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China fabricator to open Polish foundation plant

By Dan Woodland

Chinese fabricator Dajin Heavy Industry is to set up a new foundation manufacturing facility in Poland to serve the European offshore wind market.

The steel specialist is close to making a final investment decision and could start rolling out components starting with transition pieces as early as 2024.

Beijing-headquartered

Dajin is aiming to produce monopiles eventually at the as-yet-undisclosed location.

The ports of Gdynia and Gdansk have the best potential with the latter already selected by Poland's Council of Ministers to become an offshore wind terminal, sources said.

Dajin is in talks with European developers to agree memoranda of understanding on foundation supply deals, according to the company's

Europe managing director Jaroslaw Lasinski.

The discussions are "progressing in the right direction" and once nailed down will get the final investment call over the line.

Lasinski said the factory will target the upcoming offshore wind pipeline in Poland as well as other Baltic markets.

"We are talking about... 80GW in the Baltic Sea and Poland has 25GW out of this. That's a great, great potential and we are just getting started," he added.

The factory itself will employ a local workforce and contribute to the development of a domestic supply chain for monopiles and transition pieces within Poland, Lasinski said.

Dajin recently banked its first major European contract to supply 48 XXL monopiles for the 860MW Moray West wind farm off north-east Scotland, as revealed in the previous edition of reNEWS.

The fabricator is also pitching deals to developers of UK projects that would see it team up with a local

Supply chain leaders to put case for further UK support

UK offshore wind supply chain heavyweights are to seek renewed support for domestic manufacturing and ports in a fresh roundtable meeting with Energy Minister Greg Hands today.

More than a dozen companies with operations in the country, including Siemens Gamesa and GE Renewable Energy, have been invited, according to sources.

Hands will be told by some attendees that the government must do more

to ensure plans for various manufacturing facilities and large-scale ports are delivered despite existing state grant backing and changes to supply chain statements.

Among the suggestions to be tabled is a fresh look at the Contracts for Different regime, which currently rewards lowest-cost bids.

"If you want a healthy supply chain these super-skinny margins can't continue," said a source who will be at the meeting.

Developer switches to Vestas turbines for 47MW Irish site

Independent Irish developer Western Power has lined up Vestas to supply turbines for the RESS 2-winning 47.3MW Knockranny wind farm.

Talks have been held with the manufacturer on deploying 11 V117 4.3MW machines at the site near

Moycullen in County Galway on the west coast.

Towers would be a mix of 72 and 82 metres tall to conform with 130.5 and 140.5-metre tip height limits in the project's consent awarded in 2016.

"Vestas have confirmed

the suitability of the V117 4.3MW model for Knockranny having conducted a technical assessment of the site's wind conditions, layout and conditions," the developer said in paperwork filed to the local authority.

Western, which proposed



The global offshore wind supply chain continues to grow to meet surging demand in the coming years despite short-term financial pain being suffered by several big companies.

Today's reNEWS Offshore Technology Yearbook 2022 reveals an ever-growing list of players looking for a slice of the action from turbine manufacturers to CTV providers.

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sub-contractor. Dajin has submitted a "number of tenders" based on the manufacture of primary steel for TPs at its facilities in China with a partner in the UK to finalise the remaining works.

The arrangement would not only meet local content needs but also help to reduce the competitive cost base for developers, Lasinski claimed.

GE 2.85MW turbines with 101-metre rotors when the original application was filed in 2013, said advances in turbines since are behind the move. A final deal has yet to be signed. The wind farm must go live by end-2025 to qualify for RESS-2 payments.

Global Energy going solo on port of Nigg tower plant

Global Energy Group is planning to build a UK-owned steel tubular rolling facility targeting the offshore wind market at the port of Nigg on the north-east Scotland coast.

The company, which owns the harbour, is aiming to produce turbine towers and wants to tap into floating offshore wind technology at the plant.

Preparations have already begun with the demolition of existing workshops to clear space.

GEG said it will majority-own the plant, which "replaces" a previous plan to build a similar factory in a joint venture with Spanish manufacturer Haizea.

Executives at the UK company are working on a "revised business case as primary operator of the site", GEG told reNEWS.

The change of direction comes after Haizea joint venture Nigg Offshore Wind's plans to build a £110m to £120m tower factory at the Cromarty Firth site stalled, sources said.

The partners were expected to reach financial close last December and start construction this January with first towers rolling off the assembly line in 2023.

The UK and Scottish governments had both

lined up funding under their Offshore Wind Manufacturing Investment and Highland & Islands support schemes, respectively.

However, BEIS cash has not been released as the project was put on hold, a source said. A lack of near-term orders in the UK is among the reasons behind the slow progress, observers suggested.

Haizea chief executive Borja Zarraga denied the project is on hold but said "circumstances affecting the market" required the company to make a "thorough update together with GEG".

GEG chairman Roy MacGregor, however, said his company is "fully committed to developing the offshore wind supply chain and establishing a world-class manufacturing facility for rolled steel products at the port of Nigg" under the new plan.

Scottish Net Zero & Energy Secretary Michael Matheson has welcomed GEG's updated proposal, which he said would "strengthen" the domestic supply chain.

SSE Renewables, which along with Sequoia Infrastructure Debt Fund and Mainstream had lined up loans for the Haizea factory, is also backing GEG's revised plans.

Morgan and Morecambe to share onshore grid link assets

Developers behind the 1.5GW Morgan and 480MW Morecambe wind farms in the UK Irish Sea are to share onshore transmission infrastructure.

Morecambe backers Cobra and Flotation Energy told the Planning Inspectorate they expect to co-ordinate development of a joint grid link with BP and EnBW's Morgan project, having earlier included the proposal among a number of options.

The developers will submit a single permit request for the onshore transmission assets and separate applications for offshore elements. A scoping document outlining the onshore plan is expected to be filed later this year.

Cobra and Flotation said there is still uncertainty over a grid connection location and therefore they are unable to determine key transmission elements as yet.

■ BP and EnBW have started the first round of consultations for the 1.5GW Mona wind farm in the UK Irish Sea.

IN BRIEF

■ China Longyuan Power has gone to market with a supply contract for 7MW turbines to be deployed at its 1GW Sheyang wind farm off Yancheng prefecture in Jiangsu province.

■ Ocean Winds has started geophysical site investigations for the export cable route to serve its 860MW Moray West wind farm off north-east Scotland. The developer has meanwhile launched OW Brasil to pursue opportunities in the South American country with an initial 15GW pipeline.

■ Saipem and Italian engineer Trevi have signed a memorandum of understanding to jointly develop two drilling system designs for large-diameter foundation holes.

■ Shell subsidiary Amber Baltic Wind has submitted applications for offshore zones on offer in Poland's latest leasing round. Winners are due to be confirmed later this year.

DEME Offshore gets call to bolster foundation team at 1.2GW Dogger Bank A

SSE Renewables and Equinor have drafted in DEME Offshore to support Seaway 7 on foundation installation at the 1.2GW Dogger Bank A wind farm off east England.

The developers have chartered the Belgian marine contractor's jack-up Innovation to work with Seaway Strashnov in a change to the original ship line-up.

DEME's scope has yet to be disclosed but sources said it is likely to be mainly installing transition pieces supplied by Smulders. Innovation is currently mobilising and will sail to the North Sea during the summer.

The aim is to ensure the foundation campaign stays on track after Seaway 7 newbuild Alfa Lift was hit by further delays.

The installation ship, which

is being built at the China Merchants Heavy Industry shipyard in Jiangsu, was due to tackle the full installation scope this summer but delivery was put back to next year.

However, Seaway 7 has now confirmed Alfa Lift will be replaced by Strashnov for the full 2023 campaign, suggesting the new crane ship will not arrive before 2024.

No reasons have been given for the delay but last October the company reported an unplanned movement of the A-frame on the ship's crane at the yard in China.

Installation of Sif-supplied monopiles on the first phase of the 3.6GW Dogger Bank complex will start during the summer. Phase one is due online next year featuring GE Haliade-X turbines.

Vattenfall asks for brakes to be taken off at Norfolk Vanguard

Vattenfall has asked planners to drop a 1.8GW capacity cap at its Norfolk Vanguard wind farm off east England.

The developer has filed a non-material change request to amend its existing permit, arguing the removal of the limit should be allowed due to "continuing technological developments" and "to further reduce the costs of energy produced by the project to the consumer in line with government policy".

Vattenfall also wants to reduce the upper limit on turbine numbers from 158 to 145. A new nameplate capacity target has yet to be

revealed for Vanguard but based on preferred supplier Siemens Gamesa's 15MW turbines top power would be almost 2.2GW.

The modifications would not cause any changes to the onshore elements but require a variation to the wind farm's marine licence. Vattenfall said it plans to submit a separate application to the Marine Management Organisation.

The Planning Inspectorate has given stakeholders until 24 July to respond to the non-material change proposal. The developer last month filed a similar request for sister project Norfolk Boreas.



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Radar upgrade plan ends hostilities over 100MW Eleon build

Eleon is to restart construction at its stalled 100MW Aidu wind farm in Estonia after settling a long-running tip height and radar dispute.

The developer has signed an agreement with four government ministries and the Estonian Technical Surveillance Authority that will enable it to return to the 30-turbine project after a three-year hiatus.

Eleon completed installation of two of its own 3.4M116 machines (pictured) as well as a portion of the civil and balance of plant works before it was evicted by police in early 2019.

The dispute centred on turbine tip heights and impacts on Estonia's radar defence systems.

A decision earlier this year by the Ministry of Defence to upgrade radar infrastructure cleared the way for height restrictions placed on turbines to be removed.

The government pact will also bring an end to the legal proceedings that Eleon started in 2019 following



Photo: Eleon

its eviction. Developer co-founder Andreas Sonajalg said the deal includes a requirement to deploy the most modern turbine technology available, raising the possibility of a change in hardware planned for the site.

The original design called for installation of 30 Eleon 3.4M116 units with rotor diameters of 116 metres and tip heights 195 metres. The company will make a decision on any revisions "very soon", Sonajalg told reNEWS.

Construction will resume at the site in Ida-Viru county in the second half of the year following a planned €150m

green bond issue scheduled for this month, he added.

Turbine installation is scheduled for 2023 and commercial operations are likely in 2025.

■ A Tallinn court has ruled in favour of developer Enefit Green following a legal challenge to its plans for the up to 30-turbine Risti wind farm in Estonia's Laane-Nigula municipality.

The local council objected to the project, where tip heights are put at 290 metres, and withdrew from a scoping procedure. The court has annulled that decision.

Enefit Green head of wind developments Lauri Ulm said: "We believe it is possible to find a solution for the wind farm that takes into account the interests of all parties involved.

"As the next steps, (we) will meet with the representatives of the county and agree on how to continue with the process. There aren't many areas with such potential in Estonia."

ABO environmental blueprint for 700MW project in Finland

ABO Wind has unveiled the environmental impact assessment for its proposed up to 700MW Kivikangas wind farm in Finland.

The project between the towns of Kajaani and Sukeva will feature between 45 and 67 turbines rated at 7MW to 10MW with up to 300-metre tip heights. The hardware will be spaced at least 700 metres apart and no closer than 1.8km to the nearest dwelling.

The wind farm will connect to the network at Fingrid's Vuolijoki substation, which is also part of the EIA procedure.

ABO is leading project development in a partnership with Metsähallitus, Finland's state-owned resources

management organisation. Public consultation events will be carried out as part of the permitting process. Construction will start no earlier than 2024.

■ Pohjan Voima Oy has launched public consultations and a zoning initiative for its planned up to 200MW Leinnevankangas wind farm in Finland.

The developer is eyeing installation of 20 turbines rated at 6MW to 12MW with hub heights of 220 metres and tips of 330 metres at a site to the north of Saarijarvi.

Depending on zoning and permitting, construction will begin no earlier than 2025 with operations a year later.

EBRD assesses Montenegrin loan request

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development is reviewing an €82m loan application from Montenegrin utility Elektroprivreda Crne Gore to support delivery of the 55MW Gvozd wind farm.

The loan will be partially syndicated to commercial banks and is expected to be signed in the autumn, the EBRD said.

The money will be used to finance the construction and operation of 5MW turbines with up to 150-metre rotors on the Krnovo plateau in Niksic municipality.

The project also entails construction of the 110/33kV Gvozd transformer station.

1.2GW array to power giant Norwegian green steel plant

Norwegian companies Blastr Green Steel and Njordr are looking to develop around 1.2GW of wind capacity in Nordland County.

The developers have kicked off the permitting process for the Nkr50bn (€4.8bn) project, which involves construction of a 2.5-million tonnes per annum green steel facility and associated infrastructure in Sorfold and Fauske municipalities.

Power will come from a nearby 100-turbine wind farm to the east. Detailed studies for the array have yet to start but Njordr has held initial consultations with local reindeer grazing district leaders.

The wind farm will produce around six terawatt-hours per year for the proposed green steel plant, which will comprise hydrogen production facilities, a

pellet factory, smelter and rolling mills as well as a new deep-water quay in the Stottnesodden/Seljasneset area.

The plans represent one of the largest land-based industrial projects in Norwegian history as well as one of the world's first green steel facilities, according to Blastr, which has sent a request to Sorfold and Fauske councils to start the planning and licence application process and associated impact assessments.

The area has good wind conditions and is near the high voltage grid, has access to land and water and boasts an ice-free deepwater quay, Blastr added.

The exact size and scope of the project will depend on the available power volumes, cost of energy and capacity in the network.

Boreas Energie sheds light on 136MW proposal in Germany

Boreas Energie has filed initial planning paperwork for the up to 136MW Korner wind farm in Germany's Thuringia state.

The local authority has been asked to issue a preliminary decision on proposals to erect 23 turbines with 169-metre towers on agricultural land in the districts of Korner and Bothenheiligen.

Boreas indicated two turbine options in application documents. One variant shows the use of one Vestas V136-4.2MW unit, two V150-6.0MW machines and 20 V162-6.0MW generators.

The other comprises a single Nordex N133 4.8MW machine, two N149 5.7MW units and 20 N163 6MW turbines.

The project is located in a wind farm priority development area, according to the developer. The plans are open for consultation and will be discussed at a public meeting in September.

■ Nordex has received an order for 22 N149/4.X turbines from the Delta4000 series for the 105MW Krivaca wind farm in Serbia, marking the manufacturer's entry into the market.

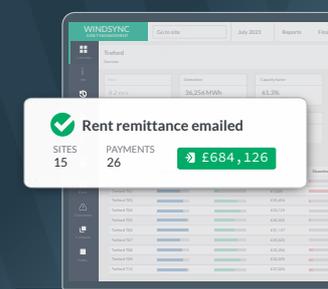
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Denmark maps 4GW of new leasing zones

Denmark has earmarked five new offshore wind development areas to deliver 4GW of additional capacity by 2030.

Feasibility studies will begin shortly across the zones called Kriegers Flak 2 North, Kriegers Flak 2 South, Kattegat 2, an area south of Hesselø and North Sea 1.

The latter tract lies south of the 1GW Thor area and is likely to be subdivided into three leases called Thor 2, 3 and 4.

Studies will include seabed surveys and analysis of wind, wave and other environmental conditions that may impact the building of wind farms, officials said.

Eolus adds another 1GW string to its Swedish wind bow

Eolus Vind is consulting on plans to build the 1GW Najaderna wind farm in the southern Bothnian Sea off the east coast of Sweden.

Designs for the project

feature between 50 and 68 turbines with tip heights of 330 to 365 metres spread across 350 square kilometres off Uppsala County, both in territorial waters and the country's

economic zone. Eolus said the consultation will allow local views on the wind farm to inform further investigations of the project site.

The developer is already

planning to build the 1.2GW Arkona and 1GW Vastvind wind farms off Sweden, as well as the 1GW Blekinge with partners Vingkraft and NTR.

Eolfi and Valeco saddle up for AO6 floater tender bid

Eolfi has thrown its hat into the ring in France's AO6 floating offshore wind tender for two 250MW projects in the Mediterranean Sea.

The Shell subsidiary is pursuing its Moulins du Leonis proposal in alliance with EnBW-owned Valeco.

The partners, together with Banque des Territoires, previously pre-qualified for France's AO5 South Brittany tender with their 250MW Moulins du Mervent floater.

The new offering will leverage Shell's experience on the Groix Belle Ile pilot wind farm as well as technological developments deployed at projects in the UK and Scotland, said Cedric Marande, tender director for France.

Applications for the pre-qualification phase for the AO6 tender closed on 23 May with contenders expected

to be named in the summer. Winners of the following auction phase will likely be revealed autumn next year.

Backers of the selected projects will be required to reach a final investment decision by 2027-28.

The AO6 tender will likely see the participation of many of the players already competing for AO5, sources said.

Two projects are envisaged in the latest sale, one located in the Occitanie region off the coast of Gruissan, the other near Port Saint Louis.

The location of the

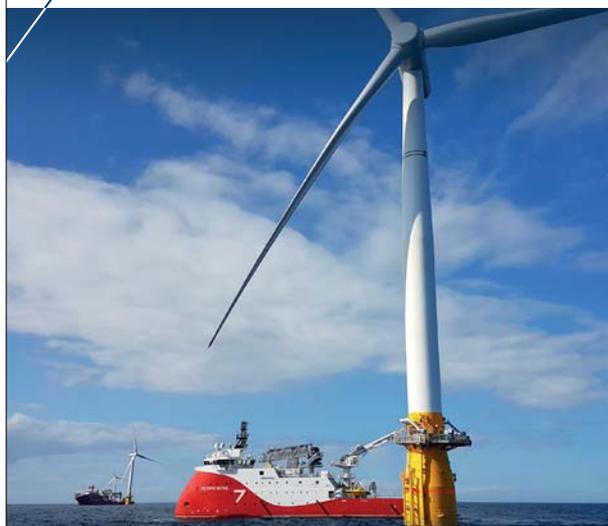
second project is subject to change due to potential environmental issues, however, with a decision expected in the coming months, according to Valeco offshore development manager Pauline Bertrand.

A potential expansion to include two further 500MW projects is being mullied by the developers, bringing total capacity to 1.5GW, Shell's Marande added.

The tender will include a Contracts for Difference mechanism with the strike price capped at €110 per megawatt-hour.

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Louis Dreyfus on wire job at Saint-Nazaire

Louis Dreyfus TravOcean is to complete installation of inter-array cables for the 480MW Saint-Nazaire wind farm off France by November.

A protective shell solution is being deployed due to the very hard soils in the seabed in the Guerande bank that rule out burial of the cables and limit the use of rock bags, the company said.

The contractor has meanwhile signed contracts with turbine supplier GE and developer EDF for the provision of maintenance services at the wind farm. Three new crew transfer vessels started work at the project this month.

The first four of 62 jacket foundations for Iberdrola's 496MW Saint-Brieuc wind farm off France have left Navantia's shipyard in Fene, Spain. The units will be delivered to Cherbourg ahead of installation scheduled during the summer.

Two-blade play at Sardinia duo

Seawind Ocean Technology is looking to deploy its own turbine design at the Del Toro 1 and 2 projects off Sardinia.

The company has developed a two-blade model claimed to offer a 25% to 35% lower levelised cost of energy compared to three-blade units, and is also planning

to develop a manufacturing plant at Oristano on the island.

Seawind is meanwhile in talks with Italian, French and Spanish authorities as well as investors on a proposed €30bn, 10GW Mediterranean wind farm that would power green hydrogen production.

IN BRIEF

■ Procurement is underway for Cloudberry Clean Energy's planned 100MW Stenkalles wind farm in Vanern, Sweden's largest lake. The developer is working with Ventolines of Holland to optimise the project and expects to take a final investment decision before the year-end.

■ The Danish Energy Agency and Frederikshavn Municipality have launched a public consultation on the environmental impact assessment for European Energy's up to 72MW Frederikshavn offshore wind farm.

■ The Danish Energy Agency and RWE will host a public meeting on 20 June as part of consultations on the

environmental impact assessment for the developer's 1GW Thor offshore wind farm.

■ Vestas has secured a conditional order agreement to supply turbines for EnBW's 900MW He Dreiht wind farm in the German North Sea.

■ SSE Renewables and Acciona Energia have signed a declaration of participation in the Pomeranian Platform for the Development of Offshore Wind Energy in the Polish Baltic Sea.

■ The Polish Wind Energy Association hosted an international supplier day in Serock this week.

GE Haliade in frame for 2.2GW Maryland

US Wind wants to deploy GE Haliade-X turbines at its up to 2.2GW Maryland wind farm off America's east coast.

The Renexia and Apollo Investment Management-owned developer is considering plans to install up to 121 of the US manufacturer's 14.7MW machines, according to the project's construction



Illustration: GE

and operation plan. The Haliade model (left) employs a rotor diameter of 220 metres and hub height of 139 metres

with the joint venture setting a maximum of 250 metres and 161 metres, respectively, in its design envelope, which is currently being examined by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management.

Contracts have yet to be signed but a GE Renewable Energy spokesperson said: "We are excited about the enormous potential of the US offshore market and are in discussions with various customers about how to use our Haliade-X technology to meet their needs."

US Wind has opted for monopile foundations due to site and market conditions, it said, and has laid out a 2200-tonne design with either integrated or separate transition pieces.

The components could potentially be sourced from Sparrows Point in Greater Baltimore, it added. Jackets "would not likely be available or cost-effective", US Wind said, while suction caisson foundations remain "unproven" and gravity-base structures "not widely used" in the type of conditions seen within the lease area.

Monopile subcomponents would likely be sourced from Europe with final welding and finishing taking place at Sparrows Point.

The developer has also mapped out how it plans to mitigate and monitor environmental impacts at the sprawling Maryland site.

Construction will not take place within 100 metres of hummocks in Indian River Bay between May and August each year to avoid disturbing nesting terns.

Fish monitoring equipment such as nanotag antennas will be installed on metocean buoys and US Wind will compile a wildlife survey.

Double bubble curtains and attenuation devices are also being considered to reduce noise during underwater pile driving.

The construction and operation plan covers the entire Maryland lease zone, including the earlier 270MW MarWin and 808MW Momentum projects, which have already received their Offshore Renewable Energy Certificates from the state.

The remainder of the 2.2GW capacity will be built out to fulfil "ongoing,

government sanctioned demands" for energy. First power could come in December 2025 from MarWin subject to permit approval.

parties to offer arguments and recommendations on a given case.

Save Long Beach Island is alleging the government failed to prepare an environmental impact statement before the leasing exercise. The organisation is also seeking permission to oppose the industry intervention.

The judge in the case has allowed a hearing but the date has yet to be set.

South Fork onshore progress

Contractor Haugland will start laying foundations this week for an onshore substation on Long Island, New York, that will service Orsted and Eversource's 132MW South Fork offshore wind farm.

The company has already trenched and installed conduit at the Cove Hollow

Road facility in East Hampton, near to an existing PSEG substation. Installation of an access road and trenching of a conduit is simultaneously underway on the Long Island Railroad Corridor. Onshore works began in January with offshore construction due to start next year.

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Falck eyes on 90MW Earlsburn extension

Falck Renewables is planning to build an up to 90MW extension to its operational 37.5MW Earlsburn wind farm in Scotland via a joint venture with REG Power Management.

Scoping documents filed with the Holyrood government's Energy Consents Unit outline a 15-turbine layout featuring 5MW to 6MW machines with 180-metre tip heights.

The Falck-REG partnership, known as Naturalis Energy Development, wants to erect

the hardware directly north-east of the existing Earlsburn site in Stirling, which has been in operation since 2007.

That wind farm is majority owned by Falck and features 15 Nordex turbines.

Energy storage is being explored as part of the extension project with both battery and non-battery technologies under consideration.

The capacity of the storage component would be dependent on the final

installed power of the new wind farm and the grid connection secured, scoping paperwork states.

Construction is expected to take between 12 and 18 months and would include new site access tracks, underground cabling and an on-site substation.

The overall extension design is subject to change depending on environmental, technical and commercial constraints encountered during early assessments.

Police get to grips with Scottish turbine delivery escort backlog

The process of securing police escorts for turbine deliveries in Scotland is now "much improved", according to trade body Scottish Renewables.

The Holyrood government and Police Scotland introduced "a more streamlined forward planning system" in April.

More officers have been trained and deployed to deal with a backlog for escort services that emerged earlier this year due in part to Covid-19 impacts on staffing.

Additional vehicles have also been permitted to increase the size of convoys and transport more equipment per trip.

Fresh discussions between the police, Holyrood and industry are due to take place this summer to "future-proof" the process, a government spokesperson added.

Longer daylight hours could see delivery windows extended to 9pm through to August while there is an open dialogue around upcoming capacity issues such as A77 road-works, the Commonwealth Games and bank holidays, Scottish Renewables added.

Talks are also underway to extend the agencies authorised to escort abnormal loads beyond Police Scotland, it is understood.

IN BRIEF

■ Glenmuckloch Renewable Energy is seeking to extend the life of its 33.6MW eponymous wind farm in Dumfries and Galloway, Scotland, to 30 years from the permitted 25 years.

■ RWE and gas distribution company SGN are to investigate using power from the developer's 213MW Scottish onshore wind fleet to produce green hydrogen.

■ Fred Olsen Renewables has appointed Natural Power to deliver the service and maintenance contract at the 62MW Windy Standard wind farm in Dumfries and Galloway, Scotland, where 21 Senvion MM82 and nine MM92 2.05MW turbines have been in operation since 2017.

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EDF focusing on yield with plans for Caithness array

EDF Renewables has taken the wraps off plans to build the up to 60MW Watten wind farm in Caithness, northern Scotland.

Scoping documents filed with Scottish ministers do not provide an exact output capacity for the eight-turbine project.

However, proposals for up to 220-metre tip heights make 6MW to 7MW units likely candidates, the paperwork adds. "By the time the project is constructed, such wind turbine models may be capable of generating more," it states.

Vestas V162 turbines have been used to undertake early technical assessments but a specific model for the final design will be chosen later in the development process.

The wind farm would be built on land east of

ScottishPower Renewables' 30MW Halsary wind farm and 3km south-west of Watten in the Highlands.

The site has "a good wind resource", according to the scoping report, while the preference for 220-metre turbines taps into the Scottish government's "aspirations for demonstrably better energy yields from sites optimised with higher tip heights".

EDF Renewables is seeking a 35-year operational life. Lithium-ion battery storage is also being considered in the proposal.

A grid connection is expected to be made at the nearby Mybster substation via an underground cable, subject to a separate planning application.

Public consultations for Watten are scheduled for the end of the month.



BLADE BATCH: Longhill Burn will feature some of the tallest turbines yet installed in the UK
Photo: Energiekontor/Natural Power

Siemens Gamesa going to new lengths at 50MW Longhill Burn

Siemens Gamesa has delivered the first components for its 5.5X turbine platform to the UK.

Haulage outfit McFadyens dropped off the initial batch of blades for the 6.6MW units that will feature at Energiekontor's 50MW Longhill Burn wind farm in Scotland.

Supply issues that have affected Siemens Gamesa throughout the year mean a slightly extended overall delivery schedule. Blade loads are expected to continue into July with nacelles due to arrive at the project site in West Lothian in October.

Energiekontor plans to complete as much assembly as possible before then. Full mechanical installation will begin as soon as the nacelles are on-site. The developer said it expects to energise some of the turbines this year and achieve full commercial

operations of all eight machines in early 2023.

Civil engineering has now been wrapped up by balance of plant contractor AE Yates, bar some final snagging.

The turbines at Longhill Burn will be among the tallest installed in the UK to date. Project manager Andy Warrington said: "At 200 metres to tip, the turbine size is a step up for the construction team."

■ ESB has secured a 92.8MW grid connection effective late October 2029 from Scottish Power Transmission for its proposed Millmoor Rig wind farm in the Borders.

The developer plans to install up to 13 turbines rated at 6MW with tip heights of 180 to 210 metres in Wauchope Forest. A full Section 36 application is set for the third quarter.

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LAND CONSENTING | LANDOWNER ENGAGEMENT | COMPULSORY PURCHASE

IN BRIEF

■ Belgian developer Storm has unveiled plans for the up to 28MW Rouveroy wind farm in the Walloon province of Hainaut.

The company is due to hold a public consultation this month on proposals to install four up to 7MW turbines in the municipality of Estinnes.

The hardware would have 125-metre towers and up to 200-metre tip heights, the developer said. The consultation will be followed by an environmental impact assessment process before Storm files a full permit application for the wind farm.

■ EVN Naturkraft has filed to repower the Prellenkirchen 3 wind farm in the district of Bruck an der Leitha, Lower Austria.

The developer has put forward plans to replace eight existing 1.8MW Enercon E-66 turbines with seven Nordex N163/6.X 6.8MW machines.

Two of the new units will have a hub height of 118 metres and five will have a hubs of 164 metres. The project will increase capacity at the site from 14.4MW to 47.6MW.

■ Wien Energie has been awarded a permit for the 50MW-plus Steinriegel 3 wind farm in Austria's Styria state.

The company filed an application in 2019 to install 12 4.3MW turbines with 130-metre rotor diameters and 115-metre hub heights in the districts of Bruck-Murzzuschlag and Weiz. Siemens Gamesa is the preferred supplier, according to permit documents.

The development will also involve dismantling the 10 Siemens Bonus 1.3MW turbines at the nearby Steinriegel 1 wind farm.

■ RWE and Energy Infrastructure Partners have brought online the 475MW Nysater wind farm located about 400km north of Stockholm in Sweden.

■ Octopus Energy Generation's fund management team is to build the 35MW Gaishecke wind farm in Hessen, Germany, its first renewable generation deal in the country. Construction will kick off in the next few weeks with operations due by the end of 2023.

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SECOND WIND: Lommel Kristalpark's original Vestas V80 turbines have been sold on for use at overseas projects

Photo: Aspiravi

Starring role for Nordex at Aspiravi repowering

Aspiravi has lined up Nordex to supply turbines for its 43MW Lommel Kristalpark repowering and extension project in Belgium.

The German manufacturer will deliver 12 N117 3.6MW machines with 106-metre towers to the Limburg industrial site east of Brussels over the summer.

Installation is scheduled to wrap up in September, according to local energy

producer and project partner Limburg win(d)t, and operations are expected to start by the end of November.

Contractors are currently making adjustments to roadways in preparation for deliveries of major turbine components, which will be transported to the Kristalpark by truck.

All civil and foundation works have been completed while eight Vestas V80

turbines that went live in 2005-07 have been dismantled and removed. The veteran hardware has been sold and will be installed at sites overseas.

Five Vestas V90 turbines, installed in 2014, will remain in place. The original site had a total capacity of 26MW. The repowering and extension project is the largest wind farm in Flanders to be built in a single phase, Aspiravi said.

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Ofgem consulting on OFTO model for multi-farm links

Developers will build their own co-ordinated grid links before they are tendered to offshore wind transmission owners (OFTOs) under plans being proposed by Ofgem.

The UK energy regulator is consulting on the 'very late competition' — generator build model, which mirrors the way in which radial links are currently developed by wind farm owners and hived off to new operators once built.

Stakeholders have until 15 July to advise Ofgem on how to implement the regime, with some questioning what incentives developers will be given to take on the additional risk of building a co-ordinated connection with a neighbouring wind farm.

Ofgem is proposing a "gateway assessment process", which would be initiated once a project's transmission system is designated as non-radial under National Grid's Holistic Network Design (HND).

This would determine

whether the link is "economic, efficient and co-ordinated" enough to qualify for an OFTO tender.

Ofgem is also consulting on the "complexities" that could arise for OFTOs bidding on shared infrastructure, including co-ordinated projects being delivered in multiple stages.

"It is possible that not all of the transmission infrastructure that an OFTO will be responsible for will enter into service on the same date.

"This will have an impact on the duration of the tender revenue stream and the combined asset life of the licensee's asset base," the consultation document notes.

The regulator wants to know whether financial incentives and penalties for asset availability should also be overhauled.

Ofgem expects to reach a final decision in the autumn. It is also awaiting the outcome of the HND, due this month.

Sampling spree for Llyr twins

Floentis Energy has applied for a marine licence running from 1 July to 30 September to extract seabed samples at the site of its proposed 100MW Llyr 1 and 100MW Llyr 2 floaters in the UK Celtic Sea.

The developer plans to take an estimated 62 sediment

samples from a five-square-kilometre zone within the array area and every 5km along the cable route.

Floentis has informed the Defence Infrastructure Organisation as the survey corridor will pass through the Castlemartin Sea Danger Area.

IN BRIEF

■ RWE Renewables has applied for a marine licence from Natural Resources Wales for its up to 1.1GW Awely Mor wind farm in the Irish Sea. The developer has separately applied for consent order for the project from the UK Planning Inspectorate. Final permit decisions are expected between 2023 and 2024.

■ Ocean Winds has secured a 350MW corporate power purchase agreement with an unnamed party for its 860MW Moray West wind farm off east Scotland. The developer is now pursuing a Contract for Difference for all or part of the remaining capacity.

■ SSE Renewables and TotalEnergies have selected Seaway 7 as preferred contractor to build the 500MW Seagreen 1a wind farm off east Scotland.

The scope of work is under final negotiation and may include full engineering, fabrication, transport and installation of 36 foundations, transportation and installation of the offshore substation, and procurement and installation of array cables.

■ JDR has reached a final agreement under the UK government's Offshore Wind Manufacturing Investment Scheme on financial support for its new subsea cable manufacturing facility in the Cambois, Northumberland, which is planned to open in 2024.

■ EDF Renewables and ESB have installed the first of two offshore substations at the 450MW Neart na Gaoithe wind farm off east Scotland.

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Flotation and Cobra take a second bite at ScotWind

Flotation Energy is bidding to acquire lease rights for the NE1 wind site off Shetland, north-east Scotland, with plans to build an up to 1GW floating turbine array.

The developer and partner Cobra are proposing to produce green hydrogen with energy from the project if selected in the ongoing ScotWind clearing round.

The zone, 30km off Lerwick in the North Sea with waters between 100 and 135 metres deep, has been put back out to tender after it failed to attract interest in the first round completed earlier this year.

Crown Estate Scotland is currently inviting bidders that participated in ScotWind to make renewed offers for the site and is due to award a lease agreement later this year.

Flotation director Alan MacAskill said that, if picked, the company and Cobra will find routes to market other than a grid connection.

The "bulk of the power" could be sent to Shetland to be converted into hydrogen for export into "global markets", he added.

"We have looked at a grid connection to Shetland. It

wouldn't be available until 2033 at the earliest. It's long and expensive.

"You have a huge (oil and gas) terminal in Sullom Voe that is ready for being repurposed and I think the owners are quite keen to do it," he said.

The developer is meanwhile considering Lerwick and Dales Voe as principal ports for construction, which is envisaged over two years from June 2026 to 2028, with the former also serving as its O&M base.

Flotation Energy and Cobra bid for up to 7GW of sites in the ScotWind auction but failed to win any leases.

Flotation Energy and Cobra are in talks with "four or five" floating substructure providers for the NE1 project.

The partners are "undecided" on which solution to choose having looked at more than 15 designs, MacAskill said.

"We generally tend to favour steel but we are not ruling out concrete."

The developers used Principle Power's WindFloat foundation for their 50MW Kincardine floating wind farm off Aberdeen, which came into operation last year.

Hornsea 4 unanswered questions

The Planning Inspectorate has issued a fresh round of questions for stakeholders on Orsted's 2.6GW Hornsea 4 wind farm off east England.

Examiners for the up to 180-turbine project have asked relevant parties about "a significant number of matters" that still need to be resolved before the end of the assessment period on 22 August.

The developer and BP have been asked to provide further information on arguments for utilising an area of the

North Sea seabed where leases for Hornsea 4 and the oil supermajor's proposed carbon capture and storage project overlap.

Elsewhere, the examining authority invited comments from Natural England and the RSPB on Orsted's assessment methodology and consideration of seabird impacts.

Energy Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng is expected to take a final decision on the wind farm application in February 2023.

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Dublin 'to bow to pressure for indexation' in wind auction contract prices

Irish energy department DECC is expected to do a U-turn on index-linking support contracts in the country's first offshore wind auction.

Officials are exploring several options for indexation having previously ruled out the measure.

Among the proposals are to link winning strike prices to inflation, a percentage of inflation or to offset certain expenditure such as development costs, according to sources.

DECC will need the approval of the Department for Public Expenditure and Reform, and is in negotiations with officials there.

The change of heart follows the result of last month's RESS-2 onshore auction, which recorded an average €97.87 per megawatt-hour price for winning wind and solar projects, up from €74.04/MWh in the first round in 2019.

Developers partly blamed the increase on the fact they had to price in skyrocketing inflation on contracts that are not index-linked, unlike in

other regimes such as the UK Contracts for Difference.

"DECC has accepted the argument. It is now over to (the Department for) Public Expenditure and we are hopeful," said a source.

The offshore wind industry has been lobbying for indexation for the first offshore auction, dubbed ORESS-1, which is scheduled to open by the year-end for the country's six designated phase-one projects.

Insiders said the change will help offset higher risk and greater uncertainty around consenting and grid connections for offshore wind projects, which could push up bidding to more than €100/MWh.

Some developers may have stayed away from the auction as they would have been unable to file bids under the round's cap, which has yet to be set but is expected to be around €120/MWh.

"That would have had major implications for the national targets (5GW by 2030)," said a source, who welcomed the proposed changes.

ENTERPRISE IRELAND OFFSHORE WIND FORUM

Oriel developer trims wings for fast take-off

Parkwind is eyeing a quick-fire construction campaign to complete its 375MW Oriel wind farm off north-east Ireland by the end of 2026.

The Belgian developer said it is in position to start onshore work for the 25-turbine project in 2024, offshore construction a year later and achieve operations by the end of 2026.

The timeline, which is subject to permitting, would put the wind farm ahead of Ireland's five other designated phase-one projects and it could become the first large-scale commercial offshore development to connect to the grid in the market.

Country manager Garret Connell told the Enterprise Ireland Offshore Wind Forum 2022 in Dublin last week that the developer's design philosophy has been about creating a proposal that can be delivered quickly.

Key to this has been

ensuring the project is the right size to connect via the existing 220kV network in the area, which has 375MW of available capacity remaining.

Parkwind, which has submitted a lease application known in Ireland as a MAC (Maritime Area Consent), will submit a bid in the first ORESS support round once it opens later this year.

The company will file for full consent once the new offshore permitting regime is in place early next year. "We're raring to go," Connell said.

Projects can deliver quickly if the right policy structure is put in place, he added, highlighting the pace of Parkwind's development of the 247MW Arcadis Ost 1 wind farm in the German Baltic Sea as an example.

■ SSE Renewables has submitted a MAC application for its 800MW Arklow Bank 2 project.

Partners cooking at Codling

EDF Renewables and Fred Olsen Seawind have made "significant progress" with tier one procurement for their up to 1.5GW Codling wind farm off east Ireland, project director Arno Verbeek told the Dublin event.

The partnership is poring over responses to invitations to tender for various scopes and is planning to progress to the next stage

of tendering shortly for the phase-one site. Verbeek said there is a "significant amount of interest" in the wind farm off Wicklow and urgency is key on contracting as the project is competing for resources in a global market.

The developers want commercial operations in 2028 subject to securing consent, a grid connection and an ORESS-1 contract.

Industrial strategy is vital to build viable sector

The Irish government needs to put in place a wide-ranging industrial strategy to ensure the country can benefit from its nascent offshore wind sector, conference delegates heard.

Peter Lefroy, the project director for RWE Renewables' 900MW Dublin Array wind farm, said he welcomed the current focus on ensuring there are ports to serve as marshalling locations but warned these are "only one part of the jigsaw".

"We have to recognise that in Ireland we are starting from scratch with the supply chain. We don't have the infrastructure."

There is a need for a more holistic approach to supply chain development via an industrial strategy, including producing a jobs plan that facilitates upskilling of workers looking to move into the sector as well as tertiary level education, Lefroy said.

"Effective policy is not just infrastructure but all associated infrastructure like roads, rail and other services, business and enterprise policies that facilitate Irish companies pivoting into the sector and international companies coming here," he added.

"Not enough is happening on this visibly... Before we have a sector deal we have got to have a vision."

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Vattenfall blazing a trail for offshore decommissioning

Vattenfall remains on track to complete decommissioning of its 16.8MW Irene Vorrink near-shore wind farm in the Netherlands on budget and without notable delays, providing a potential blueprint for dismantling offshore projects.

The smooth progress is in large part due to extensive pre-decommissioning studies, testing and planning, including in-depth discussions with authorities about the scope of work, the Swedish developer said.

The wind farm is located along the IJsselmeerdijk north of Lelystad.

Preparations to dismantle its 28 Nordtank turbines, which connect to the shore via individual gangways, started in March and were completed faster than expected, said project manager Matthew May.

This included shutting down all the turbines, removing as many bolts and electric cables as possible as well as any oils, and rotating the blades into a 'Y' position at the rate of one turbine per day.

"The aim was to do

Extensive advance planning and testing keep surprises to a minimum as developer dismantles near-shore Netherlands wind farm, writes **Heidi Vella**



OBJECT LESSONS: Veteran Nordtank turbines at the 16.8MW Irene Vorrink wind farm being dismantled in shallow waters beside the IJsselmeerdijk

Photo: CarbonGreen

everything possible in advance so as not to waste vessel time and burn dayrates," he added.

To date, all generators have been removed, all monopiles excavated on the inside down to around three metres below the mudline, and all onshore cables in the dike body have been removed and the dike restored.

Work to cut off the

monopiles two metres below the mudline has just begun.

Vattenfall said it has so far encountered only "minor" unexpected issues, including excavation being "slightly more challenging" at certain locations requiring a change of method, such as attaching an extra hose to the excavation fall pipe to reduce sedimentation.

The company has decommissioned several wind farms in the past, mostly onshore. May said engineers had to approach this project differently, however, because Irene Vorrink is located very close to shore in shallow waters of just four or five metres deep.

Some learnings were applied from previous work to dismantle the nearby near-shore four-turbine, 2MW Lely wind farm, he added.

While being near-shore makes transport distances shorter and easier, the shallow dike is not suitable for heavy cranes and machinery. Instead, a flat barge that can be pinned at each corner and loaded with a land crane is being used.

May noted that while weather is typically more temperate closer to shore,

conversely these vessel types have a lower wave tolerance than typical jack-ups requiring an eight to 10-metre draft.

The proximity to shore also created issues around the removal of the turbines' steel monopiles. The authorities require a small part of the foundation to be left in place because of the risk of damage to the dike from vibration that would result from complete removal.

"One of the biggest planning challenges was to agree what should be removed and how," said May. "Stability is an issue.

"We could remove the whole piles safely using a vibro hammer but this risks seepage from the lake that would need to be pumped out, which is expensive."

All physical work at Irene Vorrink is expected to be completed around the end this month putting the programme on track for an August finish.

Vattenfall said the original decommissioning budget provision put in place when the wind farm was built 25 years ago has proved sufficient.

The industry is keeping a close eye on progress given offshore wind farm decommissioning is still in its infancy with just 83MW of hardware pulled out so far, according to trade body WindEurope.

Repowering is expected to be the favoured route for veteran wind farms rather than dismantling but this will not always be possible, as was the case at Irene Vorrink. The small size of the foundations, which are three and a half metres in diameter, cannot accommodate heavier modern turbines.

Instead Vattenfall is constructing the new 132MW

Wind waste recycling an industry in the making

Turbine blade recycling targets can kick-start a new industrial sector for waste processing solutions, according to Irene Vorrink decommissioning manager Matthew May.

"Considering the volume of turbines that will need dismantling, and the environmental regulations in place, as we continue on this path it will reach an industrial scale," he said.

The project is the first of Vattenfall's to be dismantled under its new sustainability principles that includes banning blades from going to landfill with 50% recycled by 2025 and 100% by 2030.

Fifty tonnes of blade waste from Irene Vorrink are being sent to the Billion People company, which has developed technology to turn composite fibres into beams for solar panels and other components.

Billion People founder Gregor Luthe said it is looking to take in much more material, around 10,000 tonnes of composite glass and carbon fibre a year.

Other companies receiving waste from Irene Vorrink include Norway's Gjenkraft, which will recycle the materials into fibers, synthetic oils and gas. ■

Windplanblauw project in the same area. This will feature two rows of 12 turbines 500 and 1500 metres farther out into the IJsselmeer. Fourteen machines will be owned by Vattenfall and 10 by wind cooperative SwifterwinT.

Instead of monopile foundations, miniature islands 20 metres in diameter with piles all around and spud piles filled with sand in-between for support will provide the bases for the turbines, said May.

Construction is proceeding according to schedule despite some delays due to fast wind speeds, said the developer, and operations are expected from 2023. ■

Second life as teaching aids for two Irene Vorrink blades

Decommissioned turbine blades from Irene Vorrink will be used to teach aviation students how to carry out maintenance and repairs on wind components.

Two blades arrived at the ROC van Amsterdam/Flevoland (ROCvA) college at the end of May.

One will be used to train students how to use drone technology for inspection and the other for repairing composite materials.

In the past the institute never taught practical training for wind farm assets but decided to branch into the sector as opportunities in the aviation industry declined

due to Covid. "Aviation maintenance in general is decreasing whereas the wind maintenance sector is expected to face a huge lack of personnel as the government grows capacity up to 2030," said teacher at the Amsterdam institute Renee de Moor.

Students from ROCvA and educational exchange partner the East Coast College in Lowestoft, England, will receive practical training over 10 weeks.

They will then go onto a six-month apprenticeship with industry players such as Vattenfall, Siemens Gamesa and Deutsche WindTechnik. ■

Work resumes following death of worker at Viking project substation site

Construction of a substation compound at developer SSE Renewables' 443MW Viking wind farm on the island of Shetland, off north Scotland, has restarted following the death of a worker last week.

Activity restarted in recent days after being put on hold for just over a week following the incident on Sunday, 5 June, at the site operated by civil engineer BAM Nuttall, it is understood.

The contractor is working at three sites linked to the wider infrastructure that will support the remote island wind farm.

Works across the main Viking location, which is being prepared for the installation of 103 Vestas turbines next year, were able to remain ongoing last week.

Scottish police are investigating the "full circumstances of what happened" with support from Scotland's Health and Safety Executive.

The 23-year-old man who died at the scene in Upper Kergord has been named by Police Scotland as Liam Macdonald from Tain, who worked for BAM Nuttall.

The contractor's executive director Ian Parish said: "We owe it to all those who knew him to find out about what happened. We will do that in co-operation with our client SSE and with the relevant authorities."

SSE Renewables head of onshore projects Derek Hastings said: "We are devastated by the news and our thoughts and condolences are with the family, friends and colleagues of the young man who tragically died."

A huge construction effort is underway to deliver Viking, which is due for completion in 2024.

A high-voltage subsea connection is being built that will transport power from the wind farm to the Scottish mainland grid.

Curtain up for 140MW Breackerie on Kintyre

Energiekontor UK has taken the wraps off plans for the 140MW Breackerie wind farm on the Kintyre peninsula in western Scotland.

Scoping documents filed with Scottish government planning officials outline a 21-turbine configuration featuring 6.6MW machines.

The initial design targets 13 machines with 230-metre tip heights and the remaining eight at 200 metres.

This is "the maximum theoretical layout" for the proposed site south-west of Campbeltown in the Argyll and Bute region but could be downsized as the planning process unfolds, the developer said.

Energiekontor is seeking a 35-year operational life and estimates construction will take 18 months.

The array is planned to be

built on a 1374-hectare plot of hilly land currently used for commercial coniferous forestry.

Permanent access tracks would be constructed to enable civil works along with an on-site substation and energy storage equipment.

A separate planning request will be put in for a link to the SSE Networks grid.

Turbine components are expected to be delivered to Campbeltown Harbour by ship before completing their journey to the site by road.

Final turbine selection will be made post-consent following a tendering and procurement exercise, scoping paperwork states.

Work on the Breackerie proposal to date includes bird and landscape studies, wind yield analysis and design layout options.

Energiekontor asks to raise roof at 33.6MW Strathrory

Energiekontor is seeking approval to use taller turbines at its approved 33.6MW Strathrory wind farm in the Scottish Highlands.

An increase from the consented 149.9-metre tip heights up to 180 metres is being sought for four of the seven turbines while a fifth unit would be raised to 160 metres.

Planning documents cite "changes to turbine procurement, further investigation of wind speeds and cost increases for the necessary construction materials" as reasons for the request.

The developer said the updated design would result in only a "marginal" increase to site visibility from key viewpoints while increasing

overall generating capacity to 36MW.

Consent for Strathrory was granted on appeal in January following Highland Council's initial rejection of the plans due to landscape and visual impacts.

Energiekontor had already whittled down the scope of the proposal from eight 180-metre turbines producing 44.8MW to the smaller seven-unit footprint.

Strathrory is located on around 830 hectares of mostly open moorland to the north of Strathy Burn and north-west of Easter Ardross.

A 5MW battery storage component is also included in the planning application and the developer is seeking a 35-year operational lifespan for the project.

IN BRIEF

■ ERG has placed a 101MW turbine order with Vestas for the Mineo Militello Vizzini wind farm in Sicily, Italy. The contract includes supply and installation of 24 V136-4.2MW machines. First power is expected in the second quarter of 2023 with commissioning in the second half of the year.

■ Iberdrola has fully energised and grid-connected its 33.6MW Mikronoros wind farm in the province of Rhodope, Thrace, Greece, featuring eight V150-4.2MW turbines with hub heights of 105 metres and 150-metre rotor diameters.

■ Wind energy provided 34% of Ireland's electricity last month, a record for May and up nine

percentage points on the same period in 2021, according to industry body Wind Energy Ireland. Over the first five months of 2022 wind provided 37% of the Republic's electricity.

■ German federal network agency BNetzA has awarded onshore wind capacity totalling 931MW to 114 projects in the country's latest auction. BNetzA said 1320MW was offered and 116 bids totalling 947MW were received.

■ OX2 has been selected to handle technical, commercial and financial management of the 253MW MB2 North wind farm in Sweden. The project outside Pitea employs 63 turbines and is part of the Markbygden cluster.

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Madrid rewriting offshore wind rulebook

Developers hope ongoing consultation will produce clear guidance on permitting and grid rules as well as introduce competitive auctions, writes

Beatrice Bedeschi

The Spanish government has started consulting on a new offshore wind development framework to support ambitions to reach 1GW to 3GW of installed capacity by 2030.

The exercise, which closes on 22 June, is seeking feedback from stakeholders on updating authorisation procedures for projects.

The current permitting regime was established by a 2007 decree, under which developers were awarded a two-year licence to conduct research and then build and operate a wind farm following a competitive procedure for previously determined areas.

A further decree issued last year suspended permitting for all new offshore projects, except pilots, ahead of the policy revamp.

The new regulations will reflect technological progress in recent years as well as a maritime spatial planning strategy that is currently in development. They will also set up the basis for competitive auctions, according to Iberdrola offshore wind development director Javier Garcia Perez.

"We hope the framework will provide transparency regarding access and grid connection while promoting investment via competitive instruments," he told reNEWS.

Iberdrola has submitted



AREAS OF INTEREST: Potential development zones in Spanish territorial waters identified in the government's maritime energy strategy roadmap

Graphic: the Spanish govt.

initial project documents to the Ministry for Ecological Transition and the Demographic Challenge for more than 1GW of capacity at sites across Spain including the Canary Islands, Catalonia, Galicia and Andalusia.

"We have selected areas with the best resource and the most suitable technical conditions and continue to make progress," Perez explained.

Overall, offshore wind is expected to open up "great opportunities for Spain's supply chain", he added.

However, industry needs more clarity over maritime spatial planning, the consenting process, grid connection and tariff rules as well as first auctions.

"This dialogue gives the sector the opportunity to

explain in detail the problems we face, the solutions we identify, and the priorities for the development of floating

wind," said Saitec lead engineer Javier del Real (left).

"One of the most important points that we expect from the new framework laws is that they will set a clear definition of the different typologies of offshore wind projects, proposing at least three levels — prototype testing, pre-commercial pilot parks and commercial parks," he added.

Moreover, "given the progress in the development of different floating technologies, it is time to test smaller experimental floating

offshore wind farms", Del Real said.

"It would be interesting to promote the installation of mini-parks in the future commercial areas. That would reduce uncertainties and get greater agility in a later phase of the development of larger arrays.

"It will also help to establish valuation parameters in the competitive auction procedure of each zone, taking into account the results from pilot tests."

The consultation follows a roadmap that was approved in December, which identifies four key pillars to Spain's maritime energy strategy.

Aside from the new offshore wind targets these include establishing Spain as a European reference hub for technological development and R&D, and as an international and European benchmark in industrial capacities, and focusing on sustainability. As part of that, the government envisages investing €200m on R&D over the coming year.

The roadmap, which sees "high potential for floating wind technology in the 2030 horizon", identifies five main coastal areas: North Atlantic, South Atlantic, Canary Islands, Strait and Alboran and Levantine-Balearic in the Mediterranean Sea (see graphic).

The government is aiming to publish individual maritime spatial plans for these areas this year with first auctions expected to be held for the Canary Islands in 2023. ■



renews.biz

50MW GOFIO in vanguard as developers head to sea

The first offshore wind farms in Spanish waters are advancing ahead of the new framework.

Greenalia's 50MW GOFIO project in the Canary Islands has made "significant progress in recent months" in the permitting process, a spokesperson said.

The array is expected to be "the first commissioned in Spain when it has obtained the necessary administrative licences and permits", she added. Full operations are expected in 2025.

Elsewhere activities have focused on pilot floating projects, including Saitec and RWE's BlueSATH prototype off

Santander, and Enerocean's Wind2power pioneering two-turbine foundation design located at the PLOCAN test site in the Canary Islands.

Saitec is also behind the 2MW DemoSATH project off Bilbao, which is currently under construction, and the 50MW MedFloat pilot off the Costa Brava in the Mediterranean Sea.

MedFloat will involve the creation of test infrastructure in the Levantino-Balearic Demarcation for the testing, demonstration, and validation of SATH (swinging around twin hull) technology.

Compared to DemoSATH, "the Mediterranean Sea

presents different wave and current characteristics that will be studied with the installation of this pilot park", a spokesperson said.

"This is a good area to demonstrate the compatibility of a floating offshore wind park based on the SATH technology with other sea activities such as offshore aquaculture, fishing, bird conservation and habitat protection," she added.

Saitec recently initiated permitting and is waiting for the scope of the required environmental impact assessment from authorities. It has also yet to secure a maritime permit and grid

connection agreements. Sub-50MW projects benefit from a simplified process to secure grid offers, she noted.

Contractors are still to be finalised and will be decided based on "cost efficiency, capabilities and local content".

While potential power purchase agreements are being considered, the focus is currently on participating in specific auctions for pilot projects, she said.

A final investment decision is expected by the third quarter of next year. Construction is scheduled to kick off in early 2024 with a view to commissioning in the third quarter of 2025. ■

Ampyr chasing 30MW twins near Edinburgh

Ampyr Solar Europe is advancing plans to build two 30MW PV arrays close to each other west of Edinburgh in Scotland.

Screening requests for the projects, held via special purpose vehicles Trinlaymire Net Zero Solar and Aithrie Net Zero Solar, have been submitted to West Lothian Council.

The Trinlaymire proposal comprises a 29.9MW generating plant featuring 82,500 ground-mounted

PV panels sitting on either fixed-tilt or single-axis tracking frames.

Associated infrastructure includes a substation and access tracks with a network connection expected to be made at the Broxburn substation.

Plans for the 29.9MW Aithrie facility are similar in size and infrastructure and would also connect to the grid at Broxburn.

The two sites have been scaled similarly to reflect the

grid offers in hand as well as the available land area.

A 20MW energy storage component is also included at Aithrie comprising lithium-ion batteries housed in around 20 containers.

Consultancy David Bell Planning is overseeing the application process.

"Significant environmental impact is not likely to arise" at either site, it said, so environmental impact assessments should be unnecessary.

500MW Sunnica partners consult on new grid connection blueprint

The UK Planning Inspectorate has agreed to delay the start of the application examination process for the 500MW Sunnica solar project in Cambridgeshire and Suffolk.

Developers Tribus Energy and PS Renewables have been allocated extra time to seek feedback on updated proposals after reconsidering plans to connect at National Grid's Burwell substation.

A 30-day consultation period started last week and will run until 6 July to allow residents and stakeholders a chance to comment on new proposals to alter the transmission infrastructure.

Revised plans call for an increase in the capabilities of three on-site substations across three areas — Sunnica West A, Sunnica East A and Sunnica East B — to allow



them to directly convert power from the PV panels to 400kV rather than 132kV.

Larger 400kV cables would then be buried underground, linking directly to the Burwell facility with no extension required at that facility. A shunt reactor at Sunnica East B would also be needed to enable the new set-up.

While the electrical configuration, arrangement and layout of the substations would be different, they would not be any larger than the dimensions detailed in the

original application, according to consultation documents.

The developers are also seeking to remove the option to extend the Burwell substation from planning application documents.

Following the consultation, Tribus and PS Renewables are expected to submit a request for the changes to be made to the Planning Inspectorate along with justifications on whether they will cause any materially different environmental effects.

Photo: Sunnica

IN BRIEF

■ KGAL has received approval for three large-scale solar PV projects in Italy's Lazio region and Sicily with a combined capacity of 380MW that will be grid-connected successively from the first quarter of 2024.

■ CarVal Investors has invested €100m in Svea Solar as it looks to develop and build 500MW of PV projects in Europe.

■ INVL Renewable Energy Fund 1 is investing around €120m to develop

166MW of solar projects it has acquired in Romania. The arrays are expected to go live in 2024.

■ German developer Moveon Energy has reached an agreement to sell the 650MW Witznitz solar project near Leipzig to investor Signal Iduna and its financial subsidiary Hansainvest Real Assets.

■ Ignitis Renewables is initiating the development of a 22MW solar farm in the Taurage region of Lithuania to be

sited next to a 10MW wind farm that has been operating 10 years.

■ EDF Renewables and environmental consultancy Nature Positive are seeking academic partners to deliver a programme of ecological research to understand the environmental benefits of solar arrays in England with studies initially focused on the proposed Longfield project.

Council in driving seat at 26MW Berkshire project

West Berkshire Council has filed to build a 26MW solar and battery storage project in the south of England.

More than 57,000 PV panels as well as 10 battery storage containers will be installed across a 30-hectare site, according to planning documents. The council owns the plot in Grazeley, around 6km south of Reading.

The authority said it is considering implementing its Community Municipal Investment scheme to allow the public to buy shares in the £12m project, which is set to have a 30-year life span.

Two options for an underground cable route have been proposed to

connect the site to SSE's overhead electricity network north of the Burghfield Atomic Weapons Establishment.

Mitigation proposals include the installation of bird and bat boxes, additional tree and hedgerow planting and the creation of new ponds.

A 10-metre buffer will also be implemented between the solar farm boundary and existing hedges and woodland to reduce impacts.

The council will invite tenders for the design and construction of the project once it secures the necessary planning consents, which it expects to receive in August 2022, with work anticipated to start around the end of 2023.

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Electrolyser supply chain the weak link

Supply chain bottlenecks are a “major concern” for the nascent green hydrogen sector.

Warner Priest, director of midstream energy at InterContinental Energy, told the Reuters Green Hydrogen 2022 conference in Amsterdam last week there are doubts about the capacities of manufacturers of key electrolyser equipment.

“Everyone is building large-scale gigawatt projects from 2026 and for me supply chain is the issue. I don’t

know if manufacturers are on board with scales and timeframes,” Priest said.

Australia-based InterContinental is developing four major renewable hydrogen/ammonia complexes, one each in Oman and Saudi Arabia and two in Australia.

They will collectively be capable of producing well over 10 million tonnes of hydrogen annually and will be powered by multi-gigawatt wind and solar installations.

These will start going into

construction and operation in parallel. “We almost need to be seeing factories go into production now so that the electrolyser manufacturers can meet demand,” he added.

CWP Global co-founder and chairman Alex Hewitt agreed, saying Europe’s strategic objective of producing 10 million tonnes per annum of green hydrogen domestically is “really five minutes away... (but) we are so far away from execution. Supply is going to be a bottleneck”.

Priest said localising electrolyser production is essential to the EU ensuring supply can meet demand without missing the 2030 target set out in the REPowerEU plan.

More gigafactories with higher levels of automation should be built in countries with big project pipelines.

“One way governments can help facilitate the industry is by providing support to industrial zones to serve the market in a country. When we are talking about many gigawatts of capacity that some countries are targeting, that should help attract equipment manufacturers.”

IN BRIEF

■ Masdar has signed implementation agreements with Azerbaijan’s Ministry of Energy to develop renewable energy projects in the country with a combined confirmed capacity of 4GW, including offshore wind integrated with green hydrogen.

■ Siemens Gamesa argues in a new white paper that a “drastic increase” in green hydrogen production through renewables is necessary for governments in Europe to achieve energy security, provide price stability for consumers and meet climate goals.

■ Brazilian developer Lisarb Energy is expanding into Europe with a target of 1GW of new projects by 2023, including green hydrogen.

EU will need Africa’s help to meet ‘massive’ 2030 target

EU ambitions to produce 20 million tonnes of green hydrogen a year by 2030 demand a “system-focused approach on a huge scale” that interconnects Europe and Africa, delegates were told.

Thierry Lepercq, president of industry platform HyDeal Ambition, said the two continents must be seen as one generation hub to deliver the goal.

He questioned where the REPowerEU plan’s green hydrogen is going to come from. The blueprint supersedes a previous goal of 40GW of electrolyser capacity and could require up to five times that.

“We need to think system and we need to think scale,” he told delegates.

Referencing the largest green hydrogen project on European soil, he said: “HyDeal Espana will get to 330,000 tonnes of hydrogen production, just 1% of the EU target.”

Lepercq said there is “no question” of the role that North African countries, including Morocco, Algeria, Egypt and Mauritania, can play in providing the EU with supplies of green hydrogen central to its decarbonisation agenda.

African governments are showing “a lot of energy” on the issue, he added.

Last month six countries — Kenya, South Africa, Namibia, Egypt, Morocco

and Mauritania — launched the Africa Green Hydrogen Alliance, aiming to make the continent a “frontrunner” in global efforts to develop the gas.

Gijs Postma, from the Netherlands Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate, said that from a Dutch perspective domestic production capacity should come from the North Sea but REPowerEU requires doubling of targets.

“We can’t get this all from offshore wind so we should import to hit ambitions,” he added.

Both Lepercq and Hydrogen Europe chief policy officer Daniel Fraile said high-level green hydrogen partnerships between EU and African governments, potentially in the form of memoranda of understanding, are expected to be announced at COP27 later this year with talks underway between Egypt and Greece.

In May the European Commission stated that a Mediterranean hydrogen corridor would be one of three made a priority to address infrastructure requirements to meet the 2030 import target.

Fraile added: “We might be importing a product but there is also the opportunity to export technology such as electrolysers and wind turbines to producing countries.”

Industry must take its social responsibilities into account

Investments in green hydrogen projects must meet UN sustainability goals to avoid the risk of developing and emerging markets being exploited, delegates heard.

Impact Hydrogen chief executive Nienke Homan (left) said: “Working on global hydrogen trade matters.

“We talk a lot about technology-related issues but to realise a stable, steady

hydrogen economy requires consideration of the social and economic dimension.” A solar development as part of a green hydrogen project, for example, should also be able to demonstrably benefit local communities, she said.

“How can you create structural funding for local small and medium enterprises so they can decarbonise their power needs?”

Another approach could be for projects producing ammonia also to generate feedstocks for fertilisers.



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Econergy spots rich pickings in Romania



Joint venture agreements grease wheels of developer's 2.1GW solar build-out, explains company chief executive **Eyal Podhorzer** (left)

UK-headquartered Israeli solar and storage business Econergy Renewable Energy is cutting the turf on a multi-gigawatt build-out of European projects this year, writes *Tom Goulding*.

Chief executive Eyal Podhorzer told reNEWS Romania is among the most exciting markets and the company has moved early to establish a 2.1GW development pipeline in the country.

"Most of the projects actually starting construction in 2022 are Romanian," he said. "The expected returns are very high because the projects are large so we managed to negotiate good engineering, procurement and construction prices, electricity prices are high and the radiation is good."

In November, Econergy and Nofar Energy each acquired 50% of the 155MW Ratesti project in the north-west from Portland Trust.

Podhorzer described Ratesti as "the first big project in the market". Construction of the €99m PV plant started in the first quarter with CHINT Solar and INTEC as joint EPC

contractors. Operations are expected to start in early 2023 and Econergy has committed around €25m to €30m of equity.

Podhorzer said the joint venture is currently negotiating merchant financing for the subsidy-free project with a large financial institution that will close in the coming months.

He added the deal will be the first "not only in Romania but the first in Europe outside of Spain".

Econergy walked away from negotiations with Romania's utilities on a power purchase agreement for Ratesti about six months ago after deciding locking in a price was "not worth" it, he continued.

"We would be better off connecting the project, enjoy another one or two years at merchant prices and then wait for the PPA market to mature."

Hot on the heels of Ratesti is the 90MW Parau array, which Econergy will start building this month in Braşov and grid connect in the second quarter of 2023.

Just under €15m of the PV plant's €59m capex cost will come from the company while

French fund manager RGreen Invest has taken a 50% equity stake as well as providing a mezzanine loan that allows the partners to accelerate construction.

"This will be replaced by project financing, one, two, three years down the road," Podhorzer said, adding that RGreen will likely look to sell its stake in seven or eight years as the fund reaches maturity.

"In the agreement... we have the option to buy the 50% and if not they can sell their half (on the market)."

Econergy will also start work on the 81MW Oradea array this summer, which has a similar operating date of the second quarter of 2023.

Phoenix Insurance, Israel's largest insurer, is providing 67% of the €54m capex via a loan that can be converted to 49% of the share capital upon commercial operations.

Phoenix's contribution is part of a wider €100m package to support Econergy's developments in Romania with four more projects due to start construction in late 2022 and early 2023: the 21MW Melinesti-Goesti, 22MW



MERCHANT MOVER: The 155MW Ratesti project is the first large-scale PV plant to be built in Romania

Photo: Econergy Renewable Energy

Bobicesti, 44MW Scurtu Mare and 38MW Iancu Jianu.

Econergy plans to place some or all of these projects in its Phoenix joint venture and retain a 51% shareholding on completion. "I can't tell you exactly what the cut-off is but we will complete the commitment from Phoenix by the end of

2022," said Podhorzer. Rivals are not sitting on their hands in Romania either. "There are quite a lot of investors already there at the moment, including Enel.

"We see already prices of development rising and prices of ready-to-build also rising, so it's becoming an interesting emerging market." ■

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Friends with benefits help drive European growth

Econergy's aims are no less lofty beyond Romania and there are still obvious advantages to teaming up in the short-term.

In Poland, the company is currently building the 50MW Resko PV plant with Phoenix's funding, with the latter eligible for a 49% stake upon completion, while in Italy Econergy is the minority partner in a joint venture with UBS to build 450MW of solar.

In Greece, too, Econergy has taken 49% in two earlier-stage projects totalling

460MW it intends to co-develop with Terna Energy.

The company is also about to begin building two storage projects in the UK, the 50MW Swangate and 80MW Immingham, part of a wider 1.3GW pipeline of standalone and co-located battery and solar facilities.

Econergy intends to take on-board a 50% partner "similar in stature to both RGreen and Phoenix" in the next three months for the battery duo, according to chief executive Eyal

Podhorzer. Under some of its joint venture agreements, Econergy also charges its new partners development, EPC management and asset management fees, another plus for the whole collaboration model.

"All these JVs have the same idea behind them, to reduce the large equity needs of Econergy in the short-term... and then also leverage on the fact we take the partner in order to create additional sources of income," Podhorzer added. ■

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Missing voices on Irish offshore wind taskforce

The Irish government recently approved a proposal to establish a cross-departmental delivery taskforce for offshore wind to achieve the country's 5GW by 2030 installed capacity target, which many in the sector feel is unachievable without a serious injection of urgency into policymaking.

However, membership must be opened up to industry representation if Dublin is to have any hope of unblocking the various policy issues on grid, planning, route to market and supply chain slowing the deployment of the first large-scale projects.

Industry representatives and developers yesterday called for a seat on the panel. Speaking at a session of the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Enterprise, Trade and Employment, trade body Wind Energy Ireland chief executive Noel Cunniffe noted the taskforce "does not have industry representation at the moment". He was supported at the hearing by WEI director of external affairs Justin Moran, Inis offshore wind head Vanessa O'Connell and Green Rebel chief Kieran Ivers.

"We don't know what topics they're covering,"

Cunniffe said, adding that while it is not appropriate for the industry to be at every table "we certainly believe we should be at many of them".

One of the areas that should be addressed by the taskforce is the need for more strategic investment in port infrastructure, required to support construction in the Irish Sea. The only available location, Belfast Harbour, cannot support all 5GW of projects needed to reach the 2030 goal, the session heard.

The speakers cited "enormous potential" of Shannon Foynes both as a deep-water construction base and where green hydrogen from offshore power could be produced, as well as Cork where there is already a "critical mass of companies".

Cunniffe said: "What we believe we can bring to the table is the experience that many of our members are bringing back to Ireland having spent years in other jurisdictions developing offshore wind energy."

Dublin has no track record in offshore wind. It should open the door to those with the know-how.

Network charging tunnel vision

Scottish Renewables is right to brand new Ofgem proposals to review Transmission Network Use of System (TNUoS) charges "too narrow" in scope, warning they risk sidelining green energy generators.

The industry group has written to the UK energy regulator calling for a recently launched taskforce, which many hoped would finally deal with the long-running bugbear, to have a tighter focus on net-zero targets and better representation from the renewables sector. The five to seven-year timescale proposed for the review is "unacceptable", SR added, with market distortions caused by the charging regime "already affecting investor confidence, particularly in Scotland".

Meanwhile, the longer-term role of TNUoS in a decentralised energy system is excluded from the taskforce's remit. This is at odds with the renewable

industry's need to deliver government targets of 50GW of offshore wind in the UK and 8GW to 12GW of onshore wind in Scotland by 2030.

Frustration is growing among clean power producers, particularly north of the border, over "high and unpredictable" network charges that create "a significant barrier" to renewables deployment, SR added. In recent months backers of some wind projects off Scotland bidding into the current Contracts for Difference allocation round have received new estimates that add millions to their budgets.

The trade group's policy manager Angeles Sandoval said: "Action on network charging is imperative if we are to build enough renewable energy generation to meet net zero, and efforts to address TNUoS are overdue so it is important that the taskforce is established correctly."

IN THE FRAME



RUNNING RINGS: Component deliveries for the 14 Nordex N149/4.0-4.5 turbines to feature at Ignitis Renewables' 63MW Mazeikiai wind farm in north-west Lithuania are underway by road from the port of Klaipeda. Installation is to start this month and wrap up by the year-end.

Photo: Ignitis Renewables

Environmental nod for major Taiwan Round 3 contenders

Project developers Orsted, Copenhagen Infrastructure Partners and Swancor have secured key environmental approvals for four wind farms off Taiwan, clearing more than 5GW of capacity for the Asian island's upcoming Round 3 auction.

Orsted has obtained recommendations of approval from the Environmental Impact Review committee for the 750MW Xufeng 2 and

750MW Xufeng 3 projects off Changhua County.

The two sites cover 83.5 and 73 square kilometres, respectively, and are located 50.3km and 38.8km off the coast.

Orsted is proposing to install turbines of 11MW to 16MW at the wind farms and deploy suction bucket jacket foundations.

CIP has meanwhile got the environmental nod for the

Fengmiao A project, which could be 2.5GW-plus.

The Danish investor is proposing up to 187 turbines rated at between 9MW and 20MW. Fengmiao A, about 35km off Taichung, spans 256.87 square kilometres and is also the largest set to be bid into Round 3.

Swancor, along with its partners in the Taiwan Team consortium, has approval for the 1.1GW Formosa 4, which

is located 20km off Tong Xiao township, Miaoli County.

The Taiwan auction is scheduled to take place later this year.

■ Copenhagen Infrastructure Partners has sold a 10% stake in its planned 2.2GW Star of the South wind farm off the south coast of Gippsland in Victoria, Australia, to local superannuation fund Cbus Super.

Monopiles going in for Shenquan 2

State Power Investment Corporation has kicked off work on the water at its 500MW Shenquan 2 wind farm off Jieyang city in Guangdong province.

Chinese contractor Longyuan Zhenhua has mobilised heavylift vessel Huaxi 5000 to install the foundations for the first batch of 11MW turbines.

The 112-metres-long monopiles have diameters of 10.5 metres and weigh up to 2427 tonnes each.

Longyuan Zhenhua was contracted to work on 25 of the project's foundations. In total, Shenquan 2 will feature 16 8MW turbines and 34 11MW machines.

The project is expected to produce first power before the end of this year.

Turbine chase for 300MW Cangnan 2

China Huaneng Group has gone to market for a turbine supply deal for its 300MW Cangnan 2 wind farm off Zhejiang province. The developer is seeking a mix of sub-8MW and 8MW-plus units.

The contract will cover the supply of towers and five years of maintenance for the equipment. The turbines are to be delivered in two batches by the end of this September and the end of next March.

The project is located 23km offshore in an area covering 44.2 square kilometres with water depths ranging from 20 to 29 metres.

■ China's government-owned Shandong Marine Group has ordered a new installation jack-up from Nantong-based Wison Heavy Industries. The ship will be capable of handling 16MW turbines in up to 70 metres of water.



NAILED IT: Heerema Marine Contractors heavylift vessel Aegir (above) has completed installation of more than two-thirds of foundation pin-piles at Orsted's 605MW Greater Changhua 1 wind farm off Taiwan. The Dutch contractor has put in place 222 of the 333 tubulars earmarked for the project. The pin-piles, which are 80 to 90 metres long and weigh up to 400 tonnes, were delivered by Taiwanese manufacturers Century Wind Power Company, Formosa Heavy Industries and CSBC.

Photo: Heerema

Builder PowerChina raising cash for Vietnam job

Shanghai-listed PowerChina plans to raise fresh equity to fund execution of an engineering, procurement and construction contract at the 350MW Ca Mau wind farm off Vietnam.

The infrastructure construction group has sought regulatory approval

for a private placement of A shares on the Shanghai exchange to raise more than 2.5bn yuan, according to a public disclosure. The EPC contract will draw 1.5bn yuan of the raised proceeds with another 1bn yuan earmarked for fleet acquisition.

PowerChina subsidiary

Sinohydro Group was awarded the job by developer WTO last year. Construction will be carried out in stages with the first phase to be completed in 15 months and the second in 24 months.

■ MingYang Smart Energy's first MySE 12MW hybrid drive

offshore turbine has rolled off the production line at its manufacturing base at Shanwei in Guangdong, China.

The 12MW model is an upgrade of the manufacturer's 11MW platform and is designed for "safe and reliable performance in extreme wind conditions".

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