

Royal Haskoning is EIA Coordinator in Offshore Wind Farm Development

Royal Haskoning, The Netherlands, has agreed a framework with Forewind to provide co-ordination and lead consultancy roles for Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) relating to projects within the Dogger Bank Offshore Wind Farm Zone. Complex and wide-ranging, the EIA and pre-application process involves initial site selection for all components of onshore and offshore infrastructure, route-finding for export cables, planning and executing survey programmes, undertaking data analysis and interpretation and extensive stakeholder consultation.

The EIA for the first project of the Dogger Bank zone is currently in progress and due to be submitted to the Infrastructure Planning Commission (IPC) in December 2012.

The EIA process is vital to ensure that a development consent order to proceed with the scheme is gained from the Infrastructure Planning Commission (IPC), which approves all nationally significant infrastructure projects.

Located in the North Sea, 125km to 290km off the east coast of Yorkshire, Dogger Bank covers an immense 8,660 sq km and, if fully developed, could host more than 2000 individual wind turbine generators. Potentially the largest offshore wind farm development in the world, the Dogger Bank zone could supply up to ten per cent of the UK's energy requirements.

Royal Haskoning will provide EIA services for both the onshore and offshore elements of the individual projects. As well as the turbines and undersea cables to convey the electricity to the shore, each project will need to be connected to an onshore converter station.

Rufus Howard, Principal Consultant, Royal Haskoning, explains that the development of the onshore infrastructure for the Dogger Bank requires that Haskoning consultants are involved in a large range of assessments including cable route selection; the comparison of alternative sites; traffic and transport; land quality; flood risk; noise; and planning policy.