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Wind

Green light for 'next generation' 1.2GW East Anglia offshore wind farm



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The 1.2GW East Anglia project could be in operation by 2025

Greg Clark grants planning consent for ScottishPower Renewables to install 172 'next generation' wind turbines off the coast of Norfolk

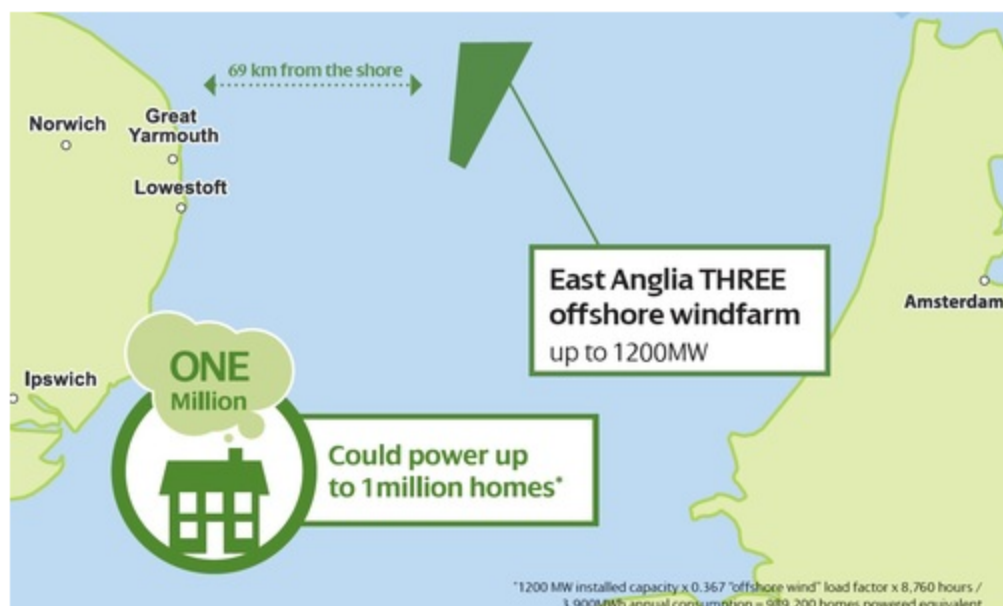
Business and Energy Secretary Greg Clark has given the green light for ScottishPower Renewables to develop a 1.2GW offshore wind project 46 miles off the coast of East Anglia that will use ultra-efficient 'next generation' turbines.

The company announced today it has been given planning consent for its East Anglia THREE offshore wind project, which will encompass 172 turbines covering an area of up to 305 square kilometres in the English Channel.

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The proposed turbines are designed to be more efficient by capturing stronger wind speeds higher in the sky, with each turbine scaling 247 metres in height - or around two and a half times the size of Big Ben.



At full capacity the project could produce enough electricity to meet the demands of almost one million UK homes, said the company's CEO Keith Anderson.

"In a little over a decade, our sector has delivered substantial amounts of green electricity for the UK, supported billions of pounds of UK investment and created thousands of high quality jobs," said Anderson. "With the support of a highly-skilled supply chain, East Anglia THREE will further enhance the UK's leading position in offshore wind."

In order to construct the wind farm, ScottishPower Renewables said it would also need to deliver up to four offshore collector stations; two offshore converter station platforms; an offshore platform for housing accommodation; an onshore transformer substation at Bramford in Suffolk; and various subsea export and interconnector cables.

The announcement was welcomed by environment minister Therese Coffey, who is the MP for the nearby Suffolk Coastal constituency.



If successful in future Contracts for Difference auctions, ScottishPower Renewables said the project would begin construction around 2022, with the wind farm up and running by 2025.

Will Apps, head of energy development at The Crown Estate - which manages around half of the UK's sea area - said the UK now had a development pipeline of more than 11GW of consented offshore wind capacity.

"This is in addition to the projects that are already built or are on track to supply 10 per cent of the UK's electricity demand by 2020," he explained. "The offshore wind industry continues to deliver as a large-scale, affordable and reliable choice for UK power generation."

The wind farm will be located close to ScottishPower Renewables' 714MW ONE offshore wind project, which is set to be fully operational in 2020. In total, the company is developing four offshore wind farms in the area with a combined capacity of 3.5GW.

RenewableUK's executive director, Emma Pinchbeck, welcomed yesterday's announcement as a vote of confidence in the UK's "world-leading" offshore wind sector. "This huge clean energy project is a great example of how offshore wind can enable the government's Industrial Strategy," said Pinchbeck. "The project is expected to create thousands of skilled jobs throughout its 30-year lifetime. Not only will the wind farm use the latest, innovative turbines, but it will also provide a massive boost for local businesses to grow."

The news comes ahead of the expected announcement this autumn of the results of the latest round of clean energy contract auctions for offshore wind projects.

The auction is widely tipped to deliver a host of highly competitive projects that are expected to comfortably exceed the government's target of offshore wind farms delivering power at less than £100/MWh.

Some industry insiders have said rapid improvements in turbine technology and project management should enable low bids that significantly undercut the level of support offered to new nuclear projects.



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