

25 November 2003 Viking Energy Ltd

## **Shetland seeks to become the UK's Renewable Powerhouse**

### **Plans for Community Controlled Mega Project Unveiled**

Renewable energy and, more specifically, onshore wind farms are topics which seem to attract heated debate, conflicting opinions and, in many cases, vociferous opposition from surrounding communities.

Shetland Islands Council, on a day when Shetland celebrates hosting Europe's largest oil terminal for the past 25 years, unveiled plans for the project which turns the existing wind farm on its head.

This is a project which will be controlled by the Shetland community and whose sole aim is to replicate and enhance the prosperity which north sea oil gas have brought to the islands over the last 25 years.

The aim is to create a 300Mw wind farm through a locally controlled company, called Viking Energy Ltd. to be developed in a location close to the already publicised 250Mw wind farm being planned by Scottish & Southern Energy.

Shetland is a community used to large-scale developments, not least the Sullom Voe Oil Terminal. Over the years we have learned to trade-off any potential down points against the firm knowledge that developments are conducted in a way which provides long lasting prosperity and well being in our community. The ZCC Act and the agreements reached between the oil industry and the local Council set the benchmark for future developments on a similar scale. Viking Energy Ltd. is a project launched in the spirit of these historic agreements and which seeks to harness our local wind resource for local benefit.

Shetland has a world-class wind resource. The capacity/load factor figures for the Burradale wind farm outside Lerwick, at 51%+, are of world significance and bear testament to this fact.

To exploit our resource we need a connection to the UK Mainland. To get that connection we need projects on a scale which justifies the massive investment in a cable. In conjunction with the SSE project we aim to provide that justification.

Work has been going on behind the scenes for a considerable number of months to bring this project to the stage where it can be announced today. Our huge potential as a future centre for wind, wave and tidal power has been brought into sharp focus once again at today's energy conference, which marks our 25 years association with Sullom Voe. Onshore wind is the first step in realising this and will provide resources to devote to the long-term vision we have for wave and tide. The conference has also publicly pinpointed the process through which an interconnector to Shetland can be achieved in 2008-2009.

The interests of the Shetland public as a whole are paramount in the Council's priorities in taking this project forward. The project will be taken forward with full public consultation, with full environmental awareness and will strive at all times to address any concerns which the community may have. Our environmental track record at Sullom Voe has been second to none.

Shetland Islands Council's Convener said: "Shetland has been the UK's powerhouse for the last 25 years. We aim to do the same job through renewable energy over the next 25 years. We've suffered many economic shocks in recent months, not least in our all important whitefish industry. We want to help the UK meet its renewables targets, and its strategic energy policy targets, but in a way which protects our way of life and economic self-interest. I'm therefore delighted to be able to announce this project today".