

Work on schedule at Fife's first commercial wind farm

by Craig Smith

DEVELOPERS behind Fife's first commercial wind farm project say they are "on track" to deliver the scheme as planned.

Kennedy Renewables has announced that work on the Little Raith wind farm near Lochgelly successfully started on site at the start of August and should be up and running within a year and a half.

The nine-turbine project is expected to have an installed capacity of 24.75 megawatts of green energy, enough to supply power to 14,500 homes — the equivalent of powering all homes in Cowdenbeath, Lochgelly, Lumphinnans, Auchtertool, Kelty and Ballingry with energy for a year.

It has therefore been hailed by Stephen Klein, chief executive of Kennedy Renewables, as a "significant step" in reducing Fife's

carbon emissions by a quarter by 2013.

The renewable energy company has secured contracts with international companies allowing the wind farm to proceed towards successful completion, signing a 15-year deal with Statkraft, a major player in European electricity markets, who will buy the energy from the site.

Leading renewable energy financier, the Co-operative Bank, are providing a loan for the project, while G E Energy has committed to supplying the nine 2.75 megawatt turbines which will be installed on site.

Scottish Power Energy Networks will also install the grid connection for the wind farm, while Wind Prospect and RJ McLeod have been appointed as project manager and principal contractor for the development respectively.

Mr Klein commented:

"We are delighted that work is progressing well to our proposed timeline.

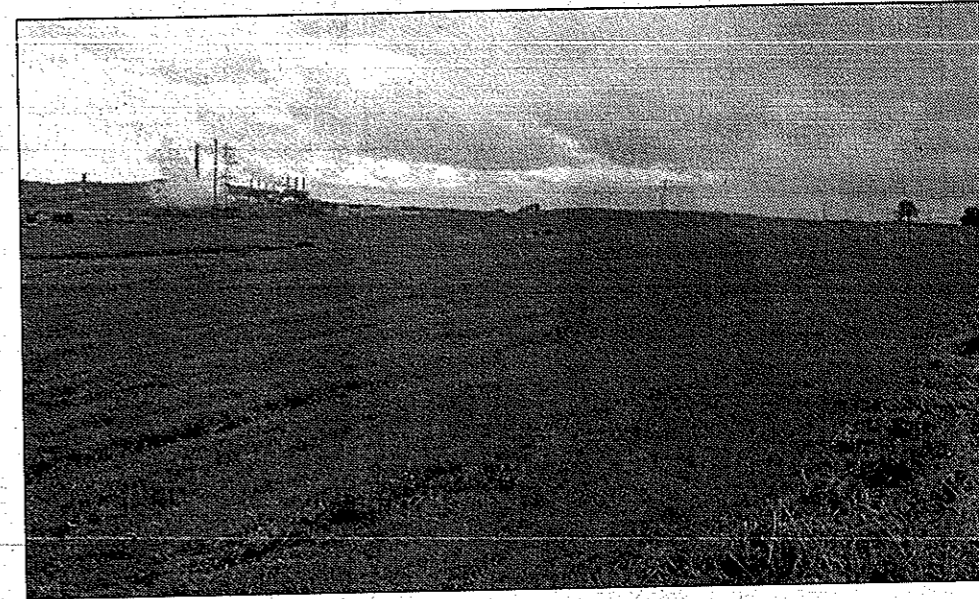
"The development is the first of its kind in Fife and we wanted to make sure that we had the right people on board in order to make this project a success."

The local economy has also benefited from the ongoing work, with around £350,000 being spent locally on the project since work commenced.

It is thought as many as 30 workers will be on site by the end of this year as work towards the finished wind farm progresses.

There are currently seven people from the local area working with RJ McLeod on site, while up to 20 people are employed on a sub-contract basis.

Materials such as stone and concrete have also been supplied by local firms Collier Haulage and Skene Group, and the firm added that the project is also



The site of the wind farm near Lochgelly. Eventually, it will have nine turbines.

making use of local builder's merchants, engineering suppliers and hire companies.

In addition, Kennedy

Renewables pointed out that local shops and petrol stations have been used for fuel and site supplies.

So far, the majority of

the road and crane hard-standings have been built and three of the turbine base ground improvements have been completed.

Foundations for the control building on site have also been constructed, while pipeline protection works for Shell's Mossmorran ethylene plant have also been installed.

The initial phase of work, which will last until December, will include completing the control building to allow Scottish Power to energise the site, installation of all roads and crane hard-standings and completion of the fourth turbine base ground improvement work.

Overall the project is expected to take 14 to 16 months with project completion scheduled for the fourth quarter next year.

The wind farm, which was the first commercial site to be given consent in Fife, received planning approval from Fife Council in March 2009, having been identified as a suitable wind farm site.