

# JLAG - Strategic Energy Update

## 1) Crown Estate East Coast Spatial Study

In April 2021 Crown Estate published their *East Coast Spatial Study*, which is part of their Offshore Wind Evidence and Change Program, and contributes to the **Offshore Transmission Network Review (OTNR)**

<https://www.thecrownestate.co.uk/media/3801/east-coast-grid-spatial-study-summary-report.pdf>

“The origin of this project was a desire to introduce an evidence base around the spatial context of developing offshore transmission infrastructure”.

“The east coast of England was chosen as the initial area for review due to the expected growth of offshore wind in the region over the coming years, given the excellent wind resource in the area. It was also chosen as there are significant other infrastructure projects seeking to connect in the region (e.g., interconnectors), adding to the pressure and disruption for communities and the environment.”

Recommendations in brief

- a. “It may be beneficial to consider longer-term regional spatial plans for offshore wind and associated grid connection and transmission infrastructure. These would have the benefit of providing clarity to a wide range of stakeholders from government to local communities.”
- b. “Consideration should also be given to reviewing and updating relevant planning and policy, including Marine Plans and National Policy Statements, such that they provide a supportive policy framework for a more coordinated approach where needed.”
- c. “Consideration should be given to the design of future leasing rounds, for example grid connection infrastructure could form part of a separate process in parallel with, or following on from, offshore wind leasing. The objective should be to support long term planning of coordinated grid connection infrastructure beyond leasing rounds”.
- d. “While the current Offshore Transmission Owner (OFTO) regime works well for radial connections, a new approach is likely to be required for coordinated solutions in order to balance short- and long-term objectives. The investment required for development of coordinated grid connection and transmission infrastructure is likely to be substantial and consideration needs to be given as to the costs and benefits of private and public funding of development, as well as competition for rights to develop and operate such assets.”
- e. “Consideration should be given to identifying potential ‘anchor’ projects, i.e., offshore wind farm developments which might provide the opportunity to pilot a coordinated grid connection model.”

**The scenarios in the report are set out below and represent a range of approaches to offshore coordination with varying outcomes and are explained on page 9 of the East Coast Spatial Study**

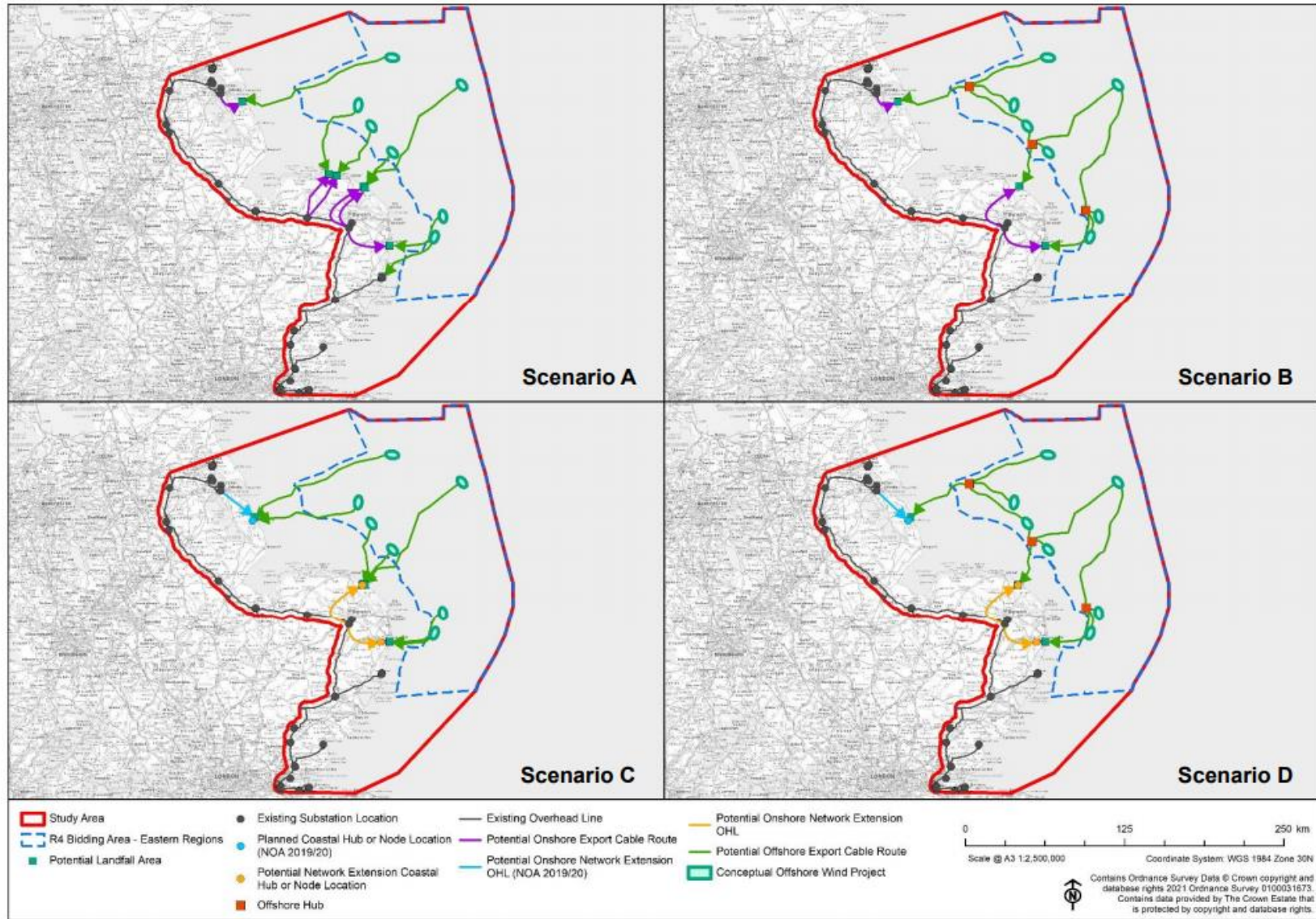


Figure 3. Overview of Grid Connection Scenarios

## 2) Engagement with Dept Business Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS)

I was invited to speak about communities and Net Zero Infrastructure, by the East Coast Project Director at National Grid, to the **OTNR Expert Advisory Group** (membership details at <https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/offshore-transmission-network-review>) on the 11<sup>th</sup> June .

Laura Waters (Norfolk CC Planner) and I, made the case that failure to deal with community issues effectively, and the limited social mandate for infrastructure change, is a strategic risk to the delivery of Government targets, especially to 40GW of offshore wind by 2030, and the associated connection projects. We made the case, that in addition to the technical and regulatory strands of the OTNR, a social mandate workstream, was needed to develop a strategic offer to the communities who are expected to host this infrastructure.

As a result, we have been asked to attend a follow up discussion with the Head of Offshore and Europe at BEIS.

## 3) Coordination between Local Amenity Groups

Amenity groups across the region who have been involved with all projects, dating back to the initial incarnation of Bramford to Twinstead, are beginning to coordinate and collaborate.

*“campaign groups and organisations from across East Anglia are forming an umbrella organisation to bring our voices together and get them heard at all levels of government. The groups and organisations involved have common values around supporting the move to green energy and common interests in seeing that achieved without despoiling our countryside with poorly planned and specified energy infrastructure. Between them, the member organisations have campaigned on a wide range of energy infrastructure planning issues and have a huge amount of experience to share.”* [https://www.facebook.com/Stour-Valley-Underground-104400951609675/?tn-str=k\\*F](https://www.facebook.com/Stour-Valley-Underground-104400951609675/?tn-str=k*F) 19<sup>th</sup> May 2021

## 4) Forthcoming consultations – “in the summer”

- a. BEIS/ Ofgem in respect of the OTNR

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/979088/OTNR\\_Q1\\_2021\\_Newsletter.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/979088/OTNR_Q1_2021_Newsletter.pdf)

- b. Government consultation on a new Strategic Policy Statement for Ofgem, there has not been one of these since the first one in 2014.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-05-18/3036>

*The Energy Act 2013 provides powers for the Secretary of State to designate a Strategy and Policy Statement (SPS) in which he would set out the Government’s strategic priorities and other main considerations of its energy policy, the policy outcomes to be achieved as a result of the implementation of that policy, and the roles and responsibilities of those who are involved in implementation of that policy. The Act imposed new duties on Ofgem to have regard to the strategic priorities when carrying out its regulatory functions and to carry out those functions in the way it considers is best calculated to further the delivery of the specified policy outcomes.*

**Phil Watson**

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**16/06/21**