



ENERGY BUSINESS NEWS

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FAIR HEAD TIDAL GOES AHEAD WITH PLANNING SUBMISSION

Planning application lodged for 100MW marine tidal scheme capable of powering 70,000 homes.

The renewable energy firm behind proposals to install a 100MW tidal generation scheme off the County Antrim coastline has lodged a planning application for permission to install tidal turbines on the seabed and associated infrastructure to bring the power ashore.

The Environmental Statement supporting the application contains details on the different types of tidal turbine technologies being considered for the site together with findings from the surveys undertaken and environmental impact assessments. The application follows an extensive period of consultation including two rounds of public information days.

Clodagh McGrath, Project Manager of Fair Head Tidal, says the local population reacted positively to the open days and we look forward to receiving further feedback now our application has been lodged.

“We initially engaged with the local communities of Ballycastle, Rathlin and the broader north coast in May 2014 outlining our development approach and plans for an extensive programme of site surveys. We returned in August last year to share further details including the findings from the surveys. Consultation with local communities is a valued part of our development process and will continue going forward.” says Ms McGrath.

The project is the second of two tidal schemes off the North Antrim coast to have secured agreement from The Crown Estate for the development of large scale tidal energy projects offering a clean and predictable power source.

It is intended that the Fair Head Tidal project would be developed in two stages, says Ms McGrath.

“The first stage would be to install an array of perhaps four to six turbines,” she says. “The second stage would be more substantial, completing the scheme’s 100MW output, which we calculate would supply enough energy to power some 70,000 homes.”

The project brings opportunities for local employment and skills training, and the planning application includes a specific section covering the potential socio-economic benefits which could arise if the scheme is built. Nationally, at a Northern Ireland level, it is estimated that some 340 temporary jobs would be created during construction of the full 100MW development, followed by some 75 permanent jobs during the operational phase, lasting up to 25 years.

DP Energy is developing similar schemes off the east coast of Canada, and off Orkney and Islay, Scotland.

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