SMS energises 50MW battery energy storage site in Cambridgeshire

The 50 megawatt (MW) system is one of the largest UK battery sites to be energised and connected to National Grid's transmission network so far

SMS recently commenced construction on two more 50MW sites in Suffolk and Derbyshire as part of plans to establish 620MW of storage by the end of 2025

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Energy solutions group, SMS plc, has successfully energised its first battery energy storage system (BESS) in Burwell, Cambridgeshire. Capable of storing and releasing up to 50MW of power, which is the equivalent amount required to serve thousands of homes with electricity, the site is one the largest projects of its kind to come online in the United Kingdom to date.

The system of lithium-ion batteries is able to store clean power such as wind and solar when electricity demand is low and release it to the network when demand is high, playing an important role in enhancing the country's renewable energy mix. Following energisation, SMS – which independently owns, manages, and operates the system – will now begin delivering a range of balancing and ancillary services essential for building grid resilience. The ability of batteries to support the grid with required flexibility means that increased deployment of the technology is fundamental for Britain's transition to a low-carbon energy system.

According to National Grid, up to 13GW of new energy storage needs to be built by 2030 for the UK to stay on track with meeting net zero commitments. With a current 620MW total pipeline of storage projects either under construction or being planned, SMS is set to become a leading contributor to this target with at least a 10% market share. In addition to the newly operational Burwell site, a 40MW system in Barnsley, Yorkshire, is nearing completion and due to come online this year, whilst work also began in late 2021 on two more 50MW sites in Suffolk and Derbyshire.

John Flaherty, Managing Director of Grid-Scale Energy Storage at SMS, said: "With the energisation of our first storage site, and three more projects due to come online in relatively quick succession, our ambitions for leading the growth of this fast-emerging sector couldn't be much clearer. Our batteries will play a significant role in improving the integration of renewables and help bolster system resilience as we come to rely on clean energy generation. Such benefits are central to reaching net zero emissions, and our aim as a business is to deploy the low-carbon assets required at scale to achieve that goal as soon as possible."

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Note to editors

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About SMS

SMS plc [www.sms-plc.com] installs, manages, and intelligently operates carbon reduction (CaRe) assets – including smart meters, battery storage, solar PV and EV charge points – that together enable a smarter, greener, and more affordable energy system. Established in 1995, SMS additionally provides energy and carbon reduction strategy services to large private and public sector organisations. SMS is currently a partner in numerous Government-supported net zero innovation projects, including the installation of kerbside EV charge points nationally and the creation of a self-sustainable, smart energy island in Orkney, Scotland. With its mission to lead the low-carbon, smart energy revolution in the UK, SMS is committed to reducing its own carbon emissions to net zero by 2030. The company is headquartered in Glasgow with 12 locations across the UK and Ireland and employs more than 1,000 people.