

**PRESS RELEASE:** 4<sup>th</sup> April 2012



## **DUDGEON OFFSHORE WIND FARM**

### **ONSHORE SUBSTATION UPDATE**

The High Court in Manchester ruled today that Dudgeon Offshore Wind Limited (DOW), a subsidiary of Warwick Energy Limited, has been successful in its appeal against the refusal of its proposal to build the onshore substation needed for the Dudgeon Offshore Wind Farm (Dudgeon) project. The Court ruled that the Secretaries of State for Energy and Climate Change (DECC) and Communities and Local Government (DCLG) must reconsider their joint decision to refuse the proposal.

DOW's proposal is to build the required substation south of the overhead power lines and pylons that run through farmland around 0.5km to the south of Little Dunham in Norfolk. The plans include almost 20 acres of additional woodland and other habitats to help screen the substation from view.

The planning application in 2009 assumed a worst case design in terms of the visual impact of the substation which has been improved significantly over the past 2 years. Even with the original design, the proposal did not attract any objections from the independent expert consultees nor any of the experts at Breckland Council. The proposal had a planning officer recommendation for approval but was refused by Breckland's planning committee in October 2010 on landscape grounds.

"We now ask the Secretaries of State to determine our application without any further delay" commented Mark Petterson, Project Director "Dudgeon is a vital infrastructure project for the UK and any further period of uncertainty may threaten its programme".

DOW hope that the Government will make good on the Prime Minister's comments in March 2012 when he said, *"Our planning system for infrastructure is much too expensive and unbelievably slow .... I believe we're well placed to become a world leader in offshore wind power and this government is going to do all it can to make sure that happens"*.

In parallel with the work on Little Dunham, and to ensure that the project has every opportunity to minimise any further delays, an alternative substation site near Necton is also under review, public exhibitions for which will be held in the Necton Community Centre on both April 13<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> from lunchtime till mid evening. The Necton site ranks second behind Little Dunham in DOW's assessment of over 100 potential onshore substation locations.

The Dudgeon wind farm site, where the wind turbines will be installed, is located 32km offshore due north from Cromer with power generation currently scheduled to commence in mid 2015.

## NOTES TO EDITORS:

1. The Dudgeon project would produce enough electricity on average to supply up to 400,000 homes with green electricity, approximately the same number of households that exist in the county of Norfolk.
2. The Dudgeon project will generate up to 560MW and involve private sector investment of up to £1.5bn; save up 40 million tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions over its expected 50 year life; and provide more than 0.5% of the UK's annual electricity needs. The project will create hundreds of jobs during the three year construction phase and up to 100 direct full time jobs thereafter.
3. In relation to the onshore electrical connection, DOW held public exhibitions in Fakenham, Necton and Holt in November 2009. The main purposes of the exhibitions were to increase public awareness of the project; identify any particular concerns that the general public might have; and to answer questions on a face to face basis.
4. The public exhibitions were attended by 321 people of whom 154 (48%) completed a questionnaire, either at the exhibitions or afterwards by post, which provided feedback to the scheme.
5. DOW had been very encouraged by the general level of local support for the project and this was confirmed from the questionnaire returns at the exhibitions where 69% of people supported the specific onshore proposals, 23% were undecided and only 8% of people were against the proposals.
6. The consent applications for the offshore elements of the Dudgeon project were lodged with the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) in June 2009 and are still being considered.
7. It is expected that electricity generation from offshore wind farms, such as this one at Dudgeon, will make a significant contribution towards the UK's target of producing at least 20% of its energy needs from renewable sources by 2020.
8. Warwick Energy's wind farm project at Dudgeon is one of 15 such projects that were awarded licenses by the Crown Estate in late 2003 as a national second Round of offshore wind projects.
9. The Dudgeon area holds the potential for a second stage of development which could more than double the output currently proposed.
10. Warwick Energy Limited is a leading UK developer of a range of energy projects and has previously been responsible for the development of the 90MW Barrow offshore wind farm (completed 2006) and the 300MW Thanet offshore wind farm (completed 2010).
11. Thanet was until recently the World's largest operational offshore wind farm facility, but Dudgeon could be almost twice its capacity.
12. The quote from the Prime Minister referenced in this press release comes from a speech that he made on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2012 regarding UK infrastructure to the Institution of Civil Engineers.

Contacts: Mark Petterson      Director, Warwick Energy      01789 471091

Warwick Energy Limited, Wellesbourne House, Wellesbourne, Warwickshire CV35 9JB