



# Killean Wind Farm Proposal

## Report on feedback



Image: View from Glenbarr War Memorial

March 2024

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### **Purpose of this report**

RES has considerable experience in developing onshore wind projects throughout the UK and believes in the importance of community consultation to identify issues and concerns, as well as benefits and opportunities, which can be considered when developing and designing a project.

The purpose of this report is to summarise the written feedback received from the community during our public consultation on the Killean Wind Farm, which ran from 6 November 2023 to 15 December 2023, regarding the design of the proposed development and highlighting any changes that have been made to the proposal since. Each section focuses on a key topic area and summarises the feedback received, followed by RES' response.

### **About the project**

The Killean Wind Farm is proposed for a site on a private estate approximately 2km east of Tayinloan, in Argyll and Bute. The site is currently utilised as a commercial forestry plantation and open rough grazing for livestock. The site has good wind resource and lies outside any nationally designated landscape areas.

In September 2023, following initial feasibility work on site, RES submitted a Scoping Report to the Scottish Government. The Report sought feedback from the Scottish Government and other consultees (including local Community Councils) on the scope of the proposed environmental survey work.

The Report included an early design layout for the proposed scheme comprising 12 turbines at a turbine tip height of around 180m, resulting in an overall installed site generating capacity (based on the scoping layout) of around 72MW of clean, green renewable energy which will help Scotland meet its climate change target of 'net zero' emissions by 2045.

### **Public exhibition and consultation**

RES held a public exhibition event in Tayinloan in Argyll and Bute on 15 November 2023 as part of its consultation on the proposed Killean Wind Farm. The event provided people with the opportunity to learn more about the project, discuss the proposal with the project team, and provide written feedback to RES on the initial early stage (scoping) design.

A range of information was made available, including visualisations to give an impression of what the site could look like from different viewpoints in the area. RES staff were on hand to discuss the proposal and answer any questions. A total of 40 people attended the event.

All information presented at the event was also made available on the project website [www.killean-windfarm.co.uk](http://www.killean-windfarm.co.uk), along with an online feedback form and links to the scoping report and other documents. In addition to comments received verbally at the event, a total of 7 feedback forms were received by the time the consultation period closed on 15 December 2023 - providing comments across a variety of topics. Feedback was also received from statutory stakeholders, political consultees and local interest groups, whom the project team engaged with directly.

The consultation feedback submitted to RES has been considered by the project team as part of the design development, in addition to feedback from key consultees and the findings from the detailed technical and environmental studies that have been undertaken. We are grateful to everyone who took the time to engage with us on the proposal.

## 2. LANDSCAPE & VISUAL FEEDBACK

RES included a multiple-choice question on the comments form that asked people about their attitude toward the preliminary plans for the proposed Killean Wind Farm. The breakdown of responses is as follows: 28.6% responded as 'supportive'; 42.8% responded as 'neutral'; 14.3% responded as 'opposed'; and 14.3% responded that they 'didn't like onshore wind farms in general'.

RES also included a multiple-choice question that asked for thoughts on the proposed preliminary design layout. The breakdown of responses is as follows: 0% responded that they 'had concerns about the proposed layout'; 66% responded that they were 'neutral towards the proposed layout'; 17% responded that they were 'happy with the proposed layout'; and 17% responded that they 'didn't like onshore wind farms in general'.

### Key themes

The key themes and comments raised within the feedback were:

- Biodiversity - concerns that the landscape and biodiversity of Kintyre was being damaged by continuous industrial developments.
- Landscape - too many onshore wind farms in Kintyre, stating that there are more than necessary to meet the area's electricity needs.
- More information required - a respondent felt that further information was required to provide feedback on the landscape and visual impact of the project.

### RES response to land and visual feedback

Following our consultation in November 2023 and further environmental and technical studies, we have reduced the number of proposed turbines from 12 to 10, with an overall installed site generating capacity of 66MW.

Two of the proposed turbines were removed from the site's layout due to a further ornithology constraint identified to the north (geese flight paths). The removal of these two turbines also allowed us to adjust the proposed layout, resulting in a more compact site in landscape and visual terms.

The cumulative impact of the proposed development along with existing and planned onshore wind farms in Kintyre will be fully assessed within the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and Ecology EIA Chapter at application stage. The application will also include an Outline Biodiversity Enhancement & Management Plan with measures to enhance habitat and biodiversity value on the site.

### **3. TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT FEEDBACK**

Although RES did not ask a specific question regarding the impact of the Killean Wind Farm on traffic and transport, we included a text box under each set of questions to enable feedback on other issues that were important to respondents. Feedback on the impact of traffic and transport is valuable as RES develops its proposals, so a response has been provided to the issues raised.

#### **Key themes**

A respondent noted that the people of Campbeltown may experience disruption when turbines and blades are transported from the quay to the site, and some attendees at the public exhibition expressed concern about potential disruption on the A83 in the vicinity of the site access.

#### **RES response to traffic and transport feedback**

An initial Access Study and Swept Paths Analysis (SPA) was carried out by RES to understand traffic flows and volumes on local roads and assess route options to help minimise potential impacts during the delivery of wind turbine components. The Access Study established a preferred route for deliveries from the Campbeltown dock before transportation to the site via the A83 to the site entrance.

Following the November 2023 public exhibition and further technical studies, RES is now considering a turbine with a slightly longer blade length (although there is no change to the proposed 180m tip height). We have re-run our transport and access assessments to take this into account, and they have concluded that no change to the proposed access route is required.

Should the project be consented, a detailed Traffic Management Plan would be developed and agreed upon with Argyll and Bute Council in consultation with Police Scotland, setting out the steps that RES would take to help mitigate any potential impacts on local traffic and road users and ensure road safety.

Some examples of measures that have been taken by RES on other construction projects include: introducing a reduced speed limit for project construction traffic along certain stretches of road; avoiding turbine deliveries between school-drop off and pick-up and/or rush hours; delivering turbine components at night-time; and, agreeing certain 'routes to site' for daily construction traffic.

The abnormal load vehicles that deliver the longer turbine components (primarily blades and towers) are specialised multi-axle vehicles, some of which can raise their load height to clear walls and bridges) that are driven by experienced operators. These vehicles have a considerable ability to precisely navigate and manoeuvre along a wide range of roads. Should the project be consented, further detailed survey work and drive-throughs along the route will be undertaken by RES and the turbine hauler to assess any more challenging stretches of the delivery route and ensure that they can be safely navigated.

#### **4. CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENERGY FEEDBACK**

RES included a multiple-choice question on the comments form to ask for views on climate change, which drives the project's need. When asked if they agreed that we are facing a global climate emergency, 50% strongly agreed, 16.63% agreed, 16.63% disagreed and 16.63% did not know. One respondent did not respond to this question.

Two multiple choice questions were also included regarding the role of renewable electricity in tackling climate change. Firstly, when asked if generating electricity from renewable sources would help tackle climate change, 66.66% strongly agreed and 33.33% did not know. No respondents disagreed with the statement. Secondly, when asked if we need to develop onshore wind farms to support greater energy independence and security for Scotland, 14.29% strongly agreed, 42.9% agreed, 14.29% strongly disagreed and 28.57% did not know.

RES also wished to find out whether respondents agreed that increasing the development of onshore wind would cut energy bills. 14.29% strongly agreed with the statement, whilst 28.57% agreed, 14.29% strongly disagreed and 42.9% did not know.

##### **Key themes**

The key themes and comments raised within the feedback were:

- Concerns over how 'Green' the project is.
- Scepticism over the urgency for action on climate change - one respondent stated that they believed that using the word "emergency" was an overstatement.
- Role of wind farms in meeting Scotland's energy demand - Scepticism over whether widespread development of wind farms are needed in Scotland.

##### **RES response to climate change and energy feedback**

We are in a climate emergency, a cost of living crisis and face issues with the security of energy supply. Onshore wind can address all of these. This is recognised by the Scottish Government's National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) which was published in February 2023.

Onshore wind plays an important part in creating a balanced energy mix and is required alongside other technologies, all of which have their merits in relation to cost, efficiency, environmental or social benefits. In response to the climate emergency, the focus on developing more onshore wind within Scotland has only strengthened - with national targets now set for installing 20GW of onshore wind across Scotland by 2030 to help towards meeting Net Zero carbon emissions by 2045.

Onshore wind, alongside other renewable energy technologies, can generate the cheapest form of new electricity generation. With the rising cost of living and climate change emergency, we must deliver electricity efficiently and at the lowest cost to the consumer.

Typically, wind farms pay back the carbon within 1-3 years and operate carbon-free thereafter. A carbon balance assessment will be provided in the Environmental Impact Assessment Report which will accompany the planning application.

## 5. COMMUNITY BENEFITS FEEDBACK

The majority of respondents provided comments relating to the community benefit package that will become available should Killean Wind Farm be consented and become operational.

### Example comments

In response to the below question on the comments form, the following comments were received:

***Q: Do you have any suggestions or comments regarding ideas, local priorities, or community projects that you would like to see benefitting from Killean Wind Farm, should it go ahead?***

***Examples could include biodiversity initiatives, apprenticeships/educational schemes, funding for schools and local community groups, improved broadband provision, etc.***

- “More electric vehicle charging points.”
- “LEDS for the whole of West Kintyre.”
- “All of the above mentioned examples [the ones provided beneath the question above] but especially broadband.”

In response to the below question on the comments form, the following suggestions were received:

***Do you have any other comments or feedback with regard to the community benefits package?***

- “Campbeltown is the hub of the economy, where the shops, schools and jobs are mainly. Residents near Killean use Campbeltown services. With this in mind Campbeltown should be part of the benefit package.”
- “The tiny percentage which is allocated to the local community does not offset the damage done to the landscape and biodiversity.”
- “Amount donated to the community and what it is spent on should be clearly communicated to the local residents.”
- “There is a 10 year wait for renewables to get connected to the grid so when EXACTLY will the community benefit?”

### RES response to community benefits feedback

A community benefits package worth up to £5,000 per MW (or equivalent) of installed capacity per year will become available once Killean Wind Farm is operational, which could include RES’ innovative Local Electricity Discount Scheme (LEDS). We will continue to work with the community to see how the funding could best support local priorities and needs to provide a lasting legacy in the local area.

RES seeks to be a power for good in communities that neighbour our projects by working openly and constructively to ensure tangible local benefits. We believe that onshore wind should provide direct, lasting benefits to local communities and there are several ways that this can be achieved.

We take a tailored approach and work directly with the community to understand how the wind farm could support the local area and help to secure long-term economic, social and



environmental benefits. This approach will help to deliver a tailored community benefits package that is aligned with the priorities of the local community and could, for instance, provide funding for projects that sit outside the parameters of a traditional application-based fund.

Should the project receive consent, the area of benefit for Killean Wind Farm will be determined in consultation with locally elected representatives from the closest communities. It is important to note that voluntary community benefits are not a material planning consideration.

RES welcomes feedback from local people on ideas for local benefits and priority projects that they would like to see supported or delivered in the community. Some examples from other communities that we've worked with include:

- Skills development opportunities
- Improvements to local footpaths and/or signage
- Funding for local groups and organisations
- Improved parking facilities at site entrance
- Apprenticeship schemes with local businesses
- Business start-up initiatives
- Improvements to village halls
- Community defibrillators
- Charging points for electric car charging
- Discounted electricity bills for residents and businesses within a set distance from the wind farm.

#### Local Electricity Discount Scheme (LEDS)

Our unique Local Electricity Discount Scheme (LEDS) seeks to deliver direct and tangible benefits to people living and working closest to RES' operational wind farms.

Developed in response to research and feedback from local communities around RES' operational wind farms, LEDS offers an annual discount to the electricity bills of those properties closest to a participating project, as a potential part of a tailored community benefits package.

#### Shared ownership

RES is also interested to understand whether there is any appetite from the community in exploring the potential opportunity of shared ownership in the wind farm. We have held initial, positive discussions with the East Kintyre Renewable Energy Group which will recommence following the submission of the application.

If shared ownership is something that interests you, please get in touch with the project team. Local Energy Scotland is the independent body that manages the Scottish Government's Community and Renewable Energy Scheme (CARES). To find out more visit: [www.localenergy.scot/hub/shared-ownership](http://www.localenergy.scot/hub/shared-ownership).

## 6. EXHIBITION AND GENERAL PROJECT FEEDBACK

RES included a multiple-choice question on the comments form that asked people about their level of knowledge about the project both before and after the consultation. All respondents had a limited knowledge of the project prior to the consultation; specifically 28.57% said that they ‘knew a little’, 28.57% ‘knew very little’ and 42.86% ‘knew nothing at all’. By contrast, 83.3% stated that they ‘knew quite a lot’ following the consultation and only 16.7% said ‘a little’.

RES also wanted to know how attendees at the public exhibition had found out about the event. A majority, 71.42%, found out through a newsletter (RES Killean project flyer) through the door whilst the remainder learnt about the exhibition from an advert in the local newspaper.

### Key themes

The key themes and comments raised within the feedback relating to the public exhibition and the wider consultation were:

- Visualisations of the project - further visualisations would have been helpful to demonstrate the project’s impact on the landscape.
- Maps of the project - many of the highly coloured maps tended to present an unclear picture of the local geography.
- Feedback questions - concerns that questions around climate change were leading.

### RES response to exhibition and general project feedback

We are grateful to everyone who provided feedback on our early scoping design at the public exhibition event we held in November 2023 and during the subsequent consultation period.

We provided a suite of maps, visualisations and information to help explain the site assessment and design process, and how the initial site layout might appear when seen from a selection of key viewpoints in the local area. The application will also include further visualisations from viewpoints in the local and wider area which have been agreed with NatureScot.

Some of the maps used different colours to highlight different local ‘constraints’ such as environmental designations, areas of peat, hydrology and cultural heritage assets. Our project team members were on hand at the exhibition to explain these in more detail.

We believe that asking people to comment on information regarding climate change is important in explaining the wider context of the need for renewable energy, particularly onshore wind, in helping to meet Scotland’s targets for ‘net zero’ emissions of greenhouse gases by 2045.

We will be providing updated information on the revised site layout, including ‘wirelines’ showing how it has changed, in our second consultation which runs from 27 March 2024 to 26 April 2024.