

Siemens Energy boss tells MPs we must 'stick with the plan' on UK's transition to clean energy

The boss of Siemens Energy UK&I has told MPs to “stick with the plan” when it comes to creating a clean energy system in the UK, urging the Government to foster more certainty on pipeline projects.

Darren Davidson, the Newcastle-born and raised head of the 6,500-strong business with sites across the UK, gave evidence to the Energy Security and Net Zero Committee in which he talked of the potential for further Siemens Energy growth if there was greater long term certainty around energy transition technologies. He pointed to the Government's Clean Power 2030 Action Plan, which was launched at Siemens Energy's Hull facility late last year, and which sets out to unlock £40bn a year of mainly private investment in clean energy.

As one of four witnesses before the committee, Mr Davidson was asked how the UK was progressing with developing secure and competitive supply chains for clean energy technologies.

He said: “The good news is we've got the clean power plan now and I think that is a really step in the right direction, and I think we've seen some positive action from that. I think if you look at the offshore wind development, auction round six was deemed to be a success and back on track and you can see that as we move forward to auction round seven. I think some of the work that we've done in-grid has also been very good.

“And when you look at the action plan that you have at the moment – there's a multitude of different technologies we have to answer the difficult question. Some of them have got moving

but others, such as hydrogen and carbon capture in some form, we need to push to get that visibility and pipeline so we can invest as key supplies.”

Mr Davidson went on to say: “If we want a clean and resilient energy infrastructure that requires investment, companies like ourselves really need to have confidence in the plan that we have going forward.” He also pointed to emerging technologies such as hydrogen, saying it is crucial to get “first of their kind” projects up and running so the sector could learn from them.

Among many sites in the UK, Siemens employs about 550 people in Newcastle at the historic Parsons Works site, and 1,300 at its wind turbine blade factory in Hull which has seen success in the 10 years since its launch. Mr Davidson said Siemens had recruited more than 1,000 people in the past three years as it pushes development of different energy technologies. He said that growth had the potential to continue if there was greater pipeline visibility.

Mr Davidson’s sentiments chimed with fellow witness Olivia Powis, CEO of the Carbon Capture and Storage Association, who – having mentioned upcoming schemes on Teesside and the [North West](#) – said that about 80% of carbon capture, utilisation and storage could be supplied by oil and gas supply chain companies that could transition.

She added: “But at the moment they need the signals to do so, to know that there will be projects for them to investment. So, I think really there is a huge opportunity in the UK, but we absolutely have to know what the trajectory and the pipeline of projects is to exploit that.” Ms Powis said that meant firms needed to know there would be a Track 2 process in the Government’s sequencing of carbon capture clusters and expansion of the Track 1 process.”