

White Cross Newsletter: Spring 2025 Issue 2

White Cross Offshore Windfarm

In spring 2025, a third phase of public consultation on the White Cross project concluded, following submission of further environmental information to North Devon Council and the Marine Management Organisation in support of the application.

The consultation was conducted by North Devon Council and the Marine Management Organisation, with further information submitted included further bat activity survey data, an updated Cable Burial Risk Assessment, a Wave and Beach Erosion Modelling Conclusions report and a Flood Risk Assessment Addendum relating to the onshore substation site.

White Cross Consent Manager Melina Jack said:

"We want to thank everyone who has engaged with the project via the various phases of consultation, including Save Our Sands, Braunton Parish Council and other stakeholders and local residents. "By holding us to account on our proposals, local people have helped to ensure the project is a better version of itself. We have identified ways to reduce the amount of space the project will require in Saunton Sands car park, produced additional environmental surveys to help us ensure we are limiting the impacts of the project, and given clear undertakings that access to the beach will be maintained at all times, and beach construction works will only last around two weeks.

East Yelland substation Braunton

Bideford

"Whilst exchanges of opinion about our proposals have occasionally been robust, we really do appreciate the work that everyone has put into scrutinising them. We care about Saunton Sands and Braunton Burrows, and we completely understand why local people want to make sure they are protected. We are confident that our proposals will do exactly this."

Record year for offshore wind power in Britain

Wind was Britain's biggest source of electricity in 2024 for the first year ever, accounting for 30% of our electricity according to data from the Government's National Energy System Operator. Renewables generated more than 50% of electricity for four consecutive quarters (Q4 2023 – Q3 2024) for the first time, averaging 51% during 2024.

White Cross Project Manager Alex Green said:

"This is a remarkable achievement for British wind power, demonstrating the pivotal role wind is playing in helping us meet our national net zero goals. Thanks to a world-class renewable energy sector, wind is the UK's most important clean power source, and that role is set to grow as new projects go live over the coming years."

New North Devon and Torridge Economic Strategy published

Last year, a new North Devon and Torridge Economic Strategy was published by the two local authorities. The five-year strategy for North Devon and Torridge District Councils covers the period from 2024 until 2029 and outlines how the councils will seek to catalyse "the right kind of growth" across the area, noting that "the Celtic Sea Floating Offshore Wind (FLOW) opportunity, will firmly put North Devon and Torridge on the green energy map".

White Cross Project Director Al Rayner said:

"We welcome this new strategy from North Devon and Torridge District Councils. Floating offshore wind has huge economic potential for the area, and our studies show that White Cross will drive economic activity across the region and support jobs."



Project overview

The White Cross Offshore Windfarm is a floating offshore wind project located 52km off the North Devon coast.

Floating offshore wind farms are the next step in the development of wind power in the UK, and are poised to unleash the potential of the Celtic Sea to generate electricity from offshore wind power.

The White Cross project will make use of up to eight wind turbines mounted on floating substructures, which are connected to the seabed using mooring lines and anchors. Once operational, the nominal capacity of the windfarm will be 100 Megawatts (MW), providing enough energy to power over 135,000 households.

The offshore export cable(s) will make landfall at Saunton Sands, before connecting to the onshore export cable(s).

The onshore export cable(s) will be completely buried underground for their entire length, and will travel approximately 8km to a new White Cross onshore substation which will accommodate the connection to the existing East Yelland substation. The cables will pass beneath Braunton Burrows and the Taw Estuary via trenchless technology, designed to avoid surface disruption.

Find out more in our map of the project's onshore proposals.

Saunton Sands car park

- Majority of spaces required for compound scheduled between September and April when the car park is less busy
- Works phased so that different parts of the car park will be used, and as soon as works are completed the area will be returned for use
- Construction engineers have identified ways to reduce the space we require in the car park to an average of 25% across the year

Saunton Sands beach

- Construction works on the beach will only last around two weeks
- Beach works will use an area of around 18 meters x 10 meters, with public beach access maintained at all times

Crossing the Taw Estuary

 Trenchless drilling techniques enable the cable to pass beneath the River Taw, avoiding associated impacts on the Taw-Torridge Estuary SSSI



Vehicle movements

 Construction Traffic Management Plan developed in collaboration with Devon **County Council**

Crossing Braunton Burrows

• 'Trenchless drilling' used to install cabling underneath the dunes, has been specifically designed to avoid any surface disruption within the Braunton Burrows Special Area of Conservation (SAC) dune system

Onshore export cables

- Onshore export cables completely buried underground for their entire length
- Cable route reinstated following construction to match the conditions pre-construction, using the original topsoil



Supporting Braunton Academy in FIRST Lego League Challenge

White Cross Offshore Windfarm continue to support Braunton Academy's participation in the FIRST Lego League Challenge, an international Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) competition which introduces young people to robotics through fun and exciting challenges.

Run by Braunton Academy's maths department as an extracurricular activity, the challenge has been supported by White Cross for three years, during which time students even reached the National Finals in Harrogate.



White Cross Stakeholder Lead Tom Jones said:

"STEM skills are vital to the UK's offshore wind and renewable energy industries, and the way the students have engaged with the challenge has been an inspiration."

Attending Bideford College careers day

On Thursday 7 November, team members represented White Cross Offshore Windfarm at Bideford College's annual careers fair. Around 1,500 students attended the fair, meeting with more than 50 employers. The team said:

"It was great to be part of this inspiring event, and share our experiences with so many interested students, teachers and parents. We are grateful to all those who visited our stall and asked such insightful and intelligent questions."

Community benefits

We are committed to delivering a community benefits scheme in line with the Community Funds for Transmission Infrastructure guidance recently published by the UK Government's Department for Energy Security and Net Zero.

In line with the guidance, our team will be commencing a new phase of engagement post-consent with local people and organisations to discuss how community benefit can reflect local needs and priorities.

We welcome input from local individuals and organisations. If you would like to talk to someone about community benefit please do not hesitate to contact the project team via hello@whitecrossoffshorewind.com.



Get in touch:

If you would like any further information or have any questions about the White Cross Offshore Windfarm, contact the project team by:



Visiting the website **whitecrossoffshorewind.com** Emailing **hello@whitecrossoffshorewind.com**

