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MACKIE'S ICE CREAM GOES GREEN WITH THE HELP OF SCOTTISH HYDRO CONTRACTING

Scottish M&E contractor, Scottish Hydro Contracting, has successfully completed a turnkey contract to install a 850kW wind turbine on the Aberdeenshire dairy farm where Mackie's of Scotland luxury ice cream is produced.

Mackie's Ice Cream is well established as a brand leader in the luxury ice cream market. The company employs 70 people and produces over six million litres of ice cream every year.

The company's strong environmental policy led to the decision to install the wind turbine. Mac Mackie explains: "We are continually looking for different ways to use the resource of our farm, and wind is a resource that is free - and abundant!"

Mackie's annual electricity bill currently stands at around £120,000. They hope to recover the £750,000 investment in the turbine over the next four to five years.

"The wind turbine has the capacity to produce 850kW of power and will supply enough power for our whole business - making us the country's first renewable energy ice cream", said Mac.

Scottish Hydro Contracting was appointed as principal contractor for the project last November. The contract involved all the design work associated with the 44 metre-high turbine, as well as the installation of 11kV switchgear and reconfiguration of the existing electrical distribution system.

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news release

As part of the contract, Scottish Hydro Contracting also fitted 11kV control cables connected to a computer terminal in the factory, to allow the owners to dial up and check the level of energy being generated.

The cables were installed using a cable plough - a German-built machine that can bury electric cables without the need for an open trench. George McCombie, project manager for Scottish Hydro Contracting, explains: "The main benefit of the cable plough is the speed of installation. We installed over a kilometre of cable in six hours. Using the old open trench technique this could've taken up to a week!"

The civil works for the project included modifications to access tracks on-site, installing the turbine foundations and some off-site roadworks to make transportation of the turbine easier.

Scottish Hydro Contracting has seen the renewable energy side of its business expand rapidly over the last few years. Bob Bell, regional director, said: "More and more organisations are recognising the importance of renewable energy, and we hope that the success of this project will encourage other companies in the area to consider the potential benefits for their own business"