

Dudgeon Offshore Wind Farm Onshore Connection

Allen Archaeology was commissioned by Royal Haskoning DHV to undertake all stages of archaeological works on the proposed route of a c.50km onshore connection for the Dudgeon Offshore Wind Farm, Norfolk.

The project included initial non-intrusive surveys, comprising geophysical survey and fieldwalking of the entire route along a 40m wide corridor, as well as metal detecting surveys of key sites, including a WW2 crash site.

This was followed by a suite of intrusive investigations, beginning with 210 evaluation trenches, targeted on areas of interest identified by the non-intrusive surveys. This information was collated to inform a strategy for the final mitigation works, encompassing five SMR areas and a set piece excavation. This was followed by monitoring of ongoing stripping of the cable route, joint bays and HDD pits, as well as assisting in collecting samples for geological surveys for a local research group, and supporting the work of the nominated UXO specialists.

Archaeological sites encountered included Romano-British settlements, Roman pottery kilns, medieval field systems and a regionally significant Anglo-Saxon cemetery overlying a prehistoric barrow. Fieldwork was undertaken between 2013-2016 with the assessments completed and analysis being undertaken this year ahead of publication in East Anglian Archaeology.

One of the key successes resulted from AAL being involved at every stage of the archaeological fieldwork, and assisted in project planning for the client, allowing information to be rapidly collated and disseminated, and helping to plan where realignment of the route to avoid the most significant sites would be quicker and more cost-effective than set-piece excavation and would help to preserve the archaeological resource in-situ.

The project involved considerable effort in terms of logistics, with teams of varying sizes and expertise having to be deployed to site often at short notice to keep to the clients timescales and responds to changing project priorities, as well as managing constraints imposed by weather.