

Welcome to the second newsletter from RES, designed to keep the local community informed about our revised Cairn Duhie Wind Farm proposal.

Planning application submitted

Overview

In March 2021, RES submitted a Section 36 application to the Scottish Government for a revised wind farm proposal at Cairn Duhie, to the south east of Ferness, in Nairnshire.

The original Cairn Duhie scheme was consented by the Scottish Government in October 2017 (the consent has recently been extended). The revised scheme reduces the consented 20-turbine site to an optimised 16-turbine proposal using modern, efficient turbines.



Hill of Towie Wind Farm, Moray
(turbines 100m to blade tip) ©KeithArkins

Viewing the Section 36 application

The Section 36 application and associated documents have been validated by the Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit (ECU) and uploaded onto the ECU's planning website at www.energyconsents.scot. The planning reference number is ECU00003225.

An electronic copy of the application and associated documents can also be viewed or downloaded at www.cairnduhie-windfarm.co.uk, and RES is providing copies of the Non-Technical Summary (NTS) and other planning documents (including the Environmental Impact Assessment Report) to people upon request.

Commenting on the proposal

Statutory consultation

A statutory consultation period will be advertised and held by the Scottish Government to enable the public, as well as statutory consultees, to submit their comments on the proposal. Comments will then be assessed against the proposal and a determination made by Scottish Ministers in due course.

Reasons to support the project

Site location

The revised Cairn Duhie proposal lies in an area which has been identified as having 'potential for wind farm development' within The Highland Council's Spatial Framework policy. The site also has good wind speeds, straightforward access from the A939 and no international or national nature designations.

Inward investment

The project is predicted to deliver around £4.4 million of inward investment in the form of jobs, employment, and the use of local services through construction and first year of operation. In addition, the project would deliver around £21 million in business rates¹ to The Highland Council over its lifetime.

RES also has a strong track-record for working with the local supply chain and is keen to hear from local businesses who are interested in learning more about the opportunities associated with this project.

Helping tackle climate change

If consented, Cairn Duhie would be capable of generating clean, low-cost renewable electricity for approximately 52,000² homes - contributing to Scotland's target of 50% energy consumption from renewables by 2030 - and helping to tackle the pressing issue of climate change. New onshore wind and large scale solar are also now the cheapest forms of new electricity generation³.

¹ The business rates figure of £21 million has been calculated from the most recent Scottish business rates (2017 valuation) and predicted performance of the wind farm.

² The 52,000 homes figure has been calculated by taking the predicted annual electricity generation of the site (based on RES assessments Cairn Duhie (re-design) has a predicted capacity factor of 31.7% - based on a 4.2 MW (megawatt) candidate turbine and dividing this by the annual average electricity figures from the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) showing that the annual UK average domestic household consumption is 3,578 kWh (December 2020). Final wind farm capacity will vary depending on the outcome of planning permission and the turbine type selected.

³ Electricity Generation Costs - Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS), August 2020.

Working with the community

Listening to people's views

We've also been listening to people's feedback over the last year or so as we've developed the proposal and maintained a regular dialogue with the host Community Council, East Nairnshire.

In early March 2020, RES undertook door-to-door visits in Ferness village in order to engage with residents and raise awareness of the proposal.



An online exhibition was also launched in May 2020 to engage with the local community - attracting over 220 'unique visits' on the day it was launched. Over 65% of comments forms received confirmed that people were 'supportive' or 'strongly supportive' of the optimised design for Cairn Duhie Wind Farm.

We have also been exploring some of the ideas and opportunities for local benefit which were suggested in people's feedback from the online exhibition. The feedback received demonstrated that discounting the annual electricity bills of residents living closest to the proposal was the preferred opportunity. We will also continue to work with the community to investigate other meaningful forms of local benefit which were raised.

Protecting the environment

Environmental Impact Assessment

As part of the design development work, RES has undertaken a detailed Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in order to investigate and mitigate any potential effects of the proposed development on the natural, physical and human environment.

RES already has a good understanding of the site due to the wealth of data gathered over the years from previous survey work associated with the original (consented) site.

Over the last year or so we have undertaken EIA work in relation to the following:

- » Landscape and visual;
- » Ornithology;
- » Ecology;
- » Archaeology and Cultural Heritage;
- » Hydrology, Hydrogeology and Geology;
- » Traffic and Transport; and
- » Noise.

The findings from all of the EIA work have been written up as a comprehensive Environmental Impact Assessment Report, which accompanies the Section 36 planning application. Scottish Ministers will take the Environmental Impact Assessment Report into account when deciding whether or not to grant consent for the revised scheme.



Castle Craig Wind Farm, Northern Ireland (turbines 125m to blade tip) ©KeithArkins

About RES

RES in Scotland

RES, a British company with a proud history in the Highlands, is one of the world's leading independent renewable energy project developers with operations across Europe, the Americas and Asia-Pacific.

At the forefront of the industry for nearly 40 years, RES has delivered over 20,000MW of renewable energy projects worldwide.

Employing over 100 staff in Scotland, RES has the expertise to develop, construct and operate projects and involve the local supply chain wherever possible.

Contact us



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For more information on the proposal please visit our website at www.cairnduhie-windfarm.co.uk. If you require information in Braille, large text or audio, please get in touch with us.