

# The Eastern Link Project

## Approach to Public Consultation Document (AtPC)

Marine / Onshore January 2022

## 1. Introduction

At SP Energy Networks we keep electricity flowing to homes and businesses throughout Central and Southern Scotland, North Wales, Merseyside, Cheshire and North Shropshire. We do this through the network of substations, overhead lines and underground cables, which we own, operate and maintain.

We are undergoing unprecedented change to the way electricity is generated and used and as the distribution and transmission operator, we're committed to delivering a cleaner, greener future.

To help deliver this greener energy to homes and businesses across the UK, we need to increase flexibility of our network between Scotland, with its renewable energy capacity, and England. By 2030, the Government's target is for 40GW of offshore wind to be delivered - enough to power every home in the UK.

To meet our target, we need to increase the capacity of the electricity network between Scotland and its reserves of renewable energy, and the rest of the UK. Scotland is committed to becoming net zero in all greenhouse gases by 2045, with England and Wales committed to net zero by 2050.

## Eastern Link

SP Energy Networks is consulting on a vital new energy link between Scotland and England, known as the Eastern Link Project. The Eastern Link project is vital to supporting the growth of renewable energy as we aim to reach Net Zero carbon emissions by 2045 in Scotland, and 2050 in the rest of the UK. To enable us to deliver this crucial project, we need to build a new substation and converter station and lay underground cables and marine cables at locations in East Lothian.

## 2. Our approach to consultation

The purpose of this Approach to Public Consultation (AtPC) document is to explain what you can expect from us and to outline the details of our consultation approach.

This document will be available on our website and in some local venues in advance of the consultation being launched. Public consultation is an important part of the delivery of this project and gives you an opportunity to fully understand our plans and give us your feedback. Your feedback can help influence our proposals and help us resolve any concerns you may have. We will be holding a statutory consultation in February 2022.

## 3. Why and when will we consult?

Your feedback and local knowledge will help us better understand the local area and any potential impacts the project may have on the community. We will listen to everyone's views and, where practical, aim to resolve any concerns or consider mitigation measures if required. We have also engaged with subject matter experts' and targeted groups relating to the environmental landscape, land, marine welfare, and others to understand any potential issues or constraints in advance of any work taking place.

We will continue to have these conversations and liaise with you throughout the lifecycle of the project. Our consultation will take place from:

- Monday 31st January 2022 – Monday 28th February 2022

Your feedback is important to us and we will be posting out a letter, consultation leaflet and feedback form in the local area and providing all materials online on our project webpage.

We will also have a stand-alone exhibition at Innerwick Village Hall.

## 4. Who will we consult?

We are happy to talk to anyone with an interest in the project. We are also working closely with East Lothian Council and have reached out to the local community councils in the area. In addition, we have identified a consultation target area for the distribution of consultation information.



### 5. What will be consulting on?

The consultation is a statutory requirement both as a pre-application requirement for the planning submission and for the marine licence application which are two separate applications required for this project.

We will be holding online one to ones and sharing information that is relevant for the area within which we are consulting. However, all information pertaining to the project will be available online and our consultation leaflet along with a feedback form and letter will be mailed out to the catchment area (see map above) and online.

#### Dunbar

Our focus within the Dunbar area is to share information relating to the converter station and the route of the underground cables. We will also be consulting the local marine and fisheries community on the marine licence application.

#### Innerwick

Due to the proximity of the Innerwick community to the cable corridor, we will have a stand-alone exhibition available in the Innerwick Village Hall and access to consultation materials will be available online also.

#### Eyemouth

For our approach in Eyemouth and in consideration of the fishing community, we will be sharing the route of the marine cables. This will include details on the environmental work undertaken and the applications that will be submitted to East Lothian Council. It will also include details on the marine surveys undertaken, the location of the marine cables, installation methods and environmental work carried out to date.

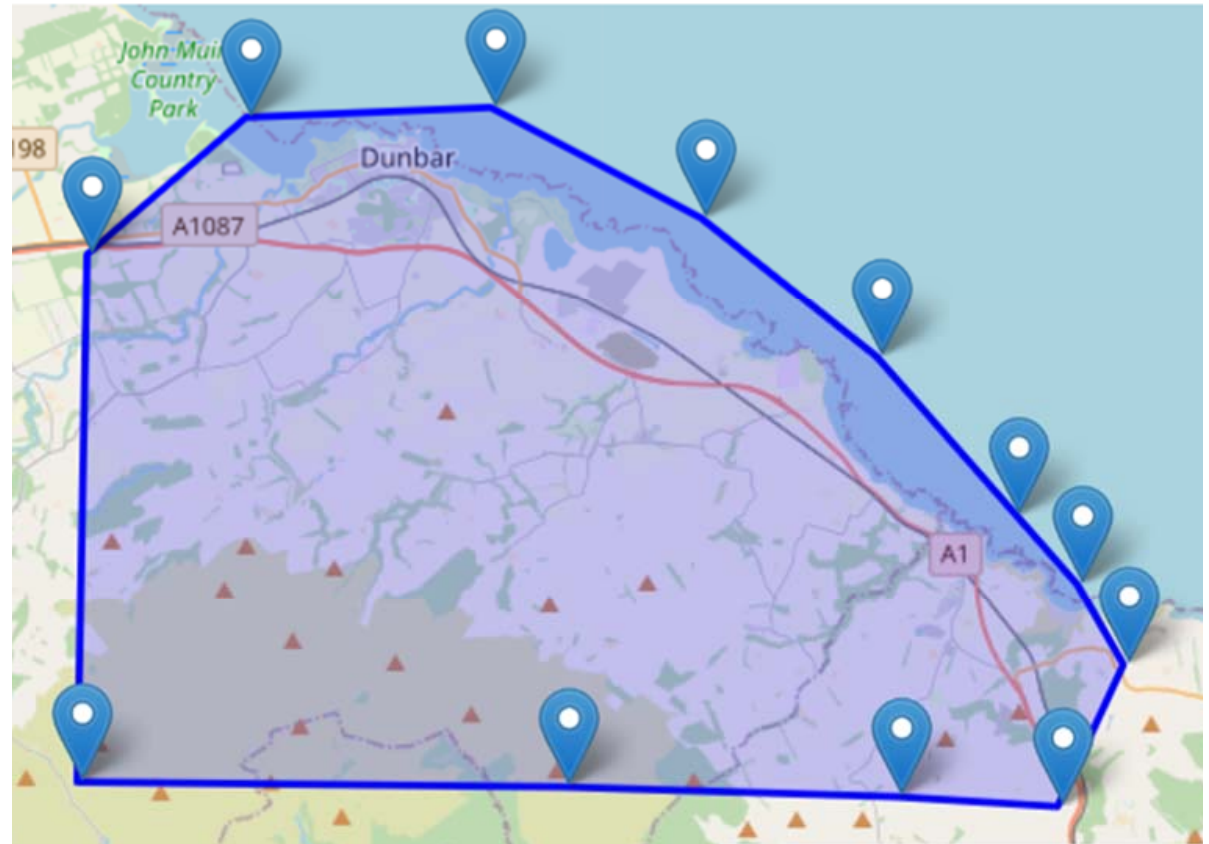


Figure 4.1 Map of mail drop area



## 6. How will we engage?

Method	Detail
Online Consultation Webpage	All consultation material will be available on our website (virtual exhibition boards)
One to One appointment's	Online or telephone ones to ones can be booked on our website
Information handout x 2	Leaflet handout at Dunbar Asda supermarket – 15th / 23rd February
Consultation leaflet, letter, and feedback form	A letter to residents with a leaflet and feedback form will be sent out prior to launch
Stakeholder briefings	One to one meeting to be offered to local elected representatives
Community Council briefings	Meetings to be held with East Lammermuir, East Lothian, Dunbar community councils
Feedback Form	To be sent out to the local community with consultation leaflet and available to submit online also via our webpage
Media / social media	Press adverts will be publicised in local papers and key messages advertised via social channels
Stand-alone exhibition	A stand-alone exhibition will be in place at Innerwick Village Hall during consultation

For more information, please contact us at [easternlink@spenergynetworks.co.uk](mailto:easternlink@spenergynetworks.co.uk) or visit our webpage here: [https://www.spenergynetworks.co.uk/pages/eastern\\_link\\_introduction.aspx](https://www.spenergynetworks.co.uk/pages/eastern_link_introduction.aspx).



## 7. Evaluation of responses

We will seek to capture both qualitative and quantitative data throughout the consultation period. This will include information about respondents' general perceptions of the project; how the plans may affect them and their homes or businesses; any concerns they have about the impact on the local economic or social aspects of the area.

We will ensure that the marine licence application contains detailed feedback from the local fishing and maritime interests in the area. We will ensure that all responses are carefully evaluated and a thorough response to each point raised by residents and stakeholders will be incorporated into the final PAC report.

SP Energy Networks will collate the views of all respondents and produce a full analysis to be presented to East Lothian Council and Marine Scotland.

## 8. Next Steps

Consultation will run from 31st January to 28th February 2022. The planning application is due for submission in April 2022. Once consented the Eastern Link will commence construction in 2024 and will complete installation by 2027. Following a period for commissioning the link will be connected by the end of 2027. Figure 8.1 below sets out a project timeline.

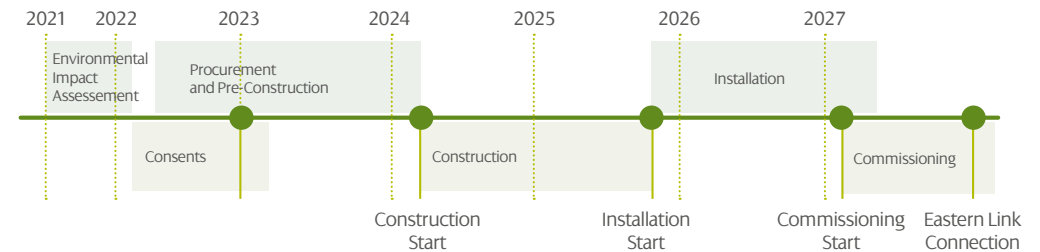


Figure 8.1 Project Timeline

