



Sheringham and Dudgeon Extension Projects

Statement of Community Consultation

July 2020

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1. Introduction

Equinor has been operating in Norfolk for close to a decade. Our existing offshore wind farms, Sheringham Shoal and Dudgeon provide enough electricity to power around 750,000 UK homes.

We are now seeking a common Development Consent Order (DCO) for two new projects: Sheringham Extension Project (SEP) and Dudgeon Extension Project (DEP), collectively known as the Sheringham and Dudgeon Extension Projects (the 'Extension Projects'). Although these are two separate offshore wind farm extension projects, at Equinor we have adopted a strategic approach to developing the projects jointly to minimise local impacts. We will apply for a common DCO for the Extension Projects and will consult on both projects together.

With the potential to generate renewable power for 820,000 UK homes, the Extension Projects will make an important contribution to the UK's legislated decarbonisation targets and efforts to tackle climate change.

Your views matter to us at Equinor. We develop our projects responsibly by engaging with communities and understanding the local environment as the plans evolve. We welcome your feedback and comments to our plans for the Extension Projects.

This document, known as a Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC), outlines how we intend to keep you informed and how you can provide your feedback on our proposals for the Extension Projects, as required under the Planning Act 2008.

2. About us

Sheringham Shoal Offshore Wind Farm and Dudgeon Offshore Wind Farm are owned by two separate joint venture partnerships known as Scira Offshore Energy Ltd. and Dudgeon Offshore Wind Ltd., respectively. At Equinor, we are involved in both joint venture partnerships and we act as the operator for both offshore wind farms. On behalf of both these partnerships, we are bringing the two Extension Projects together as part of one application for development consent, which forms the Sheringham and Dudgeon Extension Projects.

Headquartered in Norway, we are a broad energy company and have been a major provider of energy to the UK for 40 years. We power over one million homes across Europe with renewable energy from our existing offshore wind farm projects in the UK and Germany. Our current UK offshore wind farms provide enough renewable electricity to power over 750,000 UK homes. We are proud to support local skills, utilise local suppliers and support local projects.



3. Sheringham and Dudgeon Extension Projects

SEP is planned to have a generating capacity of up to 317 megawatts (MW), while DEP is planned to have a capacity of up to 402 MW. The Extension Projects will be located next to each respective existing wind farm, with SEP being approximately 17.5 kilometres (km) (11 miles) offshore at the nearest point to shore, and DEP being approximately 31 km (20 miles) offshore at the nearest point to shore.

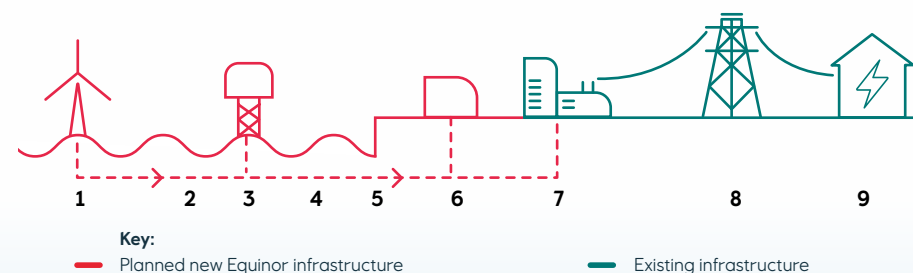
As part of the common DCO application, the Extension Projects have a shared point of connection at the existing National Grid Norwich Main Substation. With this approach we seek to minimise potential impacts on the community and environment by adopting a shared onshore footprint for the Extension Projects.

The Extension Projects will include the following new infrastructure:

- Offshore wind turbines and foundations.
- Interarray and interlink cables to connect the offshore wind turbines to an offshore substation.
- Up to two offshore substations and foundations.
- Offshore subsea export cables and scour protection.
- Landfall.
- Onshore export cables.
- Up to two onshore substations.
- A grid connection point at the National Grid Norwich Main Substation.
- Other associated development such as site access, utilities and potential landscaping/screening.

The graphic below provides an overview of the typical components of an offshore wind farm.

1. Offshore wind turbines
2. Interarray and/or interlink cables
3. Offshore substation(s) (Alternating Current (AC))
4. Offshore export cables
5. Cable landfall and onshore export cables
6. Equinor onshore substation(s)
7. Existing National Grid Substation
8. Existing National Grid power lines
9. UK homes



4. Our onshore proposals

Electricity generated by the Extension Projects offshore will be brought ashore via subsea cables and will reach the coastline at Weybourne. They will then be installed in a trench heading south towards our new onshore substation area near to the existing National Grid Norwich Main Substation.

Landfall

Supported by initial environmental assessments, we were previously evaluating two potential locations for where the offshore cables would come ashore, Weybourne and Bacton. After further technical and environmental analysis, Weybourne has been selected as the landfall point.

We published a Scoping Report in October 2019, which presented the project search area. We are currently assessing the best cable route and options to locate the onshore substation(s). We will be seeking your feedback to help shape our plans during our consultation process.

Onshore cable corridor search area

We will refine the current 1 km (roughly 0.6 miles) wide onshore scoping boundary for the onshore export cables. Since we published our Scoping Report, we have undertaken environmental and technical assessments and are considering options outside of the 1 km wide scoping boundary to explore:

- Routing the onshore cabling to the south of Weybourne, where the cables come ashore.
- Crossing the River Bure via trenchless Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) methods.
- Crossing existing onshore cabling for other offshore wind developers in the area.
- Crossing existing proposed developments, including local road network improvements and housing developments.

Onshore substation area

We are assessing options for the location of the onshore substation area. Our preferred option is to use one common substation, however if the projects are built in phases, up to two substations may be needed within the same footprint. We are assessing options within a 3 km (roughly 1.9 miles) radius of the existing National Grid Norwich Main Substation.

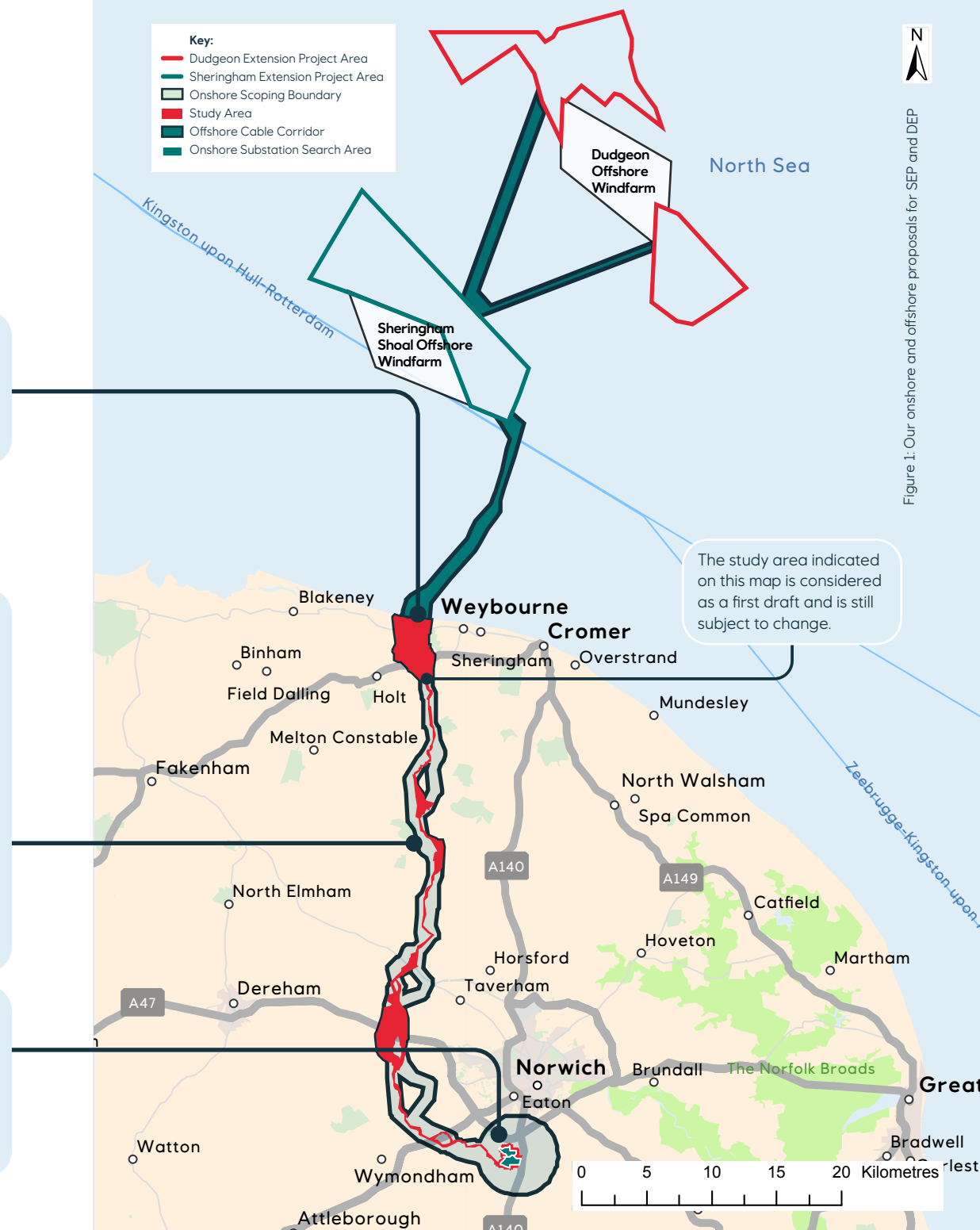


Figure 1: Our onshore and offshore proposals for SEP and DEP

5. Our public consultation

As set out in **Section 8**, we are dedicated to using a wide variety of communications methods to ensure we can continue the conversation on the Extension Projects and involve all members of the community.

Our consultation process

The consultation process for the Extension Projects will be an iterative one as the feedback and information we receive will help inform the refinement of project options. Our consultation will consist of at least two phases of consultation, including:

- **A phase one consultation**, lasting 6 weeks, from 09 July to 20 August 2020
- **A phase two consultation**, lasting 6 weeks, indicatively planned for spring 2021

Phase one public consultation

During phase one, we will invite feedback to our proposals to help inform our site selection process for the location of the onshore substation area and refinement of the onshore cable corridor. We will analyse all of the feedback we receive and, together with information from our environmental surveys and as well as discussions with technical stakeholders, we will further refine our proposals.

The phase one consultation will be open to all interested members of the public and will feature digital and non-digital methods for engagement as outlined in Section 8.

Phase two public consultation

This consultation, in accordance with section 47 of the Planning Act 2008, will allow us to update you on our project plans, including how the feedback we received during the phase one consultation has been considered as we developed our proposals for the Extension Projects.

At our phase two consultation, we will consult on our refined plans together with the results from our environmental surveys and studies, which will be published in our Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR). This will include detailed landscape and seascape visualisations of the proposals.

Ongoing engagement

We will be seeking to continue the conversation on our proposals by convening dedicated working groups, which will be established with the advice of the local planning authorities.

Local knowledge is important to us, and we will consider the feedback and comments we receive on an ongoing basis and incorporate these within our proposals where possible.

Interim reporting

We will publish a consultation summary report after each phase of consultation to keep the community updated as to how their feedback has been considered in the development of the plans for the Extension Projects.

Consultation Report

As part of the DCO application due to be submitted by the end of 2021, we will publish a Consultation Report that:

- Describes the consultation process.
- Explains how we have sought to comply with the relevant legal requirements to consult.
- Details how we have worked with local planning authorities to ensure our consultation is suitable for the area.
- Provides a summary of the feedback and consultation responses we have received.
- Responds to the feedback we have received, including explaining how your feedback has influenced our proposals.



6. What will we consult on?

The overriding aim of our public consultation on the Extension Projects is to ensure that both community and technical consultees have a chance to understand, comment and inform the proposals.

The feedback from our community consultation will help us to mature our plans for the Extension Projects. We are asking for comments from an early stage of development so we can develop a deeper understanding of key issues in the community and can take them into account as the project evolves. This will be part of an ongoing dialogue with communities, during which we will welcome all kinds of feedback.

We encourage local communities to give their views about how the Extension Projects may affect them or their local area. We will be seeking feedback to help develop our proposals regarding, but not limited to:

- Our site selection process for the location of the onshore substation area and refinement of the onshore cable corridor search area.
- The offshore environment including consultation with the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) and commercial fisheries organisations.
- Short-term and temporary impacts during construction, such as traffic movements, local amenities and the environment.
- Long-term operational considerations, such as on the local environment, landscape and visual amenity.

At each phase of consultation, we will give the community the opportunity to discuss details of the Extension Projects with the project team via our consultation methods listed in **Section 8**.

7. Who will we consult?

This consultation is open to anyone who may be interested or in any way feels impacted by our proposals for the Extension Projects. Our communication channels (listed in **Section 8**) can be used by interested parties to get in touch with us to find out more information and make comments.

We have spoken to the local planning authorities (LPAs) about plans for the Extension Projects, to help us develop our understanding of the area and surrounding communities. This mapping of the local area has informed a consultation area to guide our consultation process. This area has been divided into two separate zones:

A core consultation zone, which extends by a minimum distance of 1,000 metres either side of the onshore project search area (shown in **Figure 2**). This ensures that all individuals and stakeholders identified within a minimum distance of 1,000 metres from any associated underground or overground infrastructure are consulted. This will guide the refinement of the core consultation zone together with any project search area changes, which may include the refinement of route options and the selection of preferred sites for project infrastructure, such as the onshore substation area. Properties within the core consultation zone will directly receive communications such as leaflets and newsletters from us in the post.

A wider consultation area, as we recognise that there may be some interested individuals or parties who are not within the core consultation zone. We are committed to ensuring that these interested parties still have an opportunity to view our proposals and have their say. We will notify communities within the wider consultation area by advertising in local media and using social media. Informative consultation materials will be published online and available to view and collect via our contact details.

Throughout the development of our proposals, we will continue to work with local planning authorities to identify any relevant community groups, business organisations and area committees who should be consulted. As well as the community consultation, we will be discussing the Extension Projects with a range of statutory and non-statutory consultees, including:

- Owners, tenants and occupiers of the land included within the DCO application.
- MPs, local authorities and parish councils.
- Statutory stakeholders, such as Natural England, the Environment Agency and Historic England.
- Intertidal groups and users such as fisheries and marine organisations.
- Local interest and community groups.
- Local interest and community groups in the coastal area with a particular interest in seascape visual amenity.

Hard to reach groups

We have developed our consultation to be accessible to all groups in the community. This is particularly important in the current situation where public gatherings are restricted in line with government guidance and health protection measures because of COVID-19. The approach to consultation outlined in this SoCC seeks to offer an inclusive range of communications methods for conducting an open and meaningful consultation across the community during the COVID-19 pandemic and in the instance of any future recurring or regional lockdown measures.

Our consultation methods, described in **Section 8** of this SoCC, set out the use of digital engagement methods and also how we will consult with those without digital access. We recognise that some individuals or groups may have difficulties taking part in the consultation process for a range of reasons. We have identified a number of organisations representing hard to reach groups in the consultation area. These organisations will be contacted at the start of each consultation phase to ensure that our approach best meets the needs of its members. Please see a list of these organisations included in **Annex A** (accessible via our consultation website sepanndep.commonplace.is).



Figure 2: Core and Wider Consultation Zones



8. How will we consult?

Our consultation activities include a range of methods to ensure our consultation can be accessed by all members of the community, which is especially important given current restrictions on meeting in person owing to the COVID-19 pandemic.



Open communication

A Freephone information line is available for interested parties to call to ask questions and provide feedback: 08081 963673 (open 09:00 – 17:00. A voice message service will operate for out of office hours and all enquiries will be acknowledged within 24 hours).

A project email address is open for questions and comments: info@sepanddep.co.uk

A freepost address is also open for letters and feedback forms to be sent, free of charge to: FREEPOST DUDGEON AND SHERINGHAM EXT

Our dedicated Community Liaison Officer, Nigel Tompkins, is based locally in North Norfolk and can be contacted: nigel@ni4b.co.uk and 01263 822427 / 07860 206565



Consultation website

A dedicated consultation website is live for you to find out more information and provide your feedback: sepanddep.commonplace.is. This includes access to our digital engagement platform (see below for details). Any virtual exhibitions will be accessible via this website.



Digital engagement

Our digital engagement platform will present our plans digitally via our consultation website. This will allow you to pin your feedback to an interactive map of the projects areas and see views from other members of the community. The aim of this platform is to provide a wide-reaching and continuous way of engaging with anyone interested in the Extension Projects.



Events

Consultation events will be held where possible, offering you the opportunity to discuss our proposals with us and give your feedback. Where there are restrictions on public gatherings, these events will be delivered by virtual exhibitions available through our consultation website.

Stakeholder meetings and briefing sessions may be arranged with your local parish councils and with key local stakeholder groups. These meetings will be held via online meetings and webinars in circumstances where there are restrictions on public gatherings.



Literature

Stakeholder briefing packs have been provided to elected representatives at the start of the consultation to introduce the scheme and inform them of how we will engage with their constituents during the process.

Consultation leaflets will be distributed to all properties in the core consultation zone via post. They will also be made available for the wider consultation area online via the website, upon request and at local distribution points (where possible to access – see Section 13). Leaflets will provide information on the proposals and how people can have their say.

Feedback forms will be distributed with our consultation leaflet to all properties in the core consultation zone via post. They will also be made available for the wider consultation area online via the website, upon request and at local distribution points (where possible to access – see Section 13).

Newsletters will be available online and distributed regularly via post in the core consultation zone to update residents on the plans and proposals. Copies of all of our consultation materials can be requested in hard copy form where not already provided. The materials can also be requested in alternative formats such as large print, audio or braille formats.



Advertising

Local media will publish adverts to inform local communities of our consultation. Local information points will host posters containing information on how to get involved.

Social media will inform local communities of our consultation and invite feedback.

9. Environmental information

Equinor will be undertaking a robust Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in accordance with the Planning Act 2008 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) and the Infrastructure Planning (EIA) Regulations 2017 (the EIA Regulations). The methodology and scope of the EIA and how it will be carried out will be agreed with the relevant regulatory and environmental bodies (such as Natural England), the Planning Inspectorate (hereby PINS) and your local planning authority throughout the development of our plans for the Extension Projects.

The following reports will be made available electronically and on our consultation website as part of the EIA process and as the DCO application is prepared:

Scoping Report – Our Scoping Report was published in October 2019 and described the process we will undertake to assess any potential impacts onshore and to the existing environment. Feedback on this from the local planning authorities and statutory consultees resulted in a Scoping Opinion which was published by PINS in November 2019. Both of these documents are available to view on PINS website: <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/eastern/sheringham-and-dudgeon-extension-projects/>.

As described in **Section 4** of this SoCC, we have since undertaken environmental and technical assessments and are exploring options for the onshore cable corridor search area outside of the initial 1 km wide scoping boundary, also shown in **Figure 1**.

A more detailed plan is included in an EIA Scoping Extension document on the Equinor project website at <http://sheringhamshoal.co.uk/extensionproject/documents>¹. We will be consulting on the onshore cable corridor search area as part of our phase one consultation.

¹ This document will also be available on the Dudgeon website at: <http://dudgeonoffshorewind.co.uk/extensionproject/documents>

Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) – The PEIR will build upon the findings from the scoping phase and the feedback received through our consultation process. It will incorporate the findings of the surveys and initial assessments that have been carried out and will provide more details about the design of the onshore substation area and onshore cable corridor.

Our environmental surveys began in May 2018 and will run until approximately spring 2021. At our phase two community consultation, we will be seeking feedback from local communities and all other stakeholders on the findings of these surveys in our PEIR.

Environmental Statement (ES) – The ES will advance the content of the PEIR and continue to incorporate the responses from the consultation and results of the surveys undertaken. It will also describe any changes made to the projects and any mitigation measures that need to be implemented. The ES will form part of the DCO application.



10. The planning process

SEP and DEP are classified as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) as each project has a proposed generating capacity of over 100 MW. As the Extension Projects are NSIPs we must apply for a Development Consent Order (DCO).

The DCO application will be dealt with by PINS, the agency responsible for managing the examination process for NSIPs. If the application is accepted, it will be examined by an independent Examining Authority, who will then make a recommendation to the Secretary of State (SoS) for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS). The SoS will then review and comment on this before making a decision on whether to grant a DCO.

For more information on this process or advice on how to respond to our pre-application consultation, you can access PINS' advice note (eight) at:

<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/legislation-and-advice/advice-notes/>²



Pre-application

Equinor must consult with the community and statutory consultees (such as the local planning authorities and Natural England) in compliance with the Planning Act 2008. To demonstrate this to the Planning Inspectorate, we will submit a Consultation Report alongside the DCO application, containing details of our method for consulting, the feedback submitted in response to the consultation and how this has influenced our proposals.



Acceptance

The Planning Inspectorate, on behalf of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government has 28 days to decide whether the DCO application meets the required standards to proceed to examination, including whether the applicant's consultation has been adequate.



Pre-examination

You can register as an interested party – you will be kept informed of progress and opportunities to put your case forward. Inspectors will hold a preliminary meeting and set the timetable for examination.



Examination

You can send your comments in writing. You can request to speak at a public hearing. The Planning Inspectorate has six months to carry out the examination.



Decision

A recommendation to the Secretary of State will be issued by the Planning Inspectorate within three months of the end of the examination. The Secretary of State then has a further three months to issue a decision on the proposal.

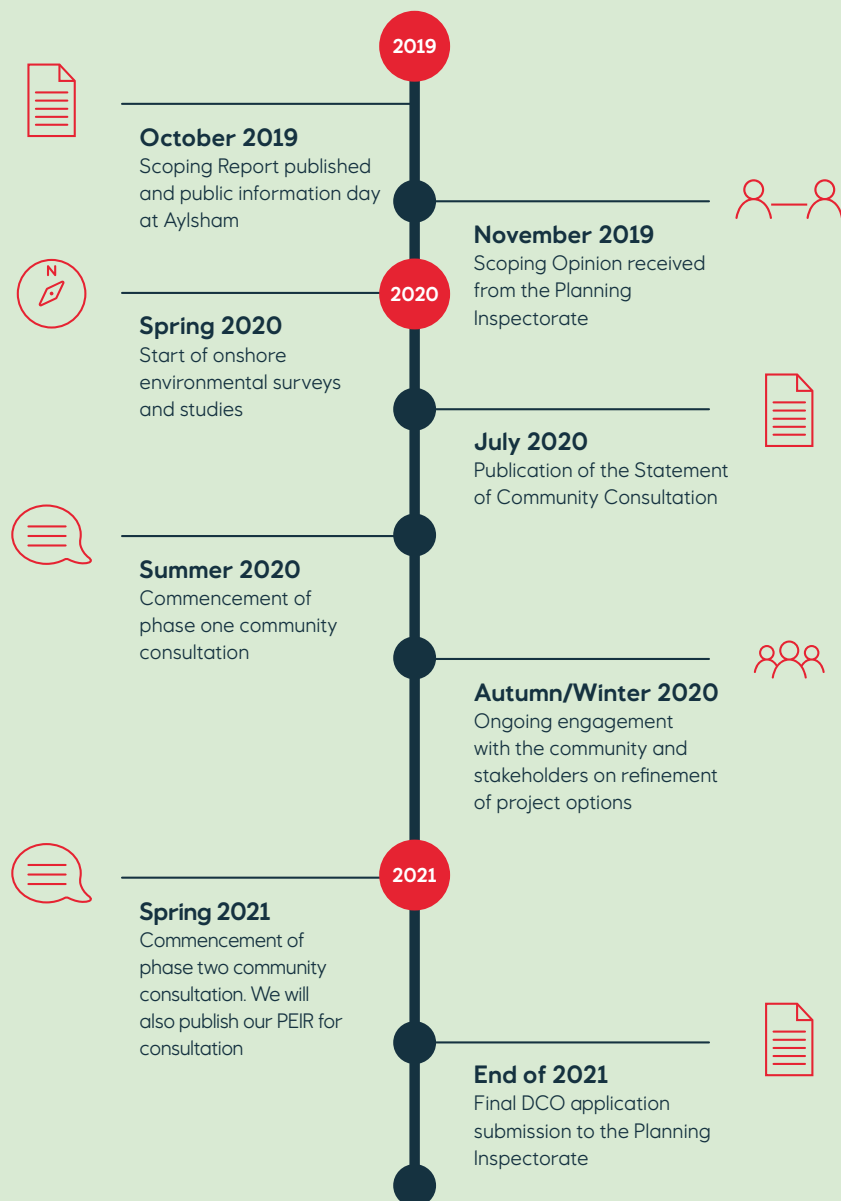


Post-decision

Once a decision has been issued by the Secretary of State, there is a six-week period for legal challenge on the decision.

² Please contact us at the contact information in Section 14 should you wish to request a hard copy.

11. Community consultation timeline



12. Phase one consultation details

We welcome you to our phase one community consultation as detailed below. Due to government restrictions and guidance on social distancing, our consultation events will be provided via a virtual platform hosted on our consultation website at sepanddep.commonplace.is. If it becomes possible to hold face to face events in addition to this virtual consultation, and we decide to do so having consulted with the relevant local planning authorities, this will be publicised in local media and other means.

Our phase one consultation period will run between **09 July and 20 August 2020**. We welcome all comments to our phase one consultation during these dates.

During this consultation period, the latest information about the Extension Projects can be viewed at our virtual exhibition space. This can be viewed and accessed via our consultation website.

If you are unable to view information at our virtual exhibition space, or do not have internet or computer access, you can speak to one of the members of our project team to answer any of your questions and provide your feedback by calling **08081 963673** or writing to us at **FREEPOST DUDGEON AND SHERINGHAM EXT.**

13. Community access points

All of our consultation documents will be available to view and download from our consultation website. Alternative methods of receiving documents can also be arranged at no extra cost for those without computer or internet access.

Documents may also be requested in alternative formats such as large print, audio or braille formats. To do this, please contact us at the details listed in Section 14.

As and when government guidance allows for public buildings to open, and hosting public documents does not produce a health hazard, we will display hard copies of the consultation documents, or ensure that there is computer access to those documents at publicly available locations. These locations will be advertised accordingly at the time.

14. Contact us

Our consultation team is on hand to take your questions and register your comments on the proposals for the Extension Projects.



Email us at:

info@sepanddep.co.uk



Call our freephone information line at:

08081 963673



Visit our consultation website at:

sepanddep.commonplace.is



Write to us at:

FREEPOST DUDGEON AND SHERINGHAM EXT



Follow us on Twitter at:

@Equinor_UK

Landowner interests

If you are a landowner, have an interest in any of the land which interacts with our proposals, or if you have any questions relating to land interests in the area, please contact the Dudgeon and Sheringham Extension Projects Land Team at Dalcour Maclaren by:



Calling: 01869 352725



Emailing: equinor.ukextensions@dalcourmaclaren.com



Alternatively, you can write to Simon Hinchliffe or Rhiannon Price at: **Dalcour Maclaren, 1 Staplehurst Farm, Weston on the Green, Oxfordshire, OX25 3QU**

If you would like this document in large print, audio or braille formats, please contact us using the details above.