# Research reveals major losses from England's onshore wind farm ban



Analysis by independent advisors Turley has highlighted substantial losses in potential clean electricity generation and job creation due to the de facto ban on onshore wind farms in England, a policy put in place by the previous Conservative Government in 2014. This ban enabled a single local objection to effectively block any wind farm development, a decision that resulted in the immediate rejection or withdrawal of 54 planning applications for onshore wind projects across the country from 2014 to 2024.

According to Turley’s findings, the ban has curbed the potential generation of approximately 2.3 gigawatts (GW) of onshore wind power over its decade-long implementation. This figure represents enough clean electricity to power around 1.6 million homes. Furthermore, the analysis indicates that the economic repercussions have been severe, with local communities missing out on an estimated £900 million in economic output and up to £11.5 million annually in Community Benefit Funds due to the restrictions.

In July 2024, the Labour Government announced it would lift this ban, setting a target of achieving 27 to 29 GW of onshore wind power across the UK by 2030. This policy shift comes at a time when Scotland, Northern Ireland, and Wales have progressed with their onshore wind farm development, with Scotland alone approving projects totalling 8.1 GW capacity during the same period England faced restrictions.

Nicola Riley, Senior Director of Net Zero Infrastructure at Turley, commented on the situation, stating, “The de facto onshore wind ban has left the Government lagging behind with its renewable energy generation pipeline. The latest policy change is a positive step forward as we are already seeing a shift in mindset at local political level and amongst communities.”

Despite the lifting of the ban, Riley emphasised that further efforts are required to address existing barriers that have hindered onshore wind projects, including transport and grid connection capacity. She noted that while the ban was not enforced in Wales and Northern Ireland, the region still saw minimal approvals for onshore wind developments over the past decade.

Riley stressed that lifting the ban is merely the first step in a more extensive process: “It is good to see positive changes to the connection regime as part of the broader Clean Power Plan 2030. Equally supportive local policy is needed, and it is essential for Government, local authorities, industry leaders, and community stakeholders to collaborate. This collaboration will create a more positive environment for applications to be made and projects delivered – producing renewable energy, jobs, community benefit funds, and economic stimulus."

Reflecting on the need for practical action, she concluded, “Transforming ambition into action requires a concerted effort and commitment from all parties involved.”

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://theenergyst.com/decade-of-blocked-onshore-wind-farms-cost-900-million-in-economic-output/> - This article supports the claim about the economic losses and potential electricity generation missed due to the de facto ban on onshore wind farms in England. It also provides details on how the policy affected planning applications and job creation.
* <https://brodies.com/insights/renewable-energy/de-facto-to-defunct-labour-removes-onshore-wind-farm-ban-in-england/> - This article explains the background and implications of the de facto ban on onshore wind farms introduced by the previous Conservative Government and its recent removal by the Labour Government.
* <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/statement-on-ending-subsidies-for-onshore-wind> - This government speech outlines the reasoning behind ending subsidies for onshore wind, highlighting concerns about affordability and the need to balance support across different renewable technologies.
* <https://grist.org/politics/brits-may-ban-new-onshore-wind-power/> - This article discusses early considerations by the Conservative Government to restrict onshore wind power, reflecting political pressures and public perception concerns.
* <https://futureclimateinfo.com/the-wind-changes-onshore-again/> - This piece highlights the shift in government policy towards onshore wind, including the reversal of a previous ban on subsidies to meet climate change targets and the importance of community engagement.