

Nissan Supplier Unipres Plans Wind Turbine to Power UK Plant

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A major Nissan supplier, Unipres (UK) Ltd, has proposed building a large wind turbine at its Sunderland facility to lower carbon emissions and support more sustainable operations. The initiative would allow the company to generate its energy and reduce dependence on external sources.

Unipres (UK) Ltd, a leading manufacturer of press-formed parts for the automotive industry, is seeking approval to construct a 492-foot (150-meter) wind turbine at its plant on Cherry Blossom Way in Washington, near Sunderland. The proposal, currently under review by Sunderland City Council, outlines the installation as a strategic move to power operations at the facility while enhancing energy independence. According to submitted plans, the turbine would have a generating capacity of up to five megawatts (MW), enough to meet most of the plant's daily electricity demands.

The energy produced by the wind turbine would be used directly by the facility's warehouse, making the operation largely self-sustaining. Any surplus electricity could be exported to the national grid, contributing to a wider energy supply while helping to offset environmental impact. The project reflects a broader push among manufacturers to improve energy efficiency and reduce their carbon footprint without compromising productivity.

The proposal was accompanied by an environmental impact scoping report, a standard requirement before a full planning application. It highlights that the wind turbine would not only support environmental targets but also deliver economic benefits. These include short-term employment through construction and ongoing opportunities for local and regional contractors throughout the supply chain.

The wind turbine, if approved, would be in operation for approximately 25 years, after which it would be dismantled according to established industry decommissioning guidelines. The site chosen is adjacent to the Nissan plant, which already hosts several wind turbines, indicating a tested and viable location for renewable infrastructure.

A formal consultation period is underway, and Sunderland City Council is expected to issue a decision on the "scoping opinion" in the coming months. This step will determine whether further environmental studies are needed before Unipres can proceed with a full planning application.

As manufacturing firms across the United Kingdom face increasing pressure to manage costs and reduce environmental impact, projects like this suggest a pragmatic path forward, one that blends economic practicality with long-term energy resilience.