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## **Introduction & Proposed Development**

# 1. Introduction

## Background

- 1.1 In March December 2021, RES submitted an application (reference LA02/2021/1205/F) to the Department for Infrastructure (DFI) Planning Service for permission to construct a wind farm comprising of up to 14 horizontal axis wind turbines, each up to a maximum of 180m to tip height, associated external electricity transformers; underground cabling; a newly created site entrance; access tracks; turning heads; crane hardstandings; control building and substation compound, 4 battery energy storage containers, tree felling, offsite areas of widening to the public road and all ancillary works. During construction and commissioning there would be a number of temporary works including a construction compound with car parking; temporary parts of crane hardstanding's and welfare facilities.
- 1.2 The site is located approximately 5km to the South West of the village of Carnlough Village and 5km west of Glenarm, Co. Antrim in the townlands of Drumourne Unshinagh Mountain, Unshinagh South, Ticloy, Slane, Cregcattan (part of Galdnagh) and Aughareamlag. The proposed site entrance is located to the eastern boundary of the site and is approximately 150m north of Doonan Leap car park. The southern boundary of the site is approximately 380m from the Slane Road with the northern site boundary approximately 2.4 km from the village of Carnlough.
- 1.3 The application was subject to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), prepared by RES, which was conducted in accordance with the Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations, 2017. A full project description, including a range of technical and environmental studies was prepared to allow the Planning Authority to assess the environmental impacts, and these were reported in the Unshinagh Wind Farm Environmental Statement (ES) which was submitted to support the application in December 2021. The planning application was validated in February 2022.
- 1.4 Following submission of the planning application a further information request from DFI for further information dated 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2022 was issued to the applicant, the request related to the provision of information relating to the BESS element of the proposal and some additional issues relating to the Environmental statement that was submitted. RES provided this information to DFI in May 2022.
- 1.5 DFI Planning issued a notice of opinion to refuse the planning application on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2024. On 16<sup>th</sup> January RES wrote to DFI requesting that the application should be taken forward to the Planning Appeals Commission for the purpose of a Hearing. On 17<sup>th</sup> January 2024 DFI wrote to the Planning Appeals Commission advising of this request.
- 1.6 On 5<sup>th</sup> June 2025 RES wrote to the PAC advising that they would like to make some amendments to the proposed Unshinagh Scheme in order to address the concerns raised by DFI and the statutory consultees before the Hearing would take place. On

25<sup>th</sup> July 2025 the PAC advised that the proposed FEI would need to be submitted to DFI Planning so that the statutory processes can be undertaken.

- 1.7 This document is a ‘non-technical’ summary of the Further Environmental Information (2026).

### **Project Description**

- 1.8 The proposed Unshinagh Wind Farm project description has been amended with the removal of 5 no. turbines, the project description shall be read as:

The proposal shall now be amended to:

*Proposed wind farm comprising 9 three-bladed, horizontal axis wind turbines, each up to a maximum of 180m to tip height, associated external electricity transformers; underground cabling; a newly created site entrance; access tracks; turning heads; crane hardstandings; control building and substation compound, 4 battery energy storage containers, tree felling, offsite areas of widening to the public road and all ancillary works. During construction and commissioning there would be a number of temporary works including a construction compound with car parking; temporary parts of crane hardstanding's and welfare facilities.*

- 1.9 **Figure 1.3** which is enclosed outlines the updated proposed turbine layout, it should also be noted that the location of the substation and the battery energy storage containers have been moved. Please refer to the updated Cultural Heritage Chapter which details the rational for this move (Section 5 of this FEI).

### **Purpose of the FEI**

- 1.10 The purpose of this FEI is to update and complement, where appropriate, the environmental information previously submitted and is to be read in conjunction with the ES (2021) and its associated figures and appendices.

### **Structure of the FEI**

- 1.11 This FEI has been prepared in accordance with the EIA Regulations and comprises the following volumes:

- **Volume 1** - Non Technical Summary;
- **Volume 2** - Main Text, Figures & Appendices;

- 1.12 Volume 2 is organised as follows:

- **Section 1 - Introduction:** sets out the purpose of the FEI, highlights what additional information has been provided and provides an overview of supplementary sections.
- **Section 2 - Planning Statement:** the purpose of this report is to outline the site's context and planning history, set out the relevant legislative and planning policy framework, and assess the proposal against these policies to demonstrate compliance.

- **Section 3 - Updated Lighting Scheme:** provides details of the updated lighting scheme for the updated turbine layout.
- **Section 4 - Landscape:** reviews any relevant changes to the baseline landscape, visual context, and planning policy within the 30 km Study Area since the original LVIA. It also assesses any significant landscape and visual effects, including cumulative effects, arising from the proposed changes to the turbine layout.
- **Section 5 - Archaeology and Cultural Heritage:** provides an additional, detailed assessment of built heritage focused on issues raised in the consultation response from the Department for Communities Historic Environment Division.
- **Section 6 - Preliminary oHMP/Ecology:** provides information to address issues raised in the consultation response from NIEA (NED).
- **Section 7 - Ornithology:** provides updated information to address the consultations responses made by NED Ornithology and RSPB NI
- **Section 8 - Noise:** provides an updated assessment of the expected sound levels resulting from the operation of the revised Proposed Development on neighbouring residents.
- **Section 9 - Traffic and Transport:** provides information to address issues raised in the consultation response from DfI Roads.
- **Section 10 - Socio-Economic:** updated report that reassesses the impact of the proposed wind farm, reflecting the reduction in the overall size of the scheme and responding to comments from the original submission.
  
- **Section 11 Conclusion:** provides a conclusion to the FEI

## Updated Figures:

**Figure 1.2 Planning Application Boundary**

**Figure 1.3 Infrastructure layout**