 12 Appropriate weight given to environmental considerations	*Demonstration that the potential impact of the route on Protected Sites has been carefully considered throughout the Cable Route evaluation process, and that all reasonable efforts have been made to avoid environmental impacts and adverse effects on the integrity of sites. If avoidance is not possible then this must be clearly justified (including reasons why alternative Cable Routes are unsuitable) and only then can mitigation be considered.* *If mitigation is included in a Cable Route option, please provide evidence that suitable mitigation approaches have been considered and can be employed on the project to avoid environment impacts and adverse effects on integrity of Habitats Regulations sites. Advice given by SNCBs on the efficacy of proposed mitigations should be provided where available, and the mitigation must be capable of being secured in project consents.* *DEVELOPER TO POPULATE HERE*
Requirement 13 Programme for PEIR consultation and Environmental Statement and/or HRA	*Demonstration that the following activities have been undertaken, or a coherent programme is in place for their completion:* – *A consultation on a Preliminary Environmental Information Report which includes the Cable Route or wider AoS; and* – *A full assessment of the environmental impacts of the Cable Route within an Environmental Statement and/or separate report to inform HRA.* *DEVELOPER TO POPULATE HERE*

Appendix 3 – CRIA information submission

The developer will be required to provide the following information in their CRIA information submission to The Crown Estate. The CRIA must be in relation to onshore grid interface position evidenced under TM04+ consistent with NESO's reformed connections process.

The CRIA information is to be submitted to the relevant OFTO asset manager.

When completing this pro-forma, developers should be cognisant of and seek to evidence how they have met the requirements contained within the CRP (Appendix 1)

Where separate documents are cross referenced, specific paragraph or section numbers must be provided alongside functioning links.

Developer	Tender / Leasing Round	Project Name
Date	Revision	Author
Section of Route	Information required in italics. Developer to populate accordingly.	

Summary Information

	Information Type	The italics represent an explanation of what the developer should include when filling out the CRP Compliance template.
0.1	**Introduction and narrative summary of the project**	*Overview of the Option Area/Option Site proposal including any project(s) to which it relates and a chart/plan showing the onshore grid interface site, the proposed Cable Route, proposed offshore substations and offshore converter stations (if known) and project locations (if applicable).*

Information Type	The italics represent an explanation of what the developer should include when filling out the CRP Compliance template.
	*Include details of your **TM04+ position** (e.g., NESO Gate status, evidence-window submissions, queue position and confirmation if a Gate 2 or Gate 1 offer has been received.*

Part 1 – Project Specification & Justification

	Information Type	The italics represent an explanation of what the developer should include when filling out the CRP Compliance template.
1.1	**Extent of Proposed Option Area/Option Site**	*To provide:* *a) a GIS shape file of the Option Area/Option Site, proposed Cable Route (if different to the Option Area/Option Site) and any offshore substations and offshore converter stations (if known). The data should be supplied in ESRI shape file geodatabase format in a geodetic WGS1984 (EPSG code 4326) projection with MEDIN standard (v.2.3.7) metadata* *b) a plan showing the entire Option Area/Option Site and proposed Cable Route* *c) a larger scale plan of the landfall location*
1.2	**A description of the proposed routeing and a justification of the Cable Route width (and where applicable, cable spacing if multiple systems).**	*Describe the process you have gone through to identify the proposed Cable Route including details of any survey work which you have undertaken.* *A narrative presentation of the proposed routeing of the proposed Cable Route width.*

Information Type	The italics represent an explanation of what the developer should include when filling out the CRP Compliance template.
	This section should demonstrate that you have taken into consideration the overall routing principles set out in Section 5.2 and any cable spacing principles as suggested in The Crown Estate's evidence-based study (where applicable): Principles of Cable Routing and Spacing, The Crown Estate (UK) 2012 *The proposed number and spacing of cables must be included, and a rationale for how this links with the width of the Cable Route requested. If the number and spacing of cables is unknown at the time of application, then a justification for the sought Cable Route must still be provided with a timeline as to when the number and spacing of cables will be known.* *Please state if the Cable Router proposed is representative of a definitive route, or if further refinement of the route is required. Please demonstrate how the width of the Cable Route has been minimised to prevent unnecessary sterilisation of the seabed but sufficient to accommodate the anticipated requirements of the project. If the route will be further refined, please outline your process for identifying the refined route and the timescales for doing this, making sure that it is clear which elements of work will be undertaken before and after development consent.*
1.3 **A draft specification of the works**	*A list description of the Transmission Asset Infrastructure proposed to be installed for the project by the rights granted from The Crown Estate. This should include:* – *Cable diameter and material* – *Maximum number and working voltage of cables (AC or DC)* – *Burial depth for cables* – *Cable protection (e.g. anticipated burial depths, matting, rock dumping, inshore protection)* – *Cable joint chambers (this is relevant for the foreshore) Any other cables or communications equipment*

	Information Type	The italics represent an explanation of what the developer should include when filling out the CRP Compliance template.
		– *Offshore substations (including details foundation types, dimensions of structures and burial depth)* – *Offshore converter stations (including details of foundation types, dimensions of structures and burial depth)* – *Any ancillary equipment* – *Any scour protection materials*
1.4	**Description of installation techniques and onshore works**	– *Installation techniques (for all applicable Transmission Asset Infrastructure'- relevant to any offshore substation and/or converter platforms, offshore cables and cable installation at landfalls)* – *The nature of works proposed at the landfall site* – *The connection point to the onshore transmission or distribution system and confirmation of relevant onshore network owner* – *Overview of the works required onshore as part of the project*
1.5	**Any other relevant technical information**	*Such other technical descriptions may be useful for The Crown Estate's understanding of the project, including information about any consultants engaged by the developer to provide input to the project and their scope of works.*

Part 2 – Planning and third party interests

	Information Type	The italics represent an explanation of what the developer should include, when filling out the CRP Compliance template.
2.1	**Planning & Consenting**	*a) List the key consents which will be required for the transmission assets, and your plan for achieving these consents (including approximate timescales).* *b) List the environmental/other user constraints that you are aware of on the corridor, and explain how you intend to mitigate these impacts. Particular mention should be made of potential impacts on any SACs, SPAs, Ramsars, MCZs/MPAs, SSSIs/ASSIs, and the way in which these will be managed.* *c) Briefly describe whether there is a marine plan in place for this location and if so, how you meet the objectives of the adopted plan.* *d) Describe any stakeholder engagement which you intend to, or have already undertaken on the corridor, including approximate dates for any future stakeholder engagement* *e) Confirmation that the proposed Cable Route accords with any relevant Appropriate Assessment and applicable Strategic Environmental Assessment.*
2.2	**Third party interests**	*Please provide a list of third-party assets (or known proposed assets) which are potentially affected by your proposed Cable Route and the way in which these interactions are being/will be managed including any discussions that have been held to find a mutually acceptable solution. It may be convenient to present this in the form of a table.* *This will be reviewed by The Crown Estate against a Proximity Check which will be undertaken along the proposed Cable Route.* *An additional Proximity Check will need to be carried out if the Option Area/Option Site is different to the Cable Route and any third-party assets that are identified in the Option Area/Option Site which are not within the Cable Route will need to be listed.*

	Information Type	The italics represent an explanation of what the developer should include, when filling out the CRP Compliance template.
		If you would like an early version of the Proximity Check(s) to inform the proposed Cable Route and/or Option Area/Option Site, please let us know.
2.3	**Other relevant information**	*Such other information as may be useful for The Crown Estate's consideration of the location of the proposed Option Area/Option Site, taking into account the cable route planning principles in Section 5.2.*

Part 3 – Commercial set-up and Guarantor

	Information Type	The italics represent an explanation of what the developer should include, when filling out the CRP Compliance template.
3.1	**Corporate set-up of Transmission Entity**	*A description of the corporate set-up of the Transmission Entity and its corporate linkage to the developer (if different). The Transmission Entity may either be the project company, or an OFTO if you have opted for the OFTO build approach in the case of offshore wind.*
3.2	***For offshore wind only** **Summary of OFTO strategy including key decision gates**	*Confirmation whether generator or OFTO build approach is being adopted, and rationale for this.* *Summary of the key risks this approach mitigates or introduces to the project and confirmation of how these risks will be managed.* *Key decision gates/milestones under the OFTO process (e.g. when you expect an OFTO tender would start/ end and when assets would transfer to an OFTO, if the generator build approach is being adopted).*

Any relevant appendices (such as other details which the developer deems to be relevant for the assessment of the proposed Cable Route) may be included in the application

Appendix 4 – Document control

Document Details

Owner	Morris Bray, Transmission Portfolio Manager, Marine
Document Name	Transmission Cable Route Identification & Leasing Guidelines
Version Date	5 November 2026
Effective Date	5 November 2026
Version	6.0
Issue	TWO
Review Date	November 2026

Document Review

Modified Date	5 November 2026
Author	Morris Bray
Version	6.0
Description of changes	Update to the guidance to reflect the inclusion of Cross-Border OFTOs , and relevant updates which are applicable to Leasing Round 5 and Cross-Border OFTOs.

If you have any questions about this Cable Route Guidance, please contact: Power.transmission@thecrownestate.co.uk

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