
NORVENTO SPINS CHRISTMAS RECORDS

Medium wind manufacturer sets a new weekly generation record at recently installed 100kW farm wind site and completes another in record time in December

London, 9th December 2015 – Leading medium-scale wind manufacturer Norvento has set a new weekly generation record for its nED100 (100kW) turbine in Portfield Gate, Pembrokeshire, Wales. The turbine yielded over 12,600 kWh between the 30th of November and the 6th December - an average of 1,800 kWh a day. This is equivalent to the turbine operating at rated power for 18 hours a day.

Simultaneously, the Spanish firm is set to secure a new installation record in the UK by fully commissioning a 100kW site at Clackmae Farm in the Scottish Borders, just one month after grid connection being secured.

As the market faces pressure to register for current Feed-in Tariff (FiT) rates, Norvento is poised to complete the installation of another 100kW site by early January, followed by the installation of another 5 wind turbines in the first quarter next year. Despite the acceleration of tariff depressions and the expiry of the pre-accreditation process, Norvento has demonstrated consistent growth in its fleet of nED100 100kW turbines, which will total 20 by the time these sites are connected.

The FiT pre-accreditation process, which expired in October, enabled small and medium wind developers to secure planning permission for a turbine site, and then 'lock in' the FiT rate for a period of up to 12 months, providing an opportunity to secure financing for the project.

The expiry of this process has posed serious challenges for the farm-scale wind sector, since planning and financing must now be secured concurrently. This, combined with an accelerated programme of FiT depression – which will see a further tariff drop in the first quarter of 2016 - has put many UK developers under significant time pressure to complete existing installations and driven the market to explore alternative financing strategies for the post-subsidy environment.

In this climate, high levels of performance and availability are critical to the long-term success of an investment in farm-scale wind, while, in the short-term, the ability to bring sites online in a swift manner is highly advantageous.

Norvento's nED100 continues to set a benchmark for performance in medium wind. The Portfield Gate turbine has yielded 27,000 kWh in the space of just 18 days since its commissioning last month, surpassing a previous generation record set at Slagnaw Farm in late 2014. This level of generation would be sufficient to power over 131 homes during the period, based on the annual electricity consumption of the average UK household, according to DECC figures¹.

Furthermore, the turbine, which makes use of advanced technology from the utility-scale wind sector, withstood harsh conditions throughout the windiest week of the year to perform at over 99% availability. The nED100 incorporates a range of sensors enabling the remote diagnosis, repair, and restart of the machine from Norvento's permanently staffed Control Centre in Galicia, Spain. The Control Centre operates all year around on a 24/7 basis, keeping downtime to a minimum and allowing Norvento to continually optimise performance across its operational portfolio.

Norvento offers not only unmatched technical support, but also over 20 years of experience bringing renewable energy projects online.

Norvento's pipeline of pre-accredited sites is strong, with at least 10 more wind turbines registered. One of the two sites in construction this month is at Winllan Bach Farm in Conwy, North Wales. The installation of this project – the first of two 100kW 'turnkey' projects fully managed by Norvento – is well underway and is scheduled to complete early in the New Year.

Yet Norvento is also demonstrating a capacity to swiftly bring online sites that have not managed to secure pre-accreditation. The installation of one such site, at Clackmae Farm in Berwickshire in the Scottish Borders, is set to commence on 7th December and is due for completion before the end of the month. The 100kW site is being developed by Norvento's agent, VG Energy, and Norvento will be able to have the turbine delivered and installed within a month of achieving a valid grid connection offer.

This quick turnaround sets a new record for Norvento and has ensured that the project will be eligible for the current FiT rate, without having needed to secure pre-accreditation.

¹ This stands at 4,170kWh, according to the DECC report "Energy Consumption in the UK (2014)", issued July 2014

“The end of the pre-accreditation process has created yet more challenges for the UK FiT-scale wind market,” said Ivo Arnús, Director of UK Business Development, Norvento, “However Norvento has consistently demonstrated an ability to work around such challenges, and these latest installation sites are testimony to that.”

“A proven strategy for development, as well as an ability to respond promptly to available opportunities has allowed Norvento to succeed in the UK, and we hope to see this pattern continue. With nED100 continuing to set unparalleled performance and availability standards across the UK, we’re confident that the turbine continues to constitute a strong investment – even with reduced aid from FiT support mechanisms.”

With a track record of more than thirty years, the Spanish manufacturer and developer established a base in the UK in 2013 and is entirely committed to staying in the market for the long run. The IEC 61400-1 certified nED100 turbine has continued to set unparalleled performance and availability standards, proving itself an effective solution to both the financial and regulatory challenges of the UK medium-scale wind sector.

Norvento recently launched an extended 24-metre rotor, which has increased the Annual Energy Production of the 100kW machine by 8% on average and has made it an increasingly attractive investment for landowners – both as an outright purchase and through land rental arrangements.

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