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## PRESS RELEASE

### **DEN BROOK DECISION: A MISSED OPPORTUNITY TO TAKE POSITIVE ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE**

Renewable Energy Systems UK Ltd (RES) has expressed disappointment at the decision today by West Devon Borough Council to refuse planning permission for the Den Brook wind farm in North Tawton, Devon.

The nine-turbine project would have generated electricity equivalent to the annual needs of around half of West Devon and reduced emissions of carbon dioxide, the main greenhouse gas.

Rachel Ruffle, Project Manager for RES, commented;

*“We are very disappointed at the Council’s decision. More than two years of design work and local consultation created a good quality, low-impact wind farm on one of the best sites in Devon, that could help the county meet its renewable energy targets.”*

As well as generating clean, green electricity from a home-grown and abundant source, the wind farm would have brought benefits to the community, such as infrastructure improvements to the Dartmoor Railway, a community fund, local sourcing of labour and materials, and wildlife enhancement measures at the site.

Speaking following the decision, Rachel said;

*“This is a huge missed opportunity. The council has failed to recognise the support that exists for this project amongst local residents. The majority of the people of Devon are content to see wind farms in their neighbourhood because they recognise that if they are going to continue to use electricity then it is better that it comes from a clean, renewable and harmless source.<sup>1</sup>”*

RES is confident that the wind farm has been designed carefully to minimise effects on the landscape and to protect local residents against noise nuisance. The Council’s main grounds for refusal were visibility. However, too much weight was given to the vocal opponents of the wind farm and too little weight to either the experts who raised no objection to the scheme or to the significant contribution the project can make to regional and national renewable energy targets. To meet Devon’s renewable energy targets, 108MW of wind power capacity is needed by 2010. There is currently less than 3MW.

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Rachel concluded;

*“In a week when scientific warnings about climate change became more serious and it became clear that the obstacles to action are not technological or financial, but political<sup>2</sup>, we have to ask why West Devon Borough Councillors have failed the people of Devon in rejecting an environmentally friendly and beneficial energy generating scheme.*

*People are concerned about the environment and about where their electricity will come from in the future. The Councillors must now explain to local people how climate change targets are going to be met if good quality and benign projects like this are turned down.”*

RES is considering whether to appeal against the decision.

## **ENDS**

### NOTES TO EDITORS:

1. While there is vocal opposition in the immediate vicinity largely due to concerns about the visual impact, there is widespread support for wind power in Devon, evidenced by a MORI poll in 2004 which showed 71% of rural Devon residents support the use of wind power in the county, with just 18% opposed.
2. DEFRA report 'Avoiding Dangerous Climate Change', published 30 January 2006. This collates evidence presented by scientists at a conference in Exeter hosted by the UK Meteorological Office in February 2005.

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For more information about the Den Brook proposal, visit [www.den-brook.co.uk](http://www.den-brook.co.uk)