



Neart na Gaoithe project enters first phase of offshore construction

One of the world's largest offshore construction vessels has arrived at the site of the EDF Renewables and ESB owned Neart na Gaoithe (NnG) offshore wind farm, 15km off the Fife coast, as the project enters its first phase of offshore construction.

The S7000, Saipem's semi-submersible crane vessel, will start the installation of casings for piles. The vessel will also work on preparing the seabed in advance of the arrival of the steel foundation jackets on which the 54 wind turbine generators and two offshore substations will be installed.

This giant vessel is 197.5 metres long and can work in the most challenging weather conditions. It can carry out heavy lift operations up to 14,000 tonnes at sea.

NnG will supply enough low carbon electricity for around 375,000 homes* and has a capacity of c. 450 megawatts (MW) of low carbon energy and will offset over 400,000 tonnes of Co2 emissions each year. Full commissioning will complete in 2023.

Matthias Haag, NnG Project Director, said: "The construction phase of the NnG offshore wind farm is now well under way and many people will be able to see the S7000 starting construction work offshore. It will be visible from much of the East Neuk of Fife and from North Berwick and Dunbar.

“We have carefully considered the implications of COVID-19 and Scottish Government guidelines as the work gets under way offshore and for the continuing onshore works.”

Guido d’Aloisio, Saipem Head of Offshore Renewable Business line, said: “It’s very important for Saipem to start offshore construction on the NnG offshore wind farm, a milestone for our new business line, and this positions Saipem as a key player in the offshore wind industry.

“Strict protocols and continuous monitoring of the situation will ensure that the health and safety of our employees, clients and partners are protected throughout our operations on the NnG project.”

Saipem will supply and install the foundations for the turbines. It will also supply and install an additional two jackets for the offshore substations.

Onshore work continues on the project at various locations along the cable route which starts at Thorntonloch beach and finishes in the Lammermuir Hills.

Ends

* Based upon the average domestic electricity consumption per home of 3,889 kWh per the Energy Consumption in the UK (published July 2017) and Renewable-UK offshore wind average load factor at 37.2%

About Neart na Gaoithe (NnG)

Neart na Gaoithe means ‘strength of the wind’. NnG is a key UK offshore wind farm project and, with up to £1.8billion invested in its infrastructure, will have a major positive impact on the Scottish economy. NnG is located off the east coast of Scotland, 15.5 km off the Fife coast and covers an area of approximately 105 km². EDF Renewables acquired NnG in 2018 and in 2019 sold a 50% stake to leading Irish Energy Company, ESB.

About EDF Renewables in the United Kingdom

EDF Renewables is one of the UK’s leading renewable energy companies which develops, builds and operates generation projects with a focus on onshore and offshore wind as well as battery storage technology. We also look after the operations and maintenance of our own wind farms. The company already operates more than 965MW of wind farms and battery storage (including 500 MW in Scotland with 460 MW under construction) and has more than 4GW consented and in development. The company employs more than 250 people.

About ESB

ESB operates across the electricity market on the island of Ireland: from generation, through transmission and distribution to the supply of customers with an expanding presence across

Great Britain. In 2017 ESB opened an office in Glasgow to spearhead further development of renewables, in particular onshore and offshore wind, across Scotland. ESB is the owner of the distribution and transmission networks in the Republic of Ireland (via ESB Networks) and Northern Ireland (via Northern Ireland Electricity Networks Ltd). In 2017, the company had a 42% share of generation in the all-island market (via Generation and Wholesale Markets) and a 34% share of electricity supply in the all-island market (via Electric Ireland) with 1.4 million customer accounts.