

A Newsletter for Local
Councillors and Planning Officers
in England and Wales

RePlan



From the Editor

Gemma Grimes
Head of Offshore Renewables,
RenewableUK

Welcome to our fourth issue of RePLAN, a newsletter for Local Councillors in England and Wales.

In this issue we take a look forward at the RenewableUK planning seminars taking place across England and Wales this summer, where, through presentations, panel debates, and questions to the speakers we provide councillors and planning officers with accurate, up to the minute information about onshore wind, as well as the chance to see a working wind farm first hand (pg 1.)

This April we announced that the UK had reached a landmark 1 gigawatt (GW) of installed generation capacity from offshore wind farms (pg 2,) and in this edition of RePLAN we look at how recent investment in offshore wind will translate into jobs and investment in the UK (pg 3.) We interview Councillor Paul Bettison, Leader of Bracknell Forest Unitary Authority in our regular 'Councillor Profile' feature and Councillor Greg Foxsmith asks whether turbine manufacturing jobs will go abroad (pg4). As always if you have any questions about onshore or offshore wind please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Gemma Grimes
Head of Offshore Renewables, RenewableUK

July 2010 | ISSUE 04

RenewableUK Regional Planning Seminars: at a wind farm near you

Last year around 1,000 local councillors and planning officers attended a series of free seminars at wind farms across the UK. RenewableUK's Planning Seminars are in full swing again this year, with up to 10 events scheduled to be held across the country between now and September.

These lively events provide delegates with an opportunity to find out about the latest policy developments, and give councillors and planning officers the opportunity to share their experiences of the development process. Gemma Grimes, RenewableUK's Head of Onshore explains that all of the planning seminars were held at operational wind farms, "giving participants invaluable hands-on experience of wind turbines and how they operate... the feedback we have received from the seminars has been excellent".

Rob McNeil, a councillor in Aberdeenshire, who attended one of the seminars in 2009, says "I started with a low-level knowledge base on wind farms. Now I feel better informed, allowing me to make better-informed decisions in my councillor role".

These Planning Seminars will look at the potential of wind energy in the UK, examine national and regional planning policy, and discuss both environmental and technical issues relating to wind farms. Speakers will comprise policy and decision makers (including planners and councillors), local people and developers.

Grimes adds "Our aim is that councillors and officers leave the events with increased knowledge



of planning for wind energy and the implications of both EU and national objectives. The programme has been designed to improve participants' awareness of the nature of wind energy technology and to better enable them to make decisions, having experienced a wind farm for themselves."

All of the events are free and representatives from all local authorities are invited to attend. Attending these events will not affect your ability to make decisions at planning committee. For further information and to book online, please visit www.bwea.com/planningconferences/index

Tuesday 20 July - North East

Hallgarth Manor Hotel, Durham, with a visit to Great Eppleton Wind Farm

Tuesday 7 Sep - South West

University of Falmouth, with a visit to Goonhilly Wind Farm

Thursday 9 Sep - Scotland

Venue TBC, with a visit to Pates Hill

Tuesday 14 Sep - East of England

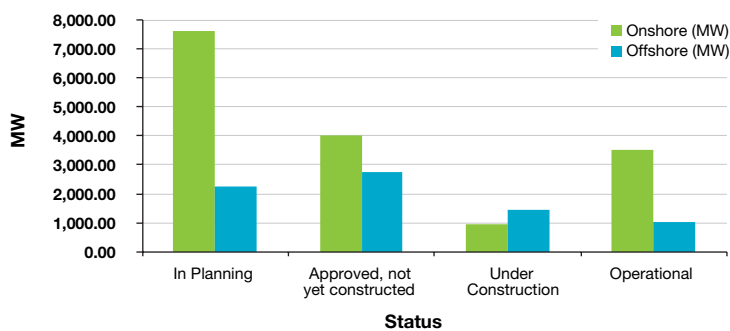
Coldham Wind Farm, Cambridgeshire



Making Headlines: a major milestone offshore

On Friday 23 April 2010 the UK announced it had 1 gigawatt (GW) of installed wind farms. However, it wasn't just the industry celebrating. The landmark figure caught the imagination of the public and the press, as well as senior figures in government.

Onshore and Offshore Snapshot



Ed Miliband, then Secretary of State at the Department of Energy and Climate Change, said, "It is great news that we've reached the 1GW landmark. The UK is now the world leader in offshore wind energy generation. We are also set to be a centre of manufacturing for offshore wind." Greg Clarke, Minister of State for Decentralisation and Planning Policy, said, "Britain's offshore wind resources have world-beating potential and can provide us with secure and sustainable energy. I congratulate the offshore wind industry on reaching the 1GW landmark, but we have potential to go much further."

This landmark comes just six months after we reached another major threshold, with 4GW of generation – from both on- and offshore wind energy – operational across the UK.

We anticipate that we will have reached the 5GW threshold by the end of 2010, with 6GW operational by the end of 2011.

Offshore Wind: creating a UK supply chain

Denmark has done it, Germany has done it, and now the UK seems finally to be on its way to creating a world-class manufacturing base for its wind industry. Decisions to build factories and research bases in the UK, from businesses such as General Electric, Mitsubishi and Siemens, prove that the UK has created the conditions large companies need to give them the confidence to invest.

Tom Delay, Chief Executive of the Carbon Trust, described the announcements by General Electric and Siemens, in quick succession, as “a clear sign that we are not just open for business but we are now winning business”.

The support given to the sector by the previous Government in attracting investors looks to be continued by the new Coalition administration, with pledges to maintain energy supplies and back low-carbon technology, made within days of the election. Chris Huhne, the Energy and Climate Change Secretary, said the Queen’s Speech and the Government’s programme “make clear that energy security and taking real action to tackle climate change aren’t add-on extras for this new Government, but are vital to our national interest”.

The sheer scale of the Round Three development programme is remarkable. Between 2003 and 2009 around 350 offshore wind turbines, with a total capacity of 1GW, were built in UK waters at a rate of one every 11 days. In contrast, the remaining Round Two and imminent Round Three projects will result in a further 6,400 turbines being installed, with a combined capacity of over 30GW – representing about a quarter of the UK’s total electricity generation capacity.

The economic opportunities on offer to the UK manufacturing sector from a project of this magnitude will be without parallel. Estimates for the total capital investment required range from £100bn to £120bn, and whilst much of the focus has been on the companies that secured the right to develop the Round Three offshore zones, investment will flow down the supply chain, providing a boost to manufacturers of everything from

turbine blades to concrete foundations, and installation vessels to subsea cables. Crucially, this investment will translate into jobs, with a 2008 study from consultancy Bain & Company predicting that if 20GW are installed offshore by 2020, the UK wind industry alone could see employment increase over tenfold, from 5,000 jobs currently to 57,000 jobs by then. In addition, the report reckons UK-based firms could serve 70 per cent of the market for offshore wind turbines, whilst exporting a similar volume to Europe. The Government is more optimistic still, estimating that in total Round Three will support 70,000 new jobs.

According to figures from the Carbon Trust, delivering these turbines in time to hit the EU’s 2020 renewable energy target means that they will have to be installed at a rate of one a day from 2010 to 2016, rising to 2.5 a day from 2017 to 2020. Moreover, they will be bigger and more challenging to install than any existing wind turbines. Typically anchored in up to 60m of water, in some cases more than 200km from shore, the turbines will stand hundreds of feet above the water, with the largest producing up to 10MW of power at full capacity – enough to single-handedly power a town of 10,000 homes.

It is easy to get swamped by these figures without fully appreciating the scale of the Round Three project, either because the turbines will be miles out at sea and only a few projects will be visible from the shore, or because the installation of each individual turbine does not seem that daunting. Taken as a whole, however, this is one of the largest engineering projects in history. The construction and installation of over 6,000 wind turbines in inhospitable waters,



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followed by the connection of the turbines back to shore via an estimated 7,500km of underwater high-voltage cables, represents an engineering challenge that in terms of scale, complexity and outright ambition will put the Thames Barrier, Wembley Stadium and the Channel Tunnel in the shade.

Councillor Profile



Councillor Paul Bettison, Leader of Bracknell Forest Unitary Authority and Chairman of LACORS Member Board

Q1 Do you think 14GW of onshore wind can be delivered by 2020?

Yes, and anyway, we should have a damned good try!

Q2 What would you do to speed up the planning process for wind energy developments?

Give individual units (up to a given size) the same “deemed consent” that we have given to mobile phone masts, which allowed them to put up national networks.

Q3 Name a renewable energy project that you supported and say why.

Lakeside EFW, Colnbrook – we now use it.

Q4 Name a renewable energy project that you have not supported and say why.

None.

Q5 How do you think community benefits could be improved for wind energy developments?

Give 20 per cent of the energy produced (or its cash equivalent) to the host community.

Q6 How would you balance national needs against local needs in relation to wind energy projects?

By giving local incentives as per Answer 5.

Q7 What are the lessons you learned by going through the planning process of a renewable energy project?

The proliferation of NIMBYs, NOTES, BANANAs and NIMTOs.

Q8 What advice would you give to other councillors who will assess a planning application for wind energy projects?

Take local people with you by demanding “gain” for the host community (and backing it up with S106).

Q9 The expansion in offshore wind, wave and tidal stream energy projects will require more cable landings and onshore substation approvals. Can councillors aid this expansion?

This must be dealt with as a statutory undertaking.

Your Questions Answered...

“Won’t the investment go overseas?” asks Greg Foxsmith, Liberal Democrat councillor for Hillrise.

Whilst it is correct to say that most of the larger onshore wind turbines are currently manufactured abroad, it is not actually the case that all the jobs go overseas.

Firstly, on average approximately 30 per cent of the build cost of onshore wind farms is spent in the United Kingdom. This figure will vary from project to project, but typically it is made up from spend on construction activities, project management, electrical equipment to connect the turbines to the grid, design and other consultancy. Secondly, the majority of spend operating and maintaining the wind farms is retained in the United Kingdom. In 2008, we commissioned Bain & Company to study employment in the United Kingdom, and at that time there were approximately 4,000 people employed in the onshore wind industry.

Thirdly, although the larger turbines

are imported, some of the components within the turbines are manufactured in the UK and exported to the manufacturing sites. Again, content will vary depending on the make and model of the turbine, but examples include Converteam in Rugby and Centa in Shipley.

Finally, we already have a major manufacturer of the towers that support the turbines, Welcon in Campbeltown, which has recently won a contract to supply towers for the Clyde Wind Farm, which will become the UK’s largest, with a capacity of 350MW. Soon we will also have a second tower manufacturer. Mabey Bridge near Chepstow are currently building a new £38m factory, which in full production will be capable of supplying 300 towers a year, creating 240 jobs.

Rhys Thomas
Supply Chain Officer, RenewableUK

“...in full production the Mabey Bridge Factory near Chepstow will be capable of supplying 300 towers a year, creating 240 jobs.”



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