



Durness Renewable Energy Project Newsletter 3

PLANNING AND SCHEDULING A RENEWABLE ENERGY SCHEME FOR DURNESS

The environmental overview, wind technical feasibility study and financial overview have been completed. Estimated costs, capital development costs, operational and revenue costs are being researched with information currently being created to lead to the preparation of a financial model.

The environmental overview has identified a potential site appropriate for siting wind generators. The general Environmental overview is available for perusal within the community and 15 copies of this and 5 PDF are with the planning authority as the outcome of the Screening Opinion was that an Environmental Impact Assessment EIA is required and the Highland Council SEPA and SNH will provide more detailed comments across the full range of potential natural heritage issues for this to include. The Local Authority is therefore proceeding to adopt a Scoping Opinion and the appropriate documentation has been lodged.

The Environmental overview available at the Service point, Post office, Community Council secretary and Durness Grazing Clerk. This is a sizable document both in hard and soft copy. And numbers are therefore limited.

Meetings have taken place on several occasions with voluntary groups of the community and reports to project management group linked to the formal constituted development group have taken place. Underway is a Community Investment plan and demographic survey along with discussions of key issues facing the community and identifying persons who should be involved in planning and investment to resolve them. This process is involving an audit of community resources and skills. This is in association with Durness Community Council and Durness Development Group.

Liaison with Electricity Company regarding construction of electrical infrastructure is continuing. Arrangements are underway for Scottish Southern Electric to carry out a feasibility study to determine the connection options available, a grant application has been completed, submitted and approved. Due to the level of generation in their process at the moment it is likely to take approx. 3 months to provide the community with the budget estimates. As part of the study, a factor regarding another party looking into using the same line is to be built into the equation. Scottish Southern Electric can create additional capacity to also cater for a Durness wind farm by upgrading the 33 kV network as required. The cost & description of these works will be included in the budget letter, expected within the next 2 months.

Hi community Energy Company have indicated that in the next stage Durness will have to identify and work with a range of experts. We will take the role of coordination and Renewable Devices will coherently compile the results and material that has to be researched and documented for the EIA.

This is expected to include

- Carry out Shadow and noise impact study
- Carry out landscape and visual impacts
- Carry out ecological Impacts study
- Determine wind capacity factor
- Archaeological Impacts
- Geological survey

And will require the expertise of

- Ecologist/ornithologist
- Landscape Architect.
- Archeological team in Highland council
- An independent archaeologist
- SEPA
- Historic Scotland

Preliminary introductions are in progress to ensure all those that will have to be involved are aware of the project and informed of the progress.

On the 9 June a Renewable and Planning Day is being arranged in Durness with Hi Community Energy Company. Further details will be available as soon as known.

Ronnie

Ronald Lansley
Secretary
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