

Frimley, UK
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Siemens appoints VolkerFitzpatrick to build Hull blade factory

Siemens today announced it had appointed leading UK contractor VolkerFitzpatrick to build its wind turbine blade factory in Hull.

Siemens said VolkerFitzpatrick's bid was the most competitive and robust proposal for construction of the 40,000sqm facility. Construction will begin next month (August), with the factory scheduled to be completed in autumn 2016, to allow for the production of the first blades by the end of 2016. Around 200 jobs will be created during construction.

The facility will accommodate the manufacture of 75m turbine blades and the assembly, maintenance, storage and distribution of wind turbine components. The contract also involves the construction of office accommodation and welfare facilities.

Shaun Cray, Siemens' General Manager, Real Estate and Construction, for the Hull project, said VolkerFitzpatrick had been chosen from an exceptionally strong shortlist of contractors.

He said: "VolkerFitzpatrick presented the most competitive and robust bid, with strong environmental and health and safety processes, a highly experienced project team and track record to deliver the project.

"A further key factor in VolkerFitzpatrick's selection is their commitment to a significant proportion of local and regional suppliers and sub-contractors, with the entire supply chain within the UK.

"In addition, they have a strong record of performance with Siemens, having delivered rail depot projects for us in the UK. We can trust them to deliver a facility of the highest quality on time and on budget."

VolkerFitzpatrick is a multi-disciplinary civil engineering and construction group with an annual turnover of circa £400m. It is a market leader in the construction of high-quality industrial and distribution facilities.

Founded in 1921 as Fitzpatrick Contractors, the company has grown organically and now employs more than 600 people. VolkerFitzpatrick is part of VolkerWessels UK, a multi-disciplinary construction and civil engineering group with a turnover of circa £800m and more than 2,400 staff. The group is the UK arm of Dutch-based VolkerWessels, one of the largest construction groups in Europe.

The company is currently undertaking works to strengthen the Albert Dock wall along the Humber in Hull and improving flood defences in Cleethorpes and Grimsby, projects which form part of the Environment Agency's asset recovery programme to repair damage caused by extreme weather during winter 2013/14.

VolkerFitzpatrick Managing Director Richard Offord said: "We are very proud to have been awarded the contract to build the blade factory for Siemens in Hull. This facility is a key element in establishing a new renewable energy industry in the UK, creating employment and wealth for the region. We look forward to working in collaboration with Siemens, stakeholders and our supply chain to demonstrate a one team approach for delivering this project."

He added: "We have a positive policy of promoting local employment on all our projects, both directly and via our supply chain of subcontractors and material suppliers."

"For this project, we aim to employ 40% of total labour within a 50-mile radius with 25% from within a 20-mile radius. The majority of our key trade packages are within the north of England, as too is most of their labour."

Siemens' Hull Project Director Finbarr Dowling said: "We are delighted to have signed the contract for construction of the blade factory, which is another significant milestone for the project."

"People will soon see steel rising from the ground and be able to observe our progress as this state-of-the-art facility takes shape."

With partner Associated British Ports (ABP), Siemens is investing £310m in the Hull project – the city's biggest ever inward investment. Siemens will employ around 1,000 people on the site, the majority within the blade factory.

Recently (July 7) Siemens published details of many of the jobs that will be available in Hull, ahead of the first major phase of recruitment later this year when Siemens expects to advertise around 250 operative and team leader positions for the blade factory. The information is available on the Green Port Hull website at <http://greenporthull.co.uk/siemens>

In June Hull City Council's Planning Committee gave consent for the blade factory and associated facilities. Development on site will also include construction of a 12,000sqm building for the service and maintenance of wind turbines and storage of parts and equipment required in pre-assembly phases, which will be subject to a separate contract.

Further information about the Siemens Hull project is available at <http://siemens.co.uk/hull>

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Contacts for journalists:

John Meehan, of Meehan Media & Comms (on behalf of Siemens Plc)

Tel: 01482 223479

mobile: 07803 199492

E-mail: john@meehanmedia.co.uk

Anne Keogh, Siemens plc

Tel: 01276 696312

mobile: 07808 823545

Email: anne.keogh@siemens.com

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