

WHO ARE WE?

We have been at the forefront of the wind industry from the very beginning, over two decades ago. Renewable Energy Systems (RES) is part of the Sir Robert McAlpine group – a British family-owned firm with over 100 years in the engineering and construction industry.

To date, we are proud to have completed nearly 1,000 megawatts of wind power capacity throughout Britain, Europe, the United States and the Caribbean.

RES is also proud to be a significant player in the blossoming offshore wind industry. Both onshore and offshore generation are needed if we as a nation are to meet our goal of generating 20% of our electricity from renewable sources by 2020.

Our record shows that we get on well with the local communities who host our wind farms around the world. One reason is that we are not owned by a multinational utility company, nor are we 'in it just for the profit'. Our staff are engineers, environmentalists and business people with a passion for wind power.

This year, RES has won acclaim for its responsible approach to wind farm development and its commitment to the environment.

The company has been awarded a Queen's Award for Enterprise in the Sustainable Development category – the most prestigious business award in the UK. Singled out for praise were the company's



'comprehensive approach to environmental and social impact assessment prior to the commencement of every wind farm project' and RES's award-winning eco-friendly HQ and educational centre, where we have invested in a range of innovative renewable energy technologies. The judges said they hoped that RES's commitment to sustainability would act as an example to others in the energy sector.

DID YOU KNOW...?

Wind power reduces greenhouse gas emissions by displacing power generation from fossil fuels

UK wind resources are more than enough to meet current renewable energy targets – 20% of UK electricity by 2020

Noise levels from wind farms are on a par with rural background noise at night time

The intermittency of wind power does not cause any technical problems. Wind turbines displace conventional power plants and do not require dedicated backup capacity

Early consultation with nature conservation organisations is essential to help developers and planners ensure appropriate siting, design and construction of a project

70 – 90% of people support wind power in principle and in practice

Those residents closest to wind turbines often prove to be the most enthusiastic advocates of wind power

The involvement of the local community at all stages of developing a site is the key to success

Drawn from 'Wind Power – your questions answered', by the Sustainable Development Commission, May 2005. For the full report, visit www.sd-commission.org.uk

STOP PRESS...STOP PRESS...STOP PRESS...

We have recently heard that the Advertising Standards Authority has adjudicated in our favour, following a complaint from an opponent of the Den Brook Wind Farm that figures used in our 2004 leaflet 'Den Brook To Do Its Bit for the Planet' were exaggerated and misleading. Following a thorough investigation, the ASA ruled that none of the five complaints could be upheld. We have always prided ourselves on an honest and straightforward approach and are satisfied that the ASA's investigation has vindicated this. For full details of the ruling, visit www.asa.org.uk

Harnessing the power of the wind at Den Brook



I am writing to update you on the progress of our proposal for a wind farm near North Tawton, Devon.

We are pleased to announce that we shall soon be submitting the planning application to West Devon Borough Council. Accompanying the application is a comprehensive Environmental Statement. This includes information on how we selected the site, the details of the project and the thorough environmental surveys we have undertaken, which identify and predict potential environmental effects from the wind farm and outline measures that can be taken to enhance the environment at Den Brook and the surrounding area.

Copies of the Environmental Statement will be placed locally, at North Tawton Post Office, North Tawton Development Trust, Bow Post Office (the Spar shop), and Spreyton Post Office. You can also get details of the plans from our website www.den-brook.co.uk where you can download a summary of the Environmental Statement.

Over the last 18 months we have been continuing our consultations and refining the design of our wind farm, to ensure that negative effects on local residents and wildlife are minimised. We have made two significant changes to the project. Originally we were proposing towers with a height of 60 metres, but for engineering reasons we are now proposing higher 80m towers. However, we have reduced the number of turbines from 10 to 9, which will reduce the overall visual effect.

We believe Den Brook is an excellent location for a wind farm and that we have designed a low-impact project that will help Devon 'do its bit' to slow down climate change and bring direct and tangible benefits for the area. Since we last wrote to you, we have all also heard the dire warnings from international scientists about the increased threat climate change poses to us. Wind power is an important part of society's drive to reduce consumption of fossil fuels.

Please take a moment to read through this leaflet and find out the latest about our proposal. If you think that the wind farm is, on balance, a good idea, then please join many others in supporting the project by writing to West Devon Borough Council and your MP – see the section 'Doing Your Bit' on the back page. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best wishes

Rachel Ruffle Project Manager

The proposed wind farm – view west from High Point on minor road between Bow and Spreyton; for illustrative purposes only



DO YOUR BIT FOR THE PLANET – SUPPORT THE DEN BROOK WIND FARM

There are a lot of myths and exaggerations circulating about wind farms but it is important that decision-makers are aware of both sides of the argument and hear the voices of those who support wind energy. If you would like to see this clean, green energy project go ahead, please write or email as soon as possible to:

Development Control
West Devon Borough Council
Oaklands Drive
Okehampton EX20 1LH

dc@westdevon.gov.uk

NB: Please include your name and address, otherwise your comments will not be considered.

Geoffrey Cox MP, can be contacted on 01837 52000 or via email to tellgeoffrey@geoffreycox.co.uk

Thank you for reading this leaflet. If you have any questions, please contact me, Rachel Ruffle, at: Renewable Energy Systems UK Ltd, Moretonhampstead Library, Moretonhampstead, Devon. TQ13 8SS. Tel: 01647 440577 Email: rachel.ruffle@res-ltd.com Website: www.den-brook.co.uk www.res-ltd.com



GLOBAL WARMING – THE MOST SERIOUS THREAT WE FACE

In January 2005, international climate scientists gathered in Exeter to debate the serious threat the planet now faces due to global warming. The conclusions were disturbing – the world is warming up far more quickly than expected. International opinion is that this is down to human activities, through an increase in the emissions of greenhouse gases from burning fossil fuels. For us in the UK, climate change will mean:

- More floods, extreme weather and a rise in sea levels
- More droughts, with impacts on householders and agriculture
- More pests and diseases
- Loss of some of our best-loved wildlife
- Economic impacts, eg. raised insurance premiums

Environmental organisations like the RSPB and WWF are calling for urgent action to be taken, including a big increase in the amount of electricity we get from renewable sources like wind farms.

As the Government's Chief Scientist, Sir David King, said in 2004, 'climate change is the most severe threat that we are facing today,

more serious even than the threat of terrorism'. We will all be affected, our grandchildren and their children more than ourselves, and we all have a responsibility to act.

Supporting green energy projects in your community is just one way you can take positive action for a cleaner environment.

Why wind?

Because compared to other renewable energy technologies it is the cheapest, most proven and ready to go now. Wave, offshore wind, solar, tidal and biomass all have an important role to play in the future, but at the moment these technologies are some way from being sufficiently reliable and economic on the scale needed to reach tough new renewable energy and climate change targets. With over a decade of experience in building and operating wind farms across Britain, we know that they can produce power safely and economically and that they can make a real difference today. And if a better option comes along a few years down the line, wind turbines can be easily removed.



THE PROJECT – AN UPDATE

We chose the Den Brook site because it fulfilled the criteria for a good, low-impact wind farm better than any other place in this part of Devon.

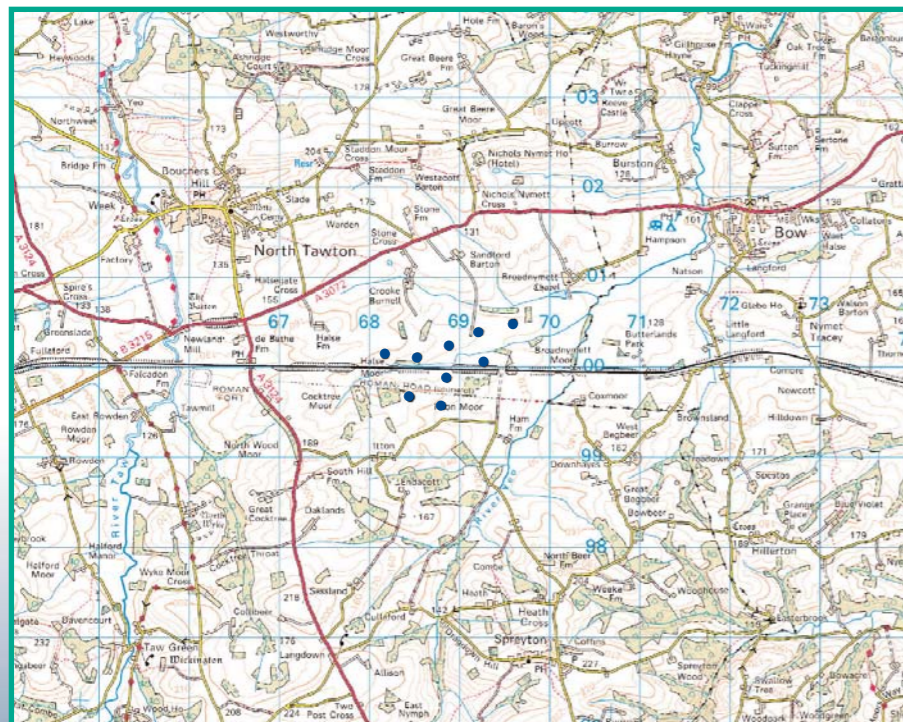
It is away from environmentally-designated sites, such as SSSIs, and the turbines are sufficient distance from homes not to cause any noise nuisance. A lot of thought has gone into the design of the wind farm and the layout of the turbines, to reduce their visual effect from key viewpoints in the area. Independent ecological experts have also confirmed that the turbines will not pose any significant risk to wildlife.

The site has: good access and transport links, so we can avoid taking heavy equipment through villages; a close connection to the local electricity grid; and the potential to generate significant amounts of electricity.

Our original plans laid out two options of either 10 large turbines with 60m towers and 40m blades or 19 smaller turbines with 49m towers and 31m blades, on land around the railway line, south east of North Tawton. Feedback from our consultations was almost unanimous in preferring the option of fewer, larger turbines. This is also the preferred option from a technical viewpoint. It is of utmost importance that if a wind farm is permitted at Den Brook, then it does a proper job of generating electricity.

We have adapted the design of the wind farm several times during the development and consultation process, following feedback from local residents and environmental and technical experts. For technical reasons, we have decided to increase the height of the turbine towers to 80 metres. However, we do not think this increase will have a significant impact on the overall visual effect of the project (see the photomontage below). At the same time we have reduced the number of turbines from 10 to 9.

The layout that we will be submitting for planning is shown below



View from junction of the A3124 and Itton Road; for illustrative purposes only.

Wind farms are popular – over 80% of people living near an existing onshore windfarm would be happy to see another wind farm built in their area (TNS Consumer Survey, 2003)

We are certain that the project as it now stands will have no negative effects. It will, on the contrary, bring positive benefits to our environment and to the community. The 18MW wind farm will:

- generate pollution-free electricity equivalent to the needs of between approximately 10,000 and 13,000 homes every year, or 49 – 65% of West Devon's domestic power consumption;
- reduce emissions of carbon dioxide (the main greenhouse gas) by over 37,000 tonnes every year;
- at the end of its life, the wind farm can be dismantled easily and quickly, leaving behind no polluting legacy.

The turbines and access tracks will take up only around 2% of the site area, with normal farming activities continuing undisturbed on the land.

Wind power is a natural, home-grown and abundant source of energy. The Den Brook wind farm will help protect our finite natural resources and make our energy supply more secure, reducing the need to rely increasingly on imports of foreign gas and oil.

* This range is a result of using two different calculation methods. The lower figure uses British Wind Energy Association methodology and the higher figure uses a method recommended by the Advertising Standards Authority.

BENEFITS FOR LOCAL PEOPLE

It is our policy to use local contractors and employees wherever possible during the construction phase and we have already had a great deal of interest from civil engineering, transport and plant hire firms in the area. We plan to get stone for the access tracks and hardstandings from Meldon Quarry and concrete for the turbine foundations from Edworthy in Bow.

RES has pledged to set up a community fund linked to the wind farm. This would be at least £1,500 per MW installed per year for the 25-year lifetime of the project, to be managed by the North Tawton Development Trust and spent on local community projects. This is one way of trying to ensure that local people will receive a direct benefit from having a wind farm in their area, on top of the clear environmental benefits to society as a whole.

DARTMOOR RAILWAY

The Dartmoor Railway runs directly through the middle of the proposed wind farm site. We plan to bring a good proportion of the construction materials and turbine components by rail, directly to the site. This will reduce the number of lorry journeys during construction. To make this happen, certain infrastructure improvements to the railway are needed and we are working with Dartmoor Railway to help them achieve this. These improvements will make a very real difference to the railway's ability to run regular services between Okehampton and Exeter, benefiting local people.



Rachel Ruffle at Dartmoor Railway's Meldon Station

HABITAT IMPROVEMENTS FOR FLORA AND FAUNA

In order to protect and enhance the local environment at Den Brook, we are proposing various mitigation measures and improvements to the site that will create an overall net gain in conservation value. We have been working closely with ornithologists and ecologists to produce a Habitat Management Programme which will be implemented with the cooperation of landowners. Proposed improvement measures include replanting of hedgerows on site (with native tree and shrub species), enhancement of habitats, and protection of watercourses and woodland through stock fencing.

Where possible, existing tracks have been used for access routes and new grassland strips and vegetation habitats will be encouraged along all tracks, providing foraging areas for animals and insects. In addition, the timing of any work carried out will be planned so as to keep disruption to a minimum.

Overall the improvements will provide many beneficial consequences for wildlife at Den Brook.

WHAT IS DEVON'S 'FAIR SHARE' OF WIND POWER?

Britain is the windiest country in Europe yet we get less than 1% of our power from this clean, natural and abundant source. Denmark generates nearly 20% of its electricity from wind farms! Likewise, Devon has a lot of wind, but it is not being used.

Our region has a target of generating 11–15% (555–693MW) of its electricity from renewable sources by 2010, on the expectation that 286–418MW will come from onshore wind power. Devon has a target of 151MW of installed renewable electricity capacity, with the assumption that onshore wind will contribute around 103MW. Devon's installed capacity of wind energy is currently only 3MW.

There is clearly a long way to go and the climate clock is ticking. An 18MW wind farm at Den Brook would be a significant step towards achieving our target.

However, these targets should be seen as absolute minimums. Climate scientists are warning us that we need to act much more quickly.

No-one is suggesting covering the whole of the West country with wind turbines, we just need to increase the proportion of power we generate from the wind, at the same time ensuring that only the best, most sensitively-designed projects go forward.

71% of rural Devon residents support the use of wind power in the county with just 18% opposed (MORI, 2004)

