

Appendix 5

Scottish and Southern Power Distribution – Interconnector clarification

A request was made by RSPB Scotland to Scottish and Southern Power Distribution on the following matter:

i) a request for comments on the accuracy of statements made by Lewis Wind Power in its recent revised planning submission for its windfarm on Lewis suggesting that LWP needs to happen in order to justify a subsea cable transmission link from Lewis;

The response was as follows:

"Development work on a Western Isles connection is currently being undertaken by SSE's regulated transmission business Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission Ltd (SHETL). This work includes technical specification of the link and investigation of potential cable routes, landfalls and substation sites ahead of applications being made for the necessary consents. When completed the circuits will be owned and maintained by SHETL as an integrated extension to its existing transmission system in the north of Scotland.

More detail on the Western Isles connection as well as a December 2006 consultation by SHETL on the portion of route proposed to be undergrounded on the Scottish mainland can be viewed at www.scottish-southern.co.uk.

The interconnector development work was triggered by two prospective windfarm developments on the Isle of Lewis contracting with National Grid for export capacity onto the grid, i.e. the Great Britain Transmission System. National Grid's Seven Year Statement (and quarterly updates), shows all large scale generation developments in Great Britain that have contracted for capacity on the grid (www.nationalgrid.com/uk/Electricity/SYS/). Any large scale projects not listed have not committed to grid capacity, or at least had not done so at the date of the document or its updates.

As shown in Table 3.5 of the Seven Year Statement, Beinn Mhor Power Ltd and SSE Generation Ltd have each individually contracted with National Grid for access to the Great Britain Transmission System for their proposed windfarm developments on Eishken Estate and Pairc (South Lochs) respectively. National Grid in turn has therefore contracted with SHETL to provide the necessary extension and reinforcement of the transmission system owned by SHETL to accommodate the developments. As well as the subsea link itself, the system reinforcements upon which connection of these two projects (and many others) are dependent include the Beauldy-Denny reinforcement on the Scottish mainland.

The costs being incurred by SHETL for the Western Isles connection development work have been allowed by the regulator Ofgem (Office of Gas and Electricity Markets) on the basis that they are being underwritten by the two transmission contracted parties who trigger the requirement for the link, i.e. Beinn Mhor Power Ltd and SSE Generation Ltd. The connection work will therefore continue to completion on the back of those two projects."

Regards
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