

Regional Planning Governance & Legislation



Department for
Infrastructure

An Roinn

Bonneagair

Department for

Infrastructure

www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk

Council Chief Executives

James House
2-4 Cromac Avenue
The Gasworks
BELFAST
BT7 2JA

Tel: 0300 200 7830

Email: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk

Your Ref:

Our Ref:

30 September 2026

Dear Colleagues

PUBLICATION OF GUIDANCE FOR THE 'ASSESSMENT AND RATING OF WIND TURBINE NOISE'

I am writing to you in relation to the publication of the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero's (DESNZ) [Guidance on the 'Assessment and Rating of Wind Turbine Noise'](#) (ARWTN), which was issued on 19 June 2026, and to set out the implications of this for the Northern Ireland planning system. The ARWTN guidance replaces the 1996 ETSU-R-97 document.

This new guidance provides updated technical guidance to practitioners, developers, planners and other stakeholders on the assessment and control of operational noise from wind turbines. It establishes the most up-to-date guidelines for the assessment and control of wind turbine noise and its aim is to help ensure that neighbouring communities receive an appropriate level of protection from potential adverse noise effects while supporting the deployment of renewable energy infrastructure.

Paragraph 6.234 of the Strategic Planning Policy Statement, Edition 2 (SPPS), which incorporates revised regional strategic planning policy on renewable and low carbon energy states that:

"ETSU-R-97 remains the UK standard methodology for the assessment of noise from wind energy development and it, along with 'A Good Practice Guide to the Application of ETSU-R-97 for the Assessment and Rating of Wind Turbine Noise' prepared by the Institute of Acoustics,⁵⁸ should be taken into account by decision-makers.....

⁵⁸or any future update to this UK standard and/or guidance."

As per the policy requirements of the SPPS, and footnote 58, the ARWTN, which replaces ETSU-R-97 should be taken into account by decision-makers within the Northern Ireland planning system, recognising that the relevance and weight to be afforded to the ARWTN, and all material planning considerations is a matter for the relevant planning authority.

I am also copying this letter to the Chair Representative of the Heads of Planning, the Chair Representative of Environmental Health NI, Chief Commissioner of the Planning Appeals Commission, and relevant officials across the Departments as per the cc. list below.

I would be grateful if you could bring this correspondence to the attention of all your senior officials, including relevant Planning and Environmental Health personnel.

Yours sincerely



ROSEMARY DALY
Chief Planner & Director

cc.

Chief Commissioner, Planning Appeals Commission
Chief Environmental Health Officer, DoH
Environmental Policy Team, DAERA
Renewable Energy Team, DfE
Chair Representative of the Heads of Planning
Chair Representative of Environment Health NI
