

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release: 3 October 2024

Disappointment at Aberdeenshire Council's objection to £150 million economy-boosting Hill of Fare Wind Farm

RES, the renewable energy company behind Hill of Fare Wind Farm, has expressed disappointment at the Council's decision not to back the 16-turbine proposal, despite the project being predicted to deliver a £156 million boost for the Aberdeenshire economy.

The 105.6MW scheme is expected to deliver £14 million of inward investment during construction - including a predicted 230 construction jobs - around £66 million of economic activity linked to operations and maintenance, and a further £50 million in business rates to Aberdeenshire Council.

The project would also deliver a tailored community benefit package worth £26.4 million over the project's lifetime; this package may include RES' unique Local Electricity Discount Scheme (LEDS), which offers an annual discount to the electricity bills of those properties closest to the wind farm, as well as the opportunity for the community to share in the wind farm's revenues.

The proposal will now undergo a public local inquiry, before being determined by the Scottish Government.

Gavin Shirley, RES' Senior Development Project Manager for Hill of Fare, commented: *"Today was an opportunity for Aberdeenshire Council to seize the opportunities that renewable energy projects, such as Hill of Fare, can deliver and reinforce the region's credentials as leaders in the Just Transition. We're therefore naturally disappointed that this opportunity to deliver jobs and investment has not been grasped."*

"This project has been carefully designed and sensitively sited in an area identified by the Council as having 'potential for wind farm development' and if consented, would maximise economic benefit to Aberdeenshire. We have undertaken extensive consultation with the community and key consultees - and gathered a wealth of data from our technical and environmental survey work – all of which has helped us develop a sensitive design which minimises impacts and maximises benefits."

The scheme, which lies approximately 6km north of Banchory, utilises modern turbines - with a mix of 180m and 200m tip heights - which are now typical for new onshore wind farms and a battery energy storage system. The 105.6MW site would be capable of generating clean, low-cost renewable electricity for around 101,000 homes each year – or the equivalent of 169,000 electric cars per annum.

If consented, a number of measures are also proposed to enhance the biodiversity on site including restoration of degraded peatland, riparian tree planting, and in addition would improve recreational access across the site with public car parking and tracks.

ENDS



Photomontage (Meikle Tap, Viewpoint 10) - which includes internal tracks, hardstandings and Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS).

Notes for editors:

About RES

RES is the world's largest independent renewable energy company, working across 24 countries and active in wind, solar, energy storage, green hydrogen, transmission, and distribution. An industry innovator for over 40 years, RES has delivered more than 27 GW of renewable energy projects across the globe and plans to bring more than 22 GW of new capacity online in the next five years.

As a service provider, RES has the skills and experience in asset management, operations and maintenance (O&M), and spare parts – supporting 41GW of renewable assets across 1,300 sites. RES brings to the market a range of purposeful, practical technology-based products and digital solutions designed to maximise investment and deployment of renewable energy.

RES is the power behind a clean energy future where everyone has access to affordable zero carbon energy bringing together global experience, passion, and the innovation of its 4,500 people to transform the way energy is generated, stored and supplied. Visit: www.res-group.com

About Hill of Fare Wind Farm

The proposal, which first went public in August 2022 as a 17-turbine scheme with tip heights of up to 250m, has been refined to a 16-turbine design with a mix of 180m and 200m tip heights following extensive consultation.

A Section 36 application for the project was submitted to Scottish Ministers by RES at the end of 2023 - with Additional Information recently included to further bolster the scheme in response to statutory consultation feedback.

Aberdeenshire Council now has until 17th October to provide their formal response on the proposal to Scottish Ministers. For more information about Hill of Fare Wind Farm please visit www.hilloffare-windfarm.co.uk.

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Issued by Liddicoat PR Consultancy on behalf of RES