BOWL Onshore Transmission Works
Granted Planning Permission in Principle by The Moray Council

19 February 2013

Beatrice Offshore Windfarm Ltd (BOWL), the joint venture partnership formed between SSE Renewables (75%) and Repsol Nuevas Energias UK (25%) has today been granted Planning Permission in Principle by The Moray Council’s Planning and Regulatory Services Committee to develop the onshore transmission works associated with connecting the offshore wind farm to the electricity grid. The application was submitted to The Moray Council in October 2012 and was approved by Committee members on Tuesday (19th February).

The ‘in principle’ permission for the onshore transmission works marks an important step forward for the Beatrice Offshore Wind Farm project, which is currently awaiting the views of The Highland Council and a final consent decision from the Scottish Government on the offshore elements of the project.

The onshore transmission works associated with the wind farm will comprise of approximately 20km of underground cable from a landfall point to the west of Portgordon and a new substation which the cable will connect to, located adjacent to the existing substation at Blackhillock near Keith.

There are two possible development options which received in principle permission as part of the onshore transmission works – an Alternating Current (AC) connection and a Direct Current (DC) connection, though only one option will finally be installed and constructed. A decision on which type of connection will be developed will be
taken once the final design for the wind farm has been confirmed. At that point, a Detailed Planning Application or application for Matters Specified in Conditions will be submitted to The Moray Council for the chosen option.

BOWL submitted an application to Scottish Ministers in April 2012 for consent to develop the Beatrice Offshore Wind Farm in the Outer Moray Firth. If consented, the wind farm will generate up to 1,000MW of renewable energy. A final decision relating to the offshore wind farm is expected later in 2013.

BOWL will continue to work closely with local residents and stakeholders to keep them informed as plans for the project progress.

Richard Escott, Head of Offshore Development for SSE Renewables, said: “SSE Renewables and our joint venture partner Repsol are delighted that members of The Moray Council’s Planning and Regulatory Services Committee have granted Planning Permission in Principle for our application for the Beatrice onshore transmission works; marking important progress in the development of the Beatrice Offshore Wind Farm. As we await final determination of the offshore elements of the project, we will continue our open, ongoing engagement with the local community to ensure they are kept informed at every stage.”

Ronnie Bonnar, Managing Director of Repsol Nuevas Energias UK, said: “The granting of Planning Permission in Principle for this application is another important milestone for the Beatrice Offshore Wind Farm Project and represents a major step forward for the development of offshore wind in the Moray Firth region. We will continue to work with key stakeholders to deliver this project.”

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Notes to Editors:
The Beatrice Offshore Wind Farm site is situated 13.5km from the Caithness coast at the nearest point.

It is approximately 11km north-east of the world’s first deep water wind farm development – the two-turbine (10MW) Beatrice Demonstrator Project, owned by SSE and Talisman and has been operational since 2007. The proposed wind farm would have a maximum of 142 to 277 turbines, (depending on turbine size).
The BOWL application was the first of the Scottish Territorial Waters sites to be submitted for consideration and is the culmination of several years of data collation, environmental studies and consultation. The existing electricity substation at Blackhillock is part of the National Electricity Transmission System and is owned and maintained by Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission Limited (SHETL). An application to upgrade the existing Blackhillock substation was approved by The Moray Council at the start of October 2012. This work is being carried out by SHETL. BOWL is working alongside SHETL to co-ordinate work on these separate projects to ensure the minimum amount of inconvenience for local communities.