

A2. BACKGROUND

A2.1 INTRODUCTION

This Addendum chapter presents developments in the climate change context since production of the Viking Windfarm ES in May 2009. The corresponding ES chapter presented the rationale for the proposed wind farm development by describing the climate change context and alternative technologies which were considered. Please read this chapter in conjunction with Chapter 2 of the 2009 ES.

It is very important to read Chapter A1, the Introduction to this ES Addendum, before reading this Chapter A4. Chapter A1 describes the background to the changes, the philosophy and approach which guided them, and the extensive (and continuing) consultations with stakeholders which inform the changes.

A2.2 UPDATES TO ES SECTION 2.3: RENEWABLE ENERGY POLICY

A2.2.1 Renewable Energy Policy - Background & Global Targets

Section 2.3.1 of the 2009 ES discussed key international conventions and CO₂ emission reduction commitments. Since publication of the ES the United Nations Climate Change Conference has been held in Copenhagen. The outcome of the conference was the Copenhagen Accord of December 18th 2009. The Copenhagen Accord recognised the scientific case for keeping global temperature rise below 2°C but did not set binding international targets for achieving this aim. Consequently there has been no change in international policy of relevance to the Viking Windfarm Section 36 application.

A2.2.2 Evolving European Policy

Section 2.3.2 of the 2009 ES discussed obligations and targets placed upon the UK Government as a result of the draft EC Renewable Energy Directive. The draft Directive has been enacted as Directive 2009/28/EC, the EC Renewable Energy Directive, adopted by the European Council on 23rd April 2009. The Renewable Energy Directive maintains UK targets set out in the draft and reported in the original ES. As a result, the adopted version of the Renewables Directive does not affect the Viking Windfarm Section 36 application.

A2.2.3 Renewables Obligation

Section 2.3.4 of the 2009 ES summarised legal implications of the Renewables Obligation for licensed electricity suppliers, including SSE, and stated a 'buy out' fee of 3.324p/kWh. The Renewables Obligation was presented as a relevant material consideration in determining the Section 36 application.

Since publication of the 2009 ES, changes have been made to the Renewables Obligation legislative framework in the UK and Scotland. The UK Energy Act 2008 strengthened the Renewables Obligation to increase the diversity of the UK's energy mix and, through Section 37, altered devolved powers to the Scottish Ministers for making Renewable Obligation Orders in relation to electricity suppliers servicing Scotland. In March 2009 the Scottish Government passed the Renewables Obligation (Scotland) Order 2009, which raised the buy out price for Scottish Renewable Obligation Certificates (SROCs). Changes to the Renewable Obligation (Scotland) Order 2009, to bring it into line with wider UK adjustments, underwent consultation in August 2009. As a result it is likely that 2010 adjustments will include removal of the 20 ROC/100 MWh renewable electricity limit.

The change to the legislative regime, while making the 'buy out' fee presented in the original ES obsolete, has strengthened the general renewable obligation on electricity suppliers operating in Scotland thus further incentivising electricity generation from renewable sources. The Viking Windfarm therefore remains subject to legal responsibilities under the Renewables Obligation as outlined in the original ES and is more in accordance with that obligation than previously reported.

A2.2.4 Consultation for a Renewable Energy Strategy (June 2008)

Section 2.3.5 of the 2009 ES detailed information contained within the consultation document for the UK Renewable Energy Strategy relevant to onshore wind and renewable energy targets. The finalised UK Renewable Energy Strategy was published in July 2009.

Onshore Wind retains a significant role within the mix of renewable technologies as part of the lead scenario in delivering the UK Renewable Energy Strategy, which outlines a target of 'around 30%' renewable electricity by 2020 to be delivered through alterations to the Renewables Obligation regime. The Strategy provides for continued support for large scale, centralised renewable energy generation; and investment in, and better management of, the grid to facilitate ease of renewable connection.

The Renewable Energy Strategy is linked to objectives set out in the UK Low Carbon Transition Plan White Paper of July 2009. The White Paper was published pursuant to sections 12 and 14 of the Climate Change Act 2008 and sets out the Government's five point plan to tackle climate change. The five points are:

- Protecting the public from immediate risk;
- Preparing for the future;
- Limiting the severity of future climate change through a new international climate change agreement;
- Building a low carbon UK; and
- Supporting individuals, communities and businesses to play their part.

The white paper confirms that onshore and offshore wind is likely to provide much of the UKs renewable generation by 2020. Due to the intermittency of the output however it will need to be supported by biomass and coal/biomass generation to ensure security of supply.

Targets and aims of the finalised Renewable Energy Strategy remain in accordance with the tone of the consultation document and the Viking Windfarm continues to assist in the delivery of the strategy as stated in the original ES.

A2.3 UPDATES TO ES SECTION 2.4: SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT POLICY

A2.3.1 Renewable Energy Generation Targets

Section 2.4.1 of the 2009 ES provided a history of renewable energy targets set by the Scottish Executive and Scottish Government. The most up to date figures available at the time of publishing were taken from the Scottish Government Spending Review and Scottish Climate Change Bill, which targeted 50% of electricity generated in Scotland to come from renewable sources by 2020, and Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) 6 which documented a target of 40%.

The Scottish Climate Change Bill has been enacted as the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 and SPP6 was replaced in 2010 by the consolidated Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) document. A Climate Change Delivery Plan (CCDP) and Renewables Action Plan (RAP) were also introduced by the Scottish Government in June 2009 as delivery mechanisms for the 2009 Act.

The Climate Change (Scotland) Act does not contain specific targets for renewable electricity generation but does confirm the 2050 reduction target for greenhouse gas emissions of 80% from the 1990 baseline, and an interim target of 42% to be achieved by 2020. The interim target was confirmed in secondary legislation passed in April 2010. The target of 50% electricity generation from renewable sources by 2020 is however carried forwards within paragraph 181 of the consolidated SPP.

The CCDP and RAP provide the most comprehensive guide to current targets, which include:

- 20% of total Scottish energy use coming from renewables sources by 2020; and
- 50% of gross electricity consumption from renewable sources by 2020, with an interim target of 31% by 2011.

The CCDP and RAP acknowledge the 2011 interim target will be achieved primarily through continuing development of Scotland's onshore wind resource.

Following publication of the CCDP and RAP it is considered the Viking Wind Farm application is more in accordance with Scottish Government policy than stated in the 2009 ES; or, to put it the other way, Scottish Government policy has moved to reinforce support for development of renewable energy generation projects such as the Viking Wind Farm.