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27th August 2020

C/O Laurie Winter
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Dear Stephen

STRATHY SOUTH WIND FARM VARIATION

THE ELECTRICITY GENERATING STATIONS (APPLICATIONS FOR VARIATION OF CONSENT) (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2013 APPLICATION FOR VARIATION UNDER SECTION 36C OF THE ELECTRICITY ACT 1989 AND DIRECTION FOR DEEMED PLANNING PERMISSION UNDER SECTION 57(2) OF THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997 OF THE SECTION 36 CONSENT TO CONSTRUCT AND OPERATE STRATHY SOUTH WIND FARM, IN THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL PLANNING AUTHORITY AREA.

SSE Generation Limited (“the Applicant”) seeks a variation under Section 36C of the Electricity Act 1989 and the Electricity Generating Stations (Applications for Variation of Consent) (Scotland) Regulations 2013 to the Description of Development provided in Annex 1 of the Section 36 Consent for the proposed Strathy South wind farm, together with a direction under Section 57 (2) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997. In addition to seeking a variation to the Annex 1 Description of Development, the Applicant seeks variations to certain of the conditions contained in Annex 2 of the current Section 36 Consent and updated conditions to the requested grant of deemed planning permission to reflect the changes to the Description of the Development, and to update the current conditions. This application under Section 36C and Section 57(2) is hereinafter referred to as the “Variation Application”.

The proposed changes to the Annex 1 Description of Development in the current Section 36 Consent are principally: an increase in the maximum tip height from 135m to 200m; an increase in the indicative rotor diameter from 104m to 162m; and some changes to associated infrastructure. The Proposed Varied Development would increase the MW capacity from 133MW to 208MW. The proposed changes are described in full in chapter 2 (Description of Development) in the Environmental Impact Assessment Report which accompanies this Variation Application. The consented Strathy South wind farm as varied by the proposed variations comprises the “Proposed Varied Development”. It is important to note that there are no changes proposed to the turbine layout of the consented Strathy South wind farm, and changes to associated infrastructure has been minimised. A draft of the proposed variations to

the Section 36 consent is provided in Appendix 1 to this Variation Application, shown as tracked changes to the Description of Development and conditions.

The location of the Proposed Varied Development in Caithness and Sutherland, Scotland is identified and enclosed in Figure 1.1 (Site Location) and Figure 2.1 (Proposed Varied Development), which illustrates there is no change to the turbine layout of the Proposed Varied Development when compared to the current consented scheme.

A copy of the Variation Application will be served on the Highland Council in accordance with Regulation 4(2)(b) of the Electricity Generating Stations (Applications for Variation of Consent) (Scotland) Regulations 2013, as amended (“the 2013 Regulations”).

The current Section 36 consent and deemed planning permission for the construction and operation of Strathy South wind farm were granted in terms of the decision letter issued by the Scottish Ministers dated 27 April 2018. In accordance with the requirement of Regulation 3(1)(d)(iii), copies of the relevant decision letters from the Scottish Ministers are attached as Appendix 2 to this Variation Application.

In accordance with Regulation 3(1) (c) the reasons for seeking a variation to the current Section 36 consent are stated in Chapter 1 of the EIA Report that accompanies this Variation Application and are summarised below:

- The increase in tip height and rotor diameter would substantially increase the energy production and associated carbon dioxide emissions reduction from the Proposed Varied Development. Consequently, the Proposed Varied Development would make an even greater contribution to the achievement of the UK and Scottish Government ‘whole system’ targets to decarbonise energy consumption by increasing the zero-carbon energy yield by 62%
- The aim of the proposed variations is to increase the energy generation potential and efficiency of the site in order to allow for the wind farm to operate in the absence of subsidies.

The Applicant is also seeking a direction under Section 57(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (“the 1997 Act”) that planning permission is deemed to be granted in respect of the Proposed Varied Development. It is proposed that the direction under Section 57(2) would be subject to planning conditions in respect of which the Applicant seeks changes to certain of the conditions set out in Part 2 of Annex 2 to the current Section 36 consent. These separate revised conditions proposed for the deemed planning permission are proposed in order to take account of: (i) the variations to the Description of Development, (ii) updated environmental information contained in the Environmental Impact Assessment Report prepared under the Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 (“the 2017 EIA Regulations”), (iii) Revised cross-references to the EIA Report as opposed to references to the ES or ES

Addendum; (iv) current and up-to-date practice and guidance relevant to planning conditions; and (v) consultation responses on the EIA Report. A draft of the proposed Section 57(2) direction is provided in Appendix 1, together with a list of those planning conditions contained in Part 2 of Annex 2 of the current Section 36 consent that it is proposed should be revised and updated.

In accordance with Regulation 5(5) of the 2017 EIA Regulations, by appointing Ramboll to coordinate the EIA Report for the Proposed Varied Development the Applicant has ensured that the EIA Report has been prepared by competent experts. The 2020 EIA Report has been compiled and approved by professional EIA practitioners at Ramboll, holding relevant undergraduate and post-graduate degrees, full membership of IEMA (MIEMA) and Chartered Environmentalist (CEnv) status with the Society for the Environment. The EIA Report meets the requirements of the Institute of Environmental Management (IEMA) EIA Quality Mark Scheme. This is a voluntary scheme operated by IEMA that allows organisations to make a commitment to excellence in EIA and to have this commitment independently reviewed on an annual basis. In addition, the Applicant confirms that each of the impact assessment chapters has been prepared by a competent expert, with the chapter providing details of the relevant professional memberships of the authors and any applicable code of practice followed.

The documentation submitted with this application includes:

- EIA Report (comprising 5 volumes)
- Pre-Application Consultation Report
- Design and Access Statement
- Planning Statement: and
- This application letter, together with a draft of the proposed variations to the current Section 36 consent, along with a draft of the proposed Section 57 direction.

This Variation Application and EIA Report will be advertised in accordance with The Electricity Generating Stations (Application for Variation of Consent) (Scotland) Regulations 2013 and the EIA Regulations, as follows:

- The Herald
- The Northern Times
- The Edinburgh gazette: and
- The application website.

A copy of the agreed advert is enclosed with this letter (Appendix 5).

The EIA Report and associated documents will not currently be available for public viewing in hard copy in line with the Electricity Works (Miscellaneous Temporary Modifications) (Coronavirus) (Scotland) Regulations 2020. The Applicant will seek to make the EIA Report and

associated documents available to the public when it is deemed safe to do so. These documents will be available on the application website:

<https://www.sserenewables.com/onshore-wind/in-development/strathy-south/>

On the basis of the information provided in the supporting documents that are lodged in support of this application and having regards to the additional information provided in this application letter to meet the requirements of Regulation 3 of the 2013 Regulations, the Applicant requests that the Scottish Ministers grants the Variation Application and makes the proposed variations to the current Section 36 consent and makes a new direction under Section 57(2) of the 1997 Act granting deemed planning permission for the Proposed Varied Development, subject to the proposed planning conditions.

Yours Sincerely,

Laurie Winter
Consent Manager

cc.
The Highland Council

Enclosed:

Appendix 1: Draft Variations to the Current Section 36 Consent and Draft Proposed Section 57 Direction

Appendix 2: Particulars of the Current Section 36 Consent

Appendix 3: Maps to be referenced in the Section 36 Consent as varied: and

Appendix 4: Advert