

# **XLINKS MOROCCO-UK POWER PROJECT**

## **Preliminary Environmental Information Report**


**Volume 2, Appendix 3.3: Surface Water Abstraction Licences, Discharge Consents and Pollution Incidents**



FOR ISSUE  
April 2024

## XLINKS MOROCCO – UK POWER PROJECT

Document status					
Version	Purpose of document	Authored by	Reviewed by	Approved by	Review date
01	Draft				

Approval for issue					
[Name]	Richard Hardy	[Signature]		[Date]	22/04/24

The report has been prepared for the exclusive use and benefit of our client and solely for the purpose for which it is provided. Unless otherwise agreed in writing by R P S Group Limited, any of its subsidiaries, or a related entity (collectively 'RPS') no part of this report should be reproduced, distributed or communicated to any third party. RPS does not accept any liability if this report is used for an alternative purpose from which it is intended, nor to any third party in respect of this report. The report does not account for any changes relating to the subject matter of the report, or any legislative or regulatory changes that have occurred since the report was produced and that may affect the report.

The report has been prepared using the information provided to RPS by its client, or others on behalf of its client. To the fullest extent permitted by law, RPS shall not be liable for any loss or damage suffered by the client arising from fraud, misrepresentation, withholding of information material relevant to the report or required by RPS, or other default relating to such information, whether on the client's part or that of the other information sources, unless such fraud, misrepresentation, withholding or such other default is evident to RPS without further enquiry. It is expressly stated that no independent verification of any documents or information supplied by the client or others on behalf of the client has been made. The report shall be used for general information only.

**Prepared by:**

**RPS**

**Prepared for:**

**Xlinks 1 Ltd**

## Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>SURFACE WATER ABSTRACTION LICENCES, DISCHARGE CONSENTS AND POLLUTION INCIDENTS.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1	Introduction .....	1
1.2	Methodology .....	1
	Sources of information .....	1
	Study area .....	1
1.3	Desk study .....	4
	Surface water abstraction licences .....	4
	Pollution incidents .....	4
	Discharge consents .....	4

## Tables

Table 1.1:	Surface water abstractions .....	4
Table 1.2:	Pollution incident categories .....	4
Table 1.3:	Discharge consents .....	4

## Figures

Figure 1.1:	Surface water abstraction licences and discharge consents within the hydrology and flood risk study area .....	3
-------------	--	---

## Glossary

<b>Term</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
Alverdiscott Substation Connection Development	The development required at the existing Alverdiscott Substation site, which is envisaged to include development of a new 400 kV substation, and other extension modification works to be confirmed by National Grid Electricity Transmission.
Alverdiscott Substation site	The National Grid Electricity Transmission substation site within which the Alverdiscott Substation sits.
Converter Site	The Converter Site is proposed to be located to the immediate west of the existing Alverdiscott Substation site in north Devon. The Converter Site would contain two converter stations (known as Bipole 1 and Bipole 2) and associated infrastructure, buildings and landscaping.
Converter station	Part of an electrical transmission and distribution system. Converter stations convert electricity from Direct Current (DC) to Alternating Current (AC), or vice versa.
Environmental Impact Assessment	The process of identifying and assessing the significant effects likely to arise from a Proposed Development. This requires consideration of the likely changes to the environment, where these arise as a consequence of a Proposed Development, through comparison with the existing and Proposed projected future baseline conditions.
Environmental Permitting Regulations	Provide a consolidated system of environmental permitting in England and Wales. Permits are required by facilities which carry out activities that could pollute the air, water or land and increase flood risk by adversely affecting land drainage.
HVAC Cables	The High Voltage Alternating Current (HVAC) cables which would bring electricity from the converter stations to the new Alverdiscott Substation Connection Development.
HVDC Cables	The High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) cables which would bring electricity to the UK converter stations from the Moroccan converter stations.
Hydrology	The study of the movement, distribution, and quality of water.
Local Authority	A body empowered by law to exercise various statutory functions for a particular area of the United Kingdom. This includes County Councils, District Councils and County Borough Councils. The relevant Local Authority for the Proposed Development is Torridge District Council.
Local Planning Authority	The local government body (e.g., Borough Council, District Council, etc.) responsible for determining planning applications within a specific area.
Mean High Water Springs	The height of mean high water during spring tides in a year.
Onshore HVDC Cable Corridor	The proposed corridor within which the onshore High Voltage Direct Current cables will be located.
Onshore Infrastructure Area	The proposed infrastructure area within the Proposed Development Draft Order Limits landward of the transition joint bays, which contains the onshore HVDC Cables, Converter Site, the Alverdiscott Substation Connection Development, highway works, utility diversions and onshore HVAC Cables.
Preliminary Environmental Information Report	A report that provides preliminary environmental information in accordance with the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. This is information that enables consultees to understand the likely significant environmental effects of a Proposed Development and which helps to inform consultation responses.
Proposed Development	The element of the Xlinks Morocco-UK Power Project within the UK, which includes the offshore cables (from the UK Exclusive Economic Zone to landfall), landfall site, onshore Direct Current and Alternating Current cables,

## XLINKS MOROCCO – UK POWER PROJECT

Term	Meaning
	converter stations, road upgrade works and, based on current assumptions, the Alverdiscott Substation Connection Development.
Proposed Development Draft Order Limits	The area within which all offshore and onshore components of the Proposed Development are proposed to be located, including areas required on a temporary basis during construction (such as construction compounds).
Study area	This is an area which is defined for each environmental topic which includes the Proposed Development Draft Order Limits as well as potential spatial and temporal considerations of the impacts on relevant receptors. The study area for each topic is intended to cover the area within which an impact can be reasonably expected.
Xlinks Morocco UK Power Project (the 'Project')	The overall scheme from Morocco to the national grid, including all onshore and offshore elements of the transmission network and the generation site in Morocco (referred to as the 'Project').

## Acronyms

Acronym	Meaning
EA	Environment Agency
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EPR	Environmental Permitting Regulations

## Units

Units	Meaning
km	Kilometre
m	Metre
m <sup>3</sup>	Cubic metre

# 1 SURFACE WATER ABSTRACTION LICENCES, DISCHARGE CONSENTS AND POLLUTION INCIDENTS

## 1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This document forms Volume 2, Appendix 3.3: Surface Water Abstraction Licences, Discharge Consents and Pollution Incidents of the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) prepared for the UK elements of the Xlinks Morocco-UK Power Project (referred to hereafter as 'the Proposed Development'). The PEIR presents the preliminary findings of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process for the Proposed Development.
- 1.1.2 This document provides the information on the following:
- surface water abstraction licences which are a good indication of how the surface watercourses are utilised;
  - pollution incidents where the quality of watercourses may have been affected by pollution; and
  - discharge consents which may affect the baseline quality of the receiving surface water.
- 1.1.3 The licences, consents and incidents listed above have been used to inform the baseline and assessment in Volume 2, Chapter 3: Hydrology and Flood Risk of the PEIR.

## 1.2 Methodology

### Sources of information

- 1.2.1 Details of the licences, consents and incidents have been obtained from a commercial data supplier (Groundsure Limited) and local planning authorities relevant to the Onshore Infrastructure Area (Torridge District Council and Devon County Council). The information is regulated by the Environment Agency (EA) and the local planning authorities.

### Study area

- 1.2.2 The elements of the study area relevant to this technical report are described below and shown within **Figure 1.1**.
- The area of land to be temporarily or permanently occupied during the construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning of the Onshore Infrastructure Area as part of the Proposed Development.
  - Hydrology receptors located within 1 km of the Converter Site and Alverdiscott Substation Connection Development and 250 m of the Onshore Infrastructure Area including the following:
    - Landfall.

## **XLINKS MOROCCO – UK POWER PROJECT**

---

- High Voltage Alternating Current (HVAC) Cables (which are also situated within the Converter Site and Alverdiscott Substation Site).
- Onshore High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) Cable Corridor.
- Temporary onshore infrastructure.

1.2.3 The buffers were chosen primarily to identify any existing receptors, assets or infrastructure that have the potential to be affected by flood risk as a result of the Onshore Infrastructure Area and therefore exclude the routes used by construction traffic and abnormal loads.

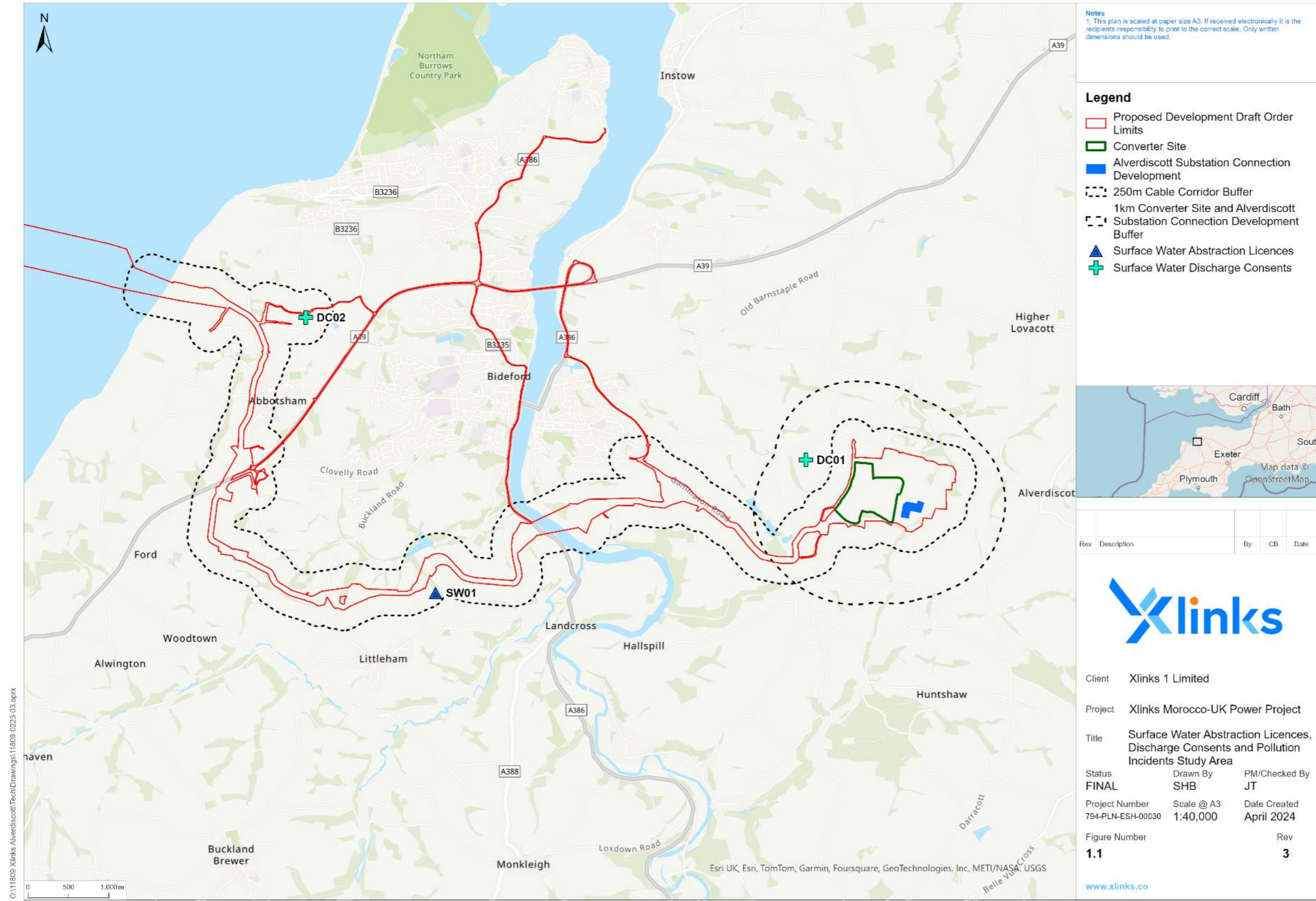


Figure 1.1: Surface water abstraction licences and discharge consents within the hydrology and flood risk study area



## 1.3 Desk study

### Surface water abstraction licences

1.3.1 Surface water abstraction licences are required for abstraction rates greater than 20 m<sup>3</sup> per day. There is one active surface water abstraction licence within the study area, listed within **Table 1.1** and presented within **Figure 1.1**.

**Table 1.1: Surface water abstractions**

ID	Abstraction ID	Licence Holder	Details	Source	Status
SW01	SW/050/0007/024	A C Withecombe & Son	General Farming & Domestic	Surface Water	Active

### Pollution incidents

1.3.2 Pollution incidents are classified by the EA into one of four categories using the common incident classification scheme. Since 2006, this data has only included Category 1 (major) and 2 (significant) pollution incidents. The different categories of pollution incidents are defined in **Table 1.2** below.

**Table 1.2: Pollution incident categories**

Pollution Incident Category	Description
Category 1	Major, serious, persistent or extensive impact or effect on the environment, people and/or property.
Category 2	Significant impact or effect on the environment, people and/or property.
Category 3	Minor or minimal impact or effect on the environment, people and/or property.
Category 4	Substantiated incident with no impact.

1.3.3 No significant pollution incidents relating to water have been identified within the study area.

### Discharge consents

1.3.4 Licenced discharges to controlled waters cover discharges of treated or untreated effluent to controlled waters under the Water Resources Act 1991. There are five active discharge consents to surface waters within the study area. Consents are listed below in **Table 1.3** and presented within **Figure 1.1**.

**Table 1.3: Discharge consents**

ID	Consent ID	Address	Issue date	Details	Receiving waterbody	Status
DC01	002212/PW/01	Woodtown House, Alverdiscott Road, Bideford, Devon, EX39 4PP	04/07/1996	Sewage discharges - final/treated effluent - Dentist/Hospital/ Nursing Home (medical)/Human Health	Tributary of the River Torridge	Varied by application - (WRA 91 sched 10 - as amended by env act 1995)

## XLINKS MOROCCO – UK POWER PROJECT

ID	Consent ID	Address	Issue date	Details	Receiving waterbody	Status
DC02	EPRGB3999RY	Pilmouth Barn, Landcross, Bideford, Devon, EX39 5JA	23/10/2017	Sewage discharges - final/treated effluent - Domestic property (single) (incl farm house)	Mudflats of River Torridge	New issued under EPR 2010
DC03	203449	Whitehall Landcross sewage treatment works, Landcross, Bideford, Devon, EX39 5HF	22/12/2010	Sewage discharges - final/treated effluent - WwTW/Sewage Treatment Works (water company)	Tidal River Yeo	Varied under EPR 2010
DC04	202669	Cornborough sewage treatment works, Bideford, Devon, EX39 5BG	31/03/2010	Sewage discharges - final/treated effluent - WwTW/Sewage Treatment Works (water company)	Bideford Bay	Modified - (WRA 91 sched 10 - as amended by env act 1995)
DC05	EPRQB3797EH	Pilmouth Farm sewage treatment plant, Pilmouth Farm, Landcross, Bideford, Devon, EX39 5JA	14/05/2020	Sewage discharges - final/treated effluent - Domestic property (multiple) (including farm houses)	River Torridge	New issued under EPR 2010