

Tell me more about carbon payback – I hear so many different stories?

There has been a lot of talk about 'carbon payback' and some people have suggested that the wind farm will result in more carbon dioxide being released into the atmosphere than it will save. So what does this mean?

The manufacture, construction activity and soil disturbance associated with a wind farm results in emissions of carbon dioxide, an important greenhouse gas.

However, the generation of electricity by a wind farm does not emit carbon dioxide. This means that wind farms provide a source of green energy which otherwise would have to be produced using fossil fuels, causing carbon emissions.

Over time this reduces the nation-wide output of carbon dioxide and these reductions will balance, or 'pay back', the original emissions involved in developing a wind farm.

Our [Environmental Statement](#) discusses the carbon payback period for the Viking Energy wind farm. Our carbon payback was calculated using a model devised by the Macaulay Land Institute that is recognised as current best practice.

The Environmental Statement describes three different scenarios for carbon payback – best, intermediate and worst case scenario. The carbon payback for these scenarios is calculated to be 2.3 years, 3.7 years and 14.9 years.

There was an unfortunate drafting error in one part of the Environmental Statement which mentioned a payback period of 48.5 years. This was a mistake and the various statutory consultees have accepted it is not correct.

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