17th June 2020

James Norman,
Head of New Transmission Investment,
Ofgem.

Dear Mr Norman,

**Shetland Transmission Link Consultation - (2)**

I wish to respond to the Ofgem consultation on a possible HVDC link to Shetland.

Primarily I am concerned that being so far away from the mainland the cost passed onto consumers will be unacceptable. This is a class issue and with the problems that the whole economy is now facing with the aftermath of Covid 19 and the added instability of Brexit, the worse off in the UK are now going to be harder hit with increased fuel poverty rates.

Secondarily the windfarm that will be using this HVDC cable seeks to be built on peatland – this project has been hanging over us for over fifteen years and we all now know that digging up peatlands is as bad a chopping down rainforests and therefore should not be done. At the least the carbon calculations for this scheme should be looked at again with the benefit of a decades worth of research into carbon calculations.

I note there are specific questions for your consultations to which I would reply as follows:

Question 1:
The huge infrastructure changes required for the windfarms will further exacerbate costs that the consumer will ultimately bear. This will include roads, quarries, bridges and further sub-sea cables. Island developers have already had to provide satellite services where tv reception has been obliterated by turbines and the amount of turbines needed to make the use of the proposed cable will mean a high proportion of homes will be built less than a kilometre from them. Only one operator has had ground investigation work done and the results of this have not been publicised as to how much peat damage they will cause during construction.

Question 2: The Oil terminal's future is still in doubt as they were due to announce in December their future plans but have not done so yet. This doesn't show commitment on their part towards using renewables as they are profit driven and shareholder led.

Question 3: Do we really need this link for the costs that it will pass on to consumers – no – we are too far away, there is the security of the cable to be thought of too. Our internet cable has suffered before and took days to mend. Far better to build a less costly and more independent solution suited for the islands. There are proposals for these (such as LNG) but they get overlooked politically with all the emphasis on the windfarm development and its alleged benefits. We could be a self sufficient example for other island groups, without the cable expense and the new power station that will require to be built additionally for the still days when there is no wind.

A second link would be just as costly for the same reasons.

Question 4: There are too many cost, practical and security issues as well as how this proposal affects the marine spatial plan and our immediate surrounding environment.

Question 5: *What are your views on the CBA put forward by the ESO?*

This was too redacted to make much sense of and didn't look at anything apart from a cable. We have a proposed cost for an LNG terminal of around £60million with minimal disturbance to the existing local grid. In 2014 Ofgem turned down a new Lerwick power station in Lerwick as the £200m cost was too expensive for consumers yet now the proposed spend of over a billion pounds seems ok. How can that be so?

Question 6: *What are your views on other approaches we have taken to assess the costs and benefits to GB consumers?*
I wish more thought on why transmitting power for hundreds of miles when it can be created nearer where it is being used could ever be a cost effective solution. We will still need back up for when the wind isn't blowing. More costs is when the operators still get paid when they are not producing – all costs to the consumer. The industry should be able to stand on its own by now and not charge for its own expansion when it likes using its customers, the majority of whom face fuel poverty in the extreme.

Question 7:
I Please don't! It is costly , insecure and not the best solution for the islands or the UK as a whole.

*ii)* Ironically SSE have announced today that they will fund the project. Nice to know they are sitting on such funds yet will charge us for them doing so anyway. You would have thought that having had ten yers to do so if it iwere such a great idea to build a windfarm here there would have been investors lining up to fund it – not one of the partners the night before your decision.

*iii)* No – its still going to costs too much for what it may generate.

*iv)* I think I have made my objections on cost, security, unnecessary project, its divided the community, its been going for a decade and is still to produce investment beyond doubt , it isn't a green scheme because of the peatland construction and wont be carbon offsetting which is the whole point of green energy.

Question 8: Do you agree with the findings of our analysis? I feel it hasn't covered all the options, only those that involve a connector.

Question 9: Alternatives to the connector should be considered to ensure best value for consumers.

Yours sincerely
By Email