

BY EMAIL

30th May 2019

Mr James Norman,
Head of New Transmission Investment,
Ofgem,
Glasgow.

Dear Mr Norman,

Shetland Transmission Link Consultation.

I wish to reply to your consultation on a possible HDVC link to Shetland.

This cable is to feed supply to the mainland for projects that have not been built yet. The developers are hoping to get the permission for this cable in place to lever further windfarms which will dwarf the landscape and be to the detriment of people living here. It will also be very costly to consumers ultimately as its costs will be passed on to us, when I believe it should be borne by those who will ultimately profit from its operation (if their business plans are sound enough to warrant investment). To say that after 25 years consumers will benefit from savings, even though they have paid out for the costs during that time seems unfair and not Ofgem protecting consumer interests.

The cable will need to be so long and expensive there are for better and more innovative/cost effective solutions that will not result in costs to consumers who are already paying the price of infrastructure that is efficient. I believe there is also surplus cabling already in place (Moray Furth) that would be better used to capacity to justify its costs. When you look at the costs it does not make sense to spend £710m (or force consumers to pay for) a project when this money would be better served shoring up existing infrastructure on the mainland and going some way to actually reduce the burden on consumers.

There are still lots of smaller barriers that Viking/Mossy Hill/Beaw in Yell (which would need another cable in addition) and others who have already got permissions for wind farms are still seeking – this doesn't make sense as for the amount of money they have had so far to get their business plans made one would have thought that they would need to have covered everything in their costings. They are still looking at the roads for example that need to be strengthened to even start constructing their sites. And this cable if it was so necessary should have been a major consideration to them from the start, not an afterthought that they are trying to get others to pay for.

The infrastructure itself is highly contentious and has been for a number of years now, so to ask those in strong opposition to it now further fund it is galling.

We are so far away from the mainland that it seems futile to let the cable come here to provide higher price electricity (borne by the consumers) than to other generating sites much nearer to the mainland. There are also potential environmental impacts to ocean life from having such a cable on the sea bed and its maintenance. We are said to have much more wind in Shetland, we may do but it is very intermittent I don't feel it warrants the extra cost to transmit from here to the mainland when something more self-sufficient and contained would be more cost effective and still secure supply using what we already have. A new power station at the gas plant for back up, the existing Burradale windfarm (the first leveraging part of the Viking Energy/Shet-T/SSE/SIC group who are naturally pushing for their proposals) and smaller suitable scaled projects to feed in that would benefit communities and not a few individuals who are pushing for this cable.

Usually wind farms are proposed on areas of deep peat and anyone with any sense could not condone this.

I am very worried about the impact on the landscape and the further impacts on the environment through peat removal and damage. There are also issues with a lot of the turbines and services, including the

cable and associated infrastructure, being too near residential areas and breaching government guidelines.

Pearland has been found to be just as critical as rainforest to sinking carbon emissions – you wouldn't advocate tearing down rainforest for a similar development? The concrete plinths underneath require to be massive yet when they reach their end of life in 25 years projected there is no guarantee that this will be removed or cleared up effectively. Companies are known to voluntarily liquidate to avoid paying for their clean up costs.

I do hope Ofgem remains on the side of the consumer in this instance as its remit suggests. The companies behind this are ultimately the only ones who would benefit from this and they have the might to make all the noise currently. Please hear the whisper of a lone consumer already living in fuel poverty along with many others.

Yours sincerely

