

Viking Energy Partnership News Release

The Viking Energy wind farm on Shetland has been given the go-ahead by Scottish Government Ministers, with a reduction in the number of turbines to 103.

The original plan for 150 turbines was initially reduced to 127 turbines following various consultations and the Scottish Government has now reduced the number to 103. All 24 turbines in the Delting section have been removed, which reduces both the overall size of the wind farm and the length of its roads.

The wind farm is being developed by Viking Energy Partnership which brings together the Shetland Charitable Trust, SSE and the owners of the existing five-turbine Burradale wind farm in Shetland.

Bill Manson, Chairman of Viking Energy Partnership, welcomed the news, saying:

"We are pleased that Ministers have approved our application for what is likely to be one of the most productive wind farms in the world.

An enormous amount of effort and extensive consultation resulted in us creating a project which is comprehensive, thorough and designed with Shetland's unique environment in mind.

This is good news for Shetland, good news for Scotland and good news for the fight against climate change. But this is not just about the Viking wind farm and the massive benefits it can bring to Shetland. The associated grid connection will unlock future renewable projects including marine energy and help us generate a whole new sustainable industry in Shetland.

At the same time, we appreciate that not everybody will be happy about this decision and we want to reassure those people who opposed the application that we will continue to endeavour to minimise or mitigate any impacts. The Habitat Management Plan that goes with the consent is by far the biggest of any wind farm in the UK, and will deliver significant and much-needed environmental improvements to Shetland which would not be happening were it not for this wind farm.

There is still much to do before a wind farm in the Central Mainland of Shetland becomes a certainty".

The Viking Energy Partnership will now prepare reports for its shareholders, including SSE and the Shetland Charitable Trust, so they can consider the funding of the next steps in the project.

As Bill Manson explained, "We plan to have a report in front of a Trust meeting as soon as practicable.

We will publish a programme of activity soon which will outline key stages in the process on financing, procurement and construction. Good liaison and partnership with stakeholders, including local businesses and the community, in delivering the project will be a high priority and plans for these will be set out as soon as possible in line with the consent conditions".

David Gardner, SSE's Director of Onshore Renewables, said: "Shetland has a fantastic wind resource which means that the Viking Energy wind farm will be one of the most productive sites in the world. This is great news for Shetland and also means that we are a step closer to achieving Scotland's climate change targets.

The partnership between SSE, an industry leader in renewables, and the Shetland Charitable Trust, is extremely positive and has the ability to leave a lasting legacy for Shetland and for Scotland."