FEHILY TIMONEY

DESIGNING AND DELIVERING
A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Appendix 5.2

Community Consultation Report

RWE

Shancloon Proposed Wind Farm

Public Consultation Report Proposed

Shancloon Wind Farm

Project Background

RWE Renewables Ireland Ltd. is seeking planning permission to construct and operate a wind farm in the townlands of Beagh More, Cloonbar, Cloonnaglasha, Corillaun, Derrymore, Shancloon, Toberroe and Tonacooleen, County Galwa. The Proposed Development will contribute to achieving local, national, regional and European policy regarding Ireland's transition to a low carbon economy and associated climate change policy objectives.

The Proposed Development will generate renewable energy for use in the national grid helping to displace thousands of tonnes of carbon dioxide over its lifetime. It can lead to cheaper electricity, energy security and help Ireland meet its challenging climate change and decarbonisation targets.

The Proposed Development will also lead to tangible local benefits such as employment opportunities during the construction and operation phases, possible payments under the Renewable Energy Support Scheme (RESS) to a Community Benefit Fund, or a specific Community Benefit Fund from RWE, and indirect benefits to the wider community from business rates paid to Galway County Council from the wind farm.

RWE Renewables in Ireland

RWE Renewables (RWE) has been in Ireland since 2016. RWE have established itself as a key player in the Irish energy market with an expanding portfolio of projects in development and operational.

RWE is undertaking long-term investments into onshore wind, offshore wind, battery storage projects, and in new technologies such as airborne wind. The company's objective is to grow a renewables business from greenfield sites as a long term energy partner for Ireland during its energy transition to 2030 and beyond.

Already with an operational wind farm, two battery storage facilities, an airborne wind test site and both onshore and offshore wind farms in development, our current Irish portfolio is managed by our experienced teams in Kilkenny and Dun Laoghaire. Among our ten projects in development at present, our largest development project is the Dublin Array Offshore Wind Farm (up to 900MW) a joint venture with Saorgus Energy.

RWE is aiming to further expand its portfolio in Ireland and is actively seeking new opportunities to partner and develop renewable energy projects and technologies

What does the Project Involve?

The Proposed Development will be made up of several structures including turbines, underground cabling from the turbines to an electrical substation, and the substation structure itself. There would also be a network of roads on site linking the turbines and substation together for staff operations and maintenance.

A windfarm needs to be connected to the electricity grid which can be done either by linking to a suitable overhead powerline nearby or using underground cables to get the renewable energy to a nearby substation.

In the case of the Shancloon Wind Farm, electricity generated by the turbines will be fed through the underground cables to the substation before being transmitted off-site to the national grid network via the Cashla-Dalton 110 kV overhead line .

A full description of the Proposed Development for the purposes of the planning application and the additional elements that form part of the overall project, assessed as part of the EIA, are contained in Chapter 2 of the EIAR.

Consultation Report Methods and Feedback

This Consultation Report outlines the methodology used and questions, concerns, feedback received from the public consultation with the people around the Proposed Development.

In accordance with the Aarhus Convention, public participation is an essential element of the development of any infrastructure project and the RWE Project Team is committed to facilitating an accessible, meaningful, and accountable consultation process with members of the public. This Consultation Report details the methods used and the questions and concerns received associated with the first phase of public consultation.

RWE is grateful to all parties and persons and groups who participated in providing feedback via the project information services (mobile, email, postal feedback and door to door and face to face meetings). The feedback given in this report is based on all of the engagement that occurred with the people around the proposed wind farm area.

The first consultation period ran from 11th April 2023 and continued via door to door visits, phone calls to the project phone, and emails to the project email address afterwards.:

Phone	+353 (0) 87 151 9219
Post	Shancloon Wind Farm RWE Renewables Ireland Limited Desart House Lower New Street Kilkenny,
By email	shancloon@rwe.com

The Consultation

Consultation Area

RWE used a consultation area of up to 2km from any turbine for its near neighbours. This took into account 231 homes surrounding the proposed location of the turbines and one or two slightly outside the 2km radius.

We took the 2km radius from the "Renewable Electricity Support Scheme Good Practice Principles Handbook for Community Benefit Funds 2021" (page 15) which suggest that near neighbours are within a 2km radius of the turbines.

- *The RESS-1 T&Cs reference near neighbours as two bands - those living within either 1km or 1-2km of the RESS Project. It is suggested that the distance specified is from the base of the nearest turbine to the nearest part of the structure of the occupied residence (not outbuildings or other such), the location of which is identified in the An Post geo-directory. The application of common sense is desirable in the finalisation of the two lists of near neighbours. For example, if in a cluster of four houses in a row, the last one would be technically excluded, perhaps an accommodation might be considered by the Fund Committee, in the interests of fairness and common decency.*

Information Service

A dedicated phone line (087 151 9219) and e-mail address (shancloon@rwe.com) were set up for the first consultation period and remained in place since then to enable anyone with queries to get in touch with the Project Team or indeed to ask questions or voice concerns via phone or email.

All queries to the phone line and to emails were replied to as soon as possible and usually within 24 hours.

A project specific website (www.rwe.com/shancloon) was also developed and was updated through the consultation period with further information, updated FAQ's and useful documents.

Project Brochure

A twelve page information brochure (Shancloon Proposed Wind Farm) was developed for the project. (See Appendix A). As well as facts about the Proposed Development it also contained the contact details for the Team as per above.

First Residents Letter and Brochure Drop

On the 11th April 2023, this brochure, as well as a cover letter from the Community Liaison Officer (Kieran O'Byrne, Stakeholder Stakeholder Engagement / Communications Manager , RWE Renewables Ireland Limited,) were delivered to all residents within a 2km radius (231 houses) of the proposed turbine array by All Homes delivery company. It was delivered in an envelope with an RWE label which said:

Dear Resident.
Enclosed please find important information re
Community Engagement on Proposed Shancloon Project

On the same day an email was sent to all local representatives (see list below) which included an introduction to the RWE's Stakeholder Engagement / Shancloon Community Liaison Officer (CLO), Kieran O'Byrne and an attached copy of the Shancloon Proposed Wind Farm brochure.

The CLO plus members of the project team went door to door on 12th, 13th and 14th of April 2023 and met with 89 householders (out of 231 houses called to) – nearly 39% of households within a 2km radius were met with within the first week of consultation.

After the first letter drop and during the following two months (April and May 2023), 37 emails were received (from 8 different residents) and each one answered.

Elected Members Engagement

On the first day of the consultation period all local representatives were emailed a letter of introduction to the CLO, a soft copy of the Shancloon Proposed Wind Farm brochure and a soft copy of the letter that was sent that day to residents.

Local Representatives who were contacted over the period were:

- Cllr. Mary Hoade,
- Cllr. Donagh Killilea
- Cllr. Karey McHugh Farag
- Cllr. Peter Roche
- Cllr Joe Sheridan
- Cllr Colm Keaveney
- Cllr Andrew Reddington

And the two new Galway Councillors elected after the 2024 local elections

- Shaun Cunniffe
- Ollie Turner

MEPs (Commissioner)

- Maria Walsh
- Luke Ming Flanagan
- Chris MacManus
- Colm Markey

TD's Galway East

- Sean Canney
- Ciaran Cannon
- Anne Rabbitte (Minister of State at the Department of Health and at the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth)

TD's Galway West

- Catherine Connolly
- Mainead Farrell
- Noel Grealish

- Hildegarde Naughton (Minister of State at the Department of the Taoiseach and at the Department of Health
- Eamon O'Cuiv

Mayo County Councillors

- Damien Ryan
- John Caulfield
- Gerry Murray
- John Cribbin
- Michael Burke
- Michael Smyth
- Neil Cruise
- Patsy O'Brien
- Richard Finn
- Tom Connolly

After receiving the first letter, Dep Sean Canney contacted the CLO to discuss the Proposed Development and arrange a face to face meeting which happened on 24th April 23. The CLO also received a phone call from Cllr Colm Keaveney asking for more information about the Proposed Development. The key discussion points from these meeting centred around noise, flicker, turbine size, possible affect on horses and the environment and health.

As well as RWE reaching out to local representatives on 11th April, each local representative also received a soft copy of all letters sent to the residents as well as an letter updating them on the Proposed Development on 23rd November 2023 and 8th December 2023. (See Appendix B).

Second Residents Letter

In September 2023 we reached out to the all 231 houses via letter dropped by All Homes delivery service letting people know that we had submitted a pre-application consultation request for Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) determination to An Bord Pleanála (ABP) and that we were awaiting the decision and that we would communicate the decision once we obtain it. The letter also said that we are continuing to work through the Environmental Impact Assessment Report and the Design works are ongoing and that we would hope to be back to the community with a further update on the proposed wind farm later in the year at which time we will once again be dropping off a letter with updated information and will be calling door to door to answer any questions you might have at that time.

Third Residents Letter

A third residents letter and attached turbine location map was dropped by hand by the CLO and his team over three days, (27th 28th and 29th November 2023)

The letter stated that the team had reached out to the community in September 2023 to inform them that we had submitted a Pre Application Submission to An Bord Pleanála and that we has since met with ABP for a second time with a view to obtaining an SID determination and that we hoped to have a final decision from the Bord soon.

The letter also said that when we reached out to the community in March and September 2023 we were investigating the potential of installing 13 turbines on the site but following extensive detailed engineering and environmental studies, we have now selected 11 turbine locations which were presented on the map attached. It also said that these locations are being progressed through the full Environmental Impact Assessment. The proposed turbines are up to 180m in height, with an installed capacity of between 6 and 6.6MW..

We met with 60 residents over the three days of going door to door with the letter and map and had numerous calls and email follow ups in the days and weeks following as well as a number of face to face meetings.

Drop in Clinic Letter drop

RWE held a drop in Clinic in the Ard Ri Hotel on Thursday 12th June.

A letter drop was undertaken by the RWE team on Tuesday 3rd and Wednesday 4th June to say that we were going to hold a Drop in Clinic and welcomed people to contact the CLO by phone, text, email or post to suggest a time that they might be available. The letter stated that RWE were happy to discuss the project with small groups of people and also said that in the event that residents were not able to attend that they could contact the CLO to arrange a separate meeting.

Two maps were attached to this letter which gave the locations of the turbines, substation and the red line boundary in which the internal access tracks etc would be constrained. The maps also gave the access route for turbine delivery and site access.

While going door to door dropping letters we met with approximately 18 people as we delivered.

The letter drop also elicited a number of contacts (4) from local residents as well as contacts for booking time at the Clinic.

Drop in Clinic

On the day of the Clinic 22 people attended over the day. A number of people who could not attend on the day sought meetings at different times. We had requests from five people to meet the day / night before and two others to meet them the next morning (11am) all of them wanted to meet us in the homes.

We also had further requests for information at the clinic and some followed up with more requests the following week / weeks. Afterwards. We responded to 5 different residents over the following weeks with answers to their questions.

Feedback from Door to Door Meetings

As the stakeholder interaction progressed during both consultations, it became clear that there were three main questions that most people discussed with the RWE team. These were about shadow flicker, noise and visual impact.

We also received feedback on the doorsteps about how people would like to be communicated with vis a vis face to face meetings, group meetings etc. We discussed the various options and the majority said that they were in favour of being able to meet with us on a one to one basis / door to door, or in small groups. Some felt intimidated by large groups and felt that their questions and

concerns would not be heard in larger groups. We mentioned a “drop in facility” in a local facility which some residents felt might be appropriate.

Website

A project website was developed and was available from 11th April 2023 to anyone who wished to find out more. (www.rwe.com/shancloon)

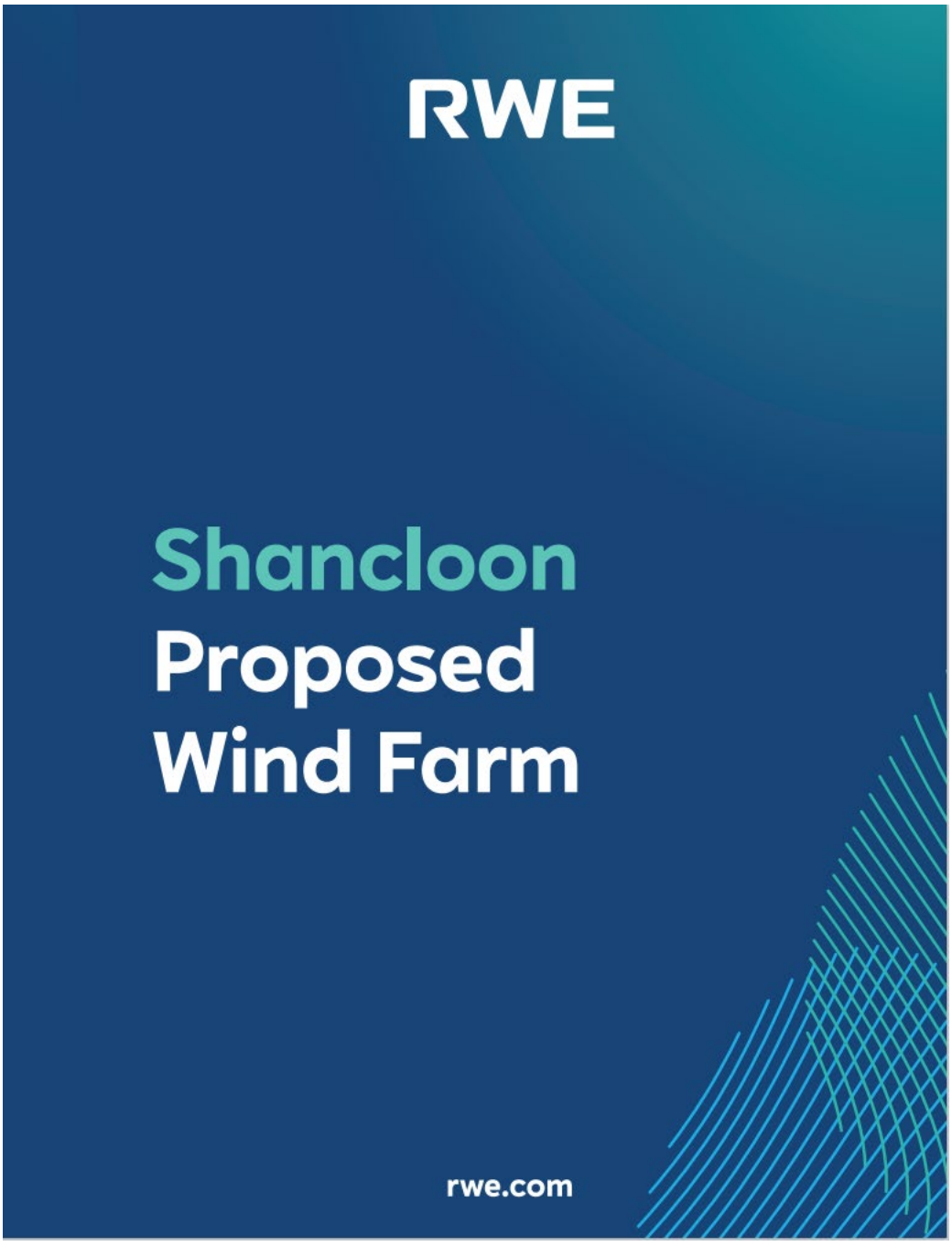
As the project developed and questions and concerns were asked and raised by local residents as part of the stakeholder engagement process, these were answered on the website and further relevant information was also published on the site.

By the middle of June 2023 the website had grown to include three sections dedicated to giving more information and answering questions asked by the residents. They included “Useful Documents” and “More Information”. These sections included the following information:

- Useful Documents
    - Wind Energy Development Guidelines
    - Draft Wind Energy Guidelines
    - RESS Community Benefit Fund – Good Practice Principles Handbook
    - RESS 2 Terms and Conditions
    - Wind Europe Accelerating Wind Turbine Blade Circularity
    - Wind Energy and Biodiversity
- More Information
    - Shancloon Consultation Map, November 2023
    - Shancloon Residents Letter April 2023
    - Shancloon Residents Letter September 2023
    - Shancloon Residents Letter November 2023
    - Shancloon Proposed Wind Farm Brochure
    - Wind Turbines and Horses – British Horse Society Guidance for Planners and Developers

APPENDIX A

Project Brochure



The Need for Wind Farms in Ireland

The Government's Climate Action Plan 2023 (CAP23) is the second annual update to Ireland's Climate Action Plan 2019.

This plan implements the carbon budgets and sectoral emissions ceilings and sets a roadmap for taking decisive action to halve our emissions by 2030 and reach net zero no later than 2050. To achieve these goals we must harness our massive renewable natural resources. CAP23 provides us with greater energy security, stable prices, more jobs, and regional development, particularly to rural communities.

Electricity will play an important role in the decarbonisation of various sectors through electrification including transport, heating, and industry. Among the measures in the plan is to increase the proportion of renewable electricity to up to 80% by 2030. A target of 9 GW from onshore wind, 8 GW from solar, and at least 5 GW of offshore wind energy has been set to be achieved by 2030.

To get us to 9GW of onshore wind we will need to double the installed capacity of onshore wind in Ireland from over 4,400MW to 9,000MW. The development of new onshore wind farms are crucial as we move away from our reliance on fossil fuels and towards the electrification of transport, heat and other areas.

While offshore wind will play a part in these 2030 targets (rising from 25MW in 2021 to 5,000MW in 2030), onshore wind is still fundamental to the decarbonisation of the electricity market in Ireland.

Onshore Wind

The first onshore wind farm in Ireland was built in Co Mayo in 1992. Now there are about 400 onshore wind farms across Ireland capable of generating over 4,400MW of electricity.

Onshore wind energy makes sense for Ireland. Ireland has enormous wind generation potential. Wind energy is a clean, non-polluting energy source which does not produce harmful emissions or greenhouse gases in its generation.

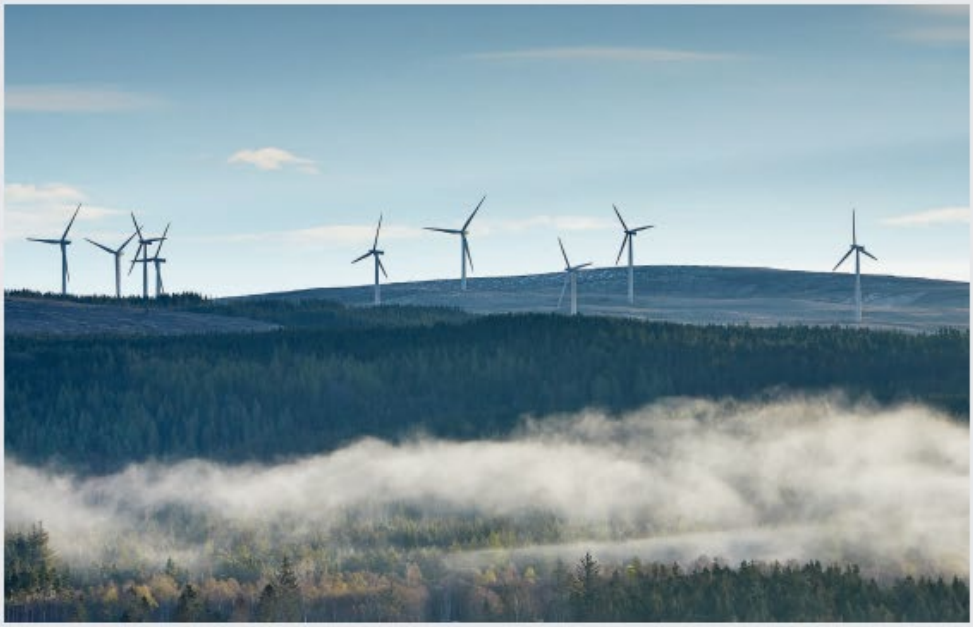
According to the SEAI, wind energy is currently the largest contributing resource of renewable energy in Ireland. It is both Ireland's largest and cheapest renewable electricity resource. In 2021 wind provided over 85% of Ireland's renewable electricity and 34% of our total electricity demand.

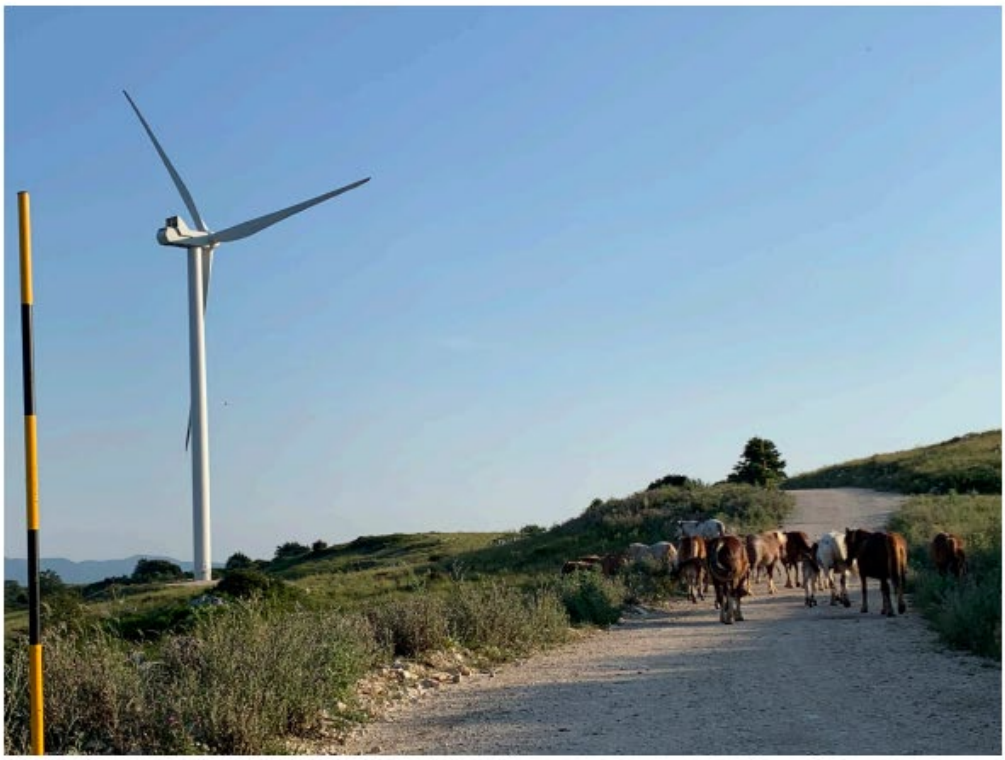
In a recently published analysis by energy specialists Baringa ("Cutting Carbon, Cutting Bills: Analysis of gas savings delivered by wind farms in 2022), wind energy provided 34% of Ireland's total electricity demand, saving Ireland €2 billion on gas imports.

Onshore wind can help us achieve our renewable energy and climate action goals. Onshore wind development will also continue to provide investment and employment nationally, regionally and locally, and particularly in rural communities.

Why Onshore Wind Farms?

- CAP23 states that by 2050 our homes, cars, workplaces, shops and schools will be powered by electricity generated in Ireland from a renewable energy source and by 2030 that 80% of electricity generated in Ireland is to come from renewable energy
- An onshore wind farm generates clean, renewable electricity and is Ireland's cheapest method of electricity production (SEAI)
- Irish consumers avoided paying €2 billion for gas in 2022 because the country's wind farms provided 34% of our electricity. (Baringa report "Cutting Carbon, Cutting Bills: Analysis of gas savings delivered by wind farms in 2022.")
- Ireland has the second highest wind resource in Europe and wind energy is the largest contributing resource of renewable energy in the country (SEAI)
- Every MW generated is the equivalent of powering approximately 625 homes for a year (SEAI)
- Ireland has invested over €7 billion on developing onshore wind energy to date (WEI)
- The wind industry supports over 4,000 jobs in Ireland and annually pays more than €30 million in commercial rates to local authorities (WEI)
- The amount of fuel and carbon costs displaced by wind power across the island of Ireland from January to September 2022 was €1,890 million
- The amount of CO_2 avoided through the use of renewable energy in 2020, was 6.6 million tonnes of CO_2 (MtCO2). This was equivalent to the CO_2 emissions of over half of all Irish homes. (SEAI)





Proposed Shancloon Wind Farm

RWE is currently investigating developing projects in many areas around the country, including around Shancloon in Co. Galway.

The proposed Shancloon Project could generate renewable energy for use in the national grid helping to displace thousands of tonnes of carbon dioxide over its lifetime. It will lead to cheaper electricity, energy security and help Ireland meet its challenging climate change and decarbonisation targets.

It could also lead to tangible local benefits such as employment opportunities during the construction and operation phases, possible payments under the Renewable Energy Support Scheme (RESS) to a Community Benefit Fund, or a specific Community Benefit Fund from RWE, and indirect benefits to the wider community from business rates paid to Galway County Council from the wind farm.

What Is Happening Now?

The RWE Development Team has identified an initial study area for the proposed Shancloon Project, for up to 13 wind turbines (with a capacity of up to 86MW) with associated internal roads, an electrical substation, underground cabling and ancillary works. Environmental Impact Studies have commenced within the study area.

Public Consultation

For most large projects a consideration is whether the development is considered a Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) or not. The Planning and Development (Strategic Infrastructure) Act 2006, says that an energy infrastructure which is considered SID includes "an installation for the harnessing of wind power for energy production (a wind farm) with more than 25 turbines or having a total output greater than 50 megawatts".

At this stage of the project we estimate that the output of the proposed Shancloon wind farm will be up to 86MW and therefore we envisage the development will be over 50MW in capacity and will likely fall under the SID process. RWE will need to go through a pre planning consultation process with An Bord Pleanála to determine who the consenting authority will be.

Under the Planning and Development (Strategic Infrastructure) Act 2006 an SID planning application, does not go to the local planning authority (Galway County Council), but instead is submitted directly to An Bord Pleanála (ABP) for a decision. However anyone can submit comments on the proposed application to ABP regardless of which planning authority it falls under.

RWE is committed to community engagement in all of its projects and is now entering into a pre-planning consultation period with stakeholders, especially local residents, to answer questions and gather feedback on the proposed project.

We hope that we will be able to visit you individually as we undertake our usual door to door engagement. You can of course call us on 087 151 9219 with any queries you may have. We can also facilitate Zoom or Skype calls.

We welcome email correspondence to our dedicated project email address (**shancloon@rwe.com**) or by post to our office in Kilkenny at Shancloon Proposed Wind Farm, RWE Renewables, Desart House, Lower New Street Co. Kilkenny, R95 H488.

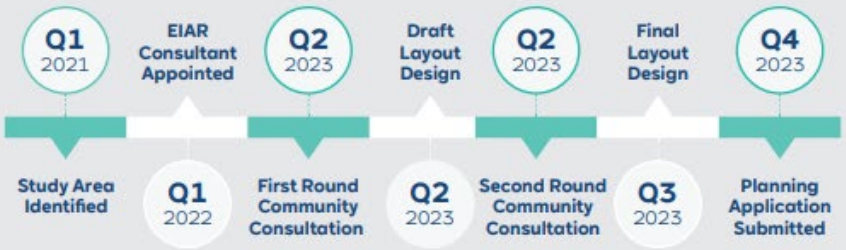
We also have a project website which will be updated with relevant information as the project progresses. Please find it at **www.rwe.com/shancloon**

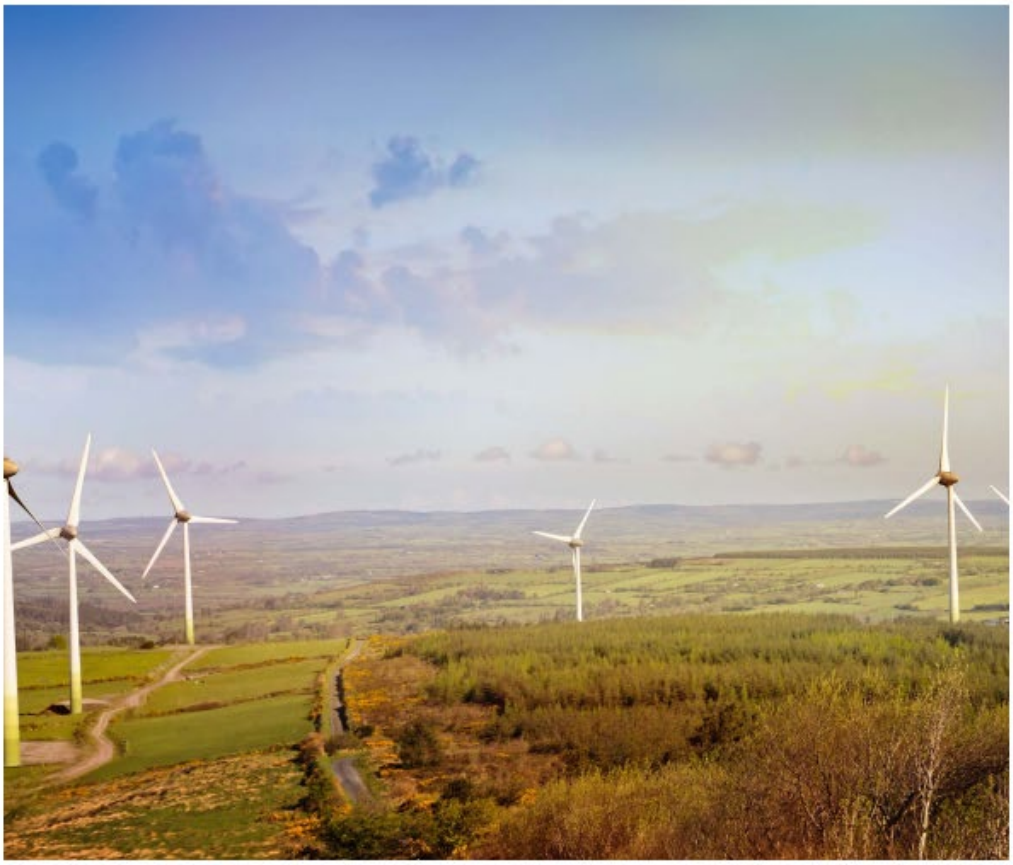
Next Steps

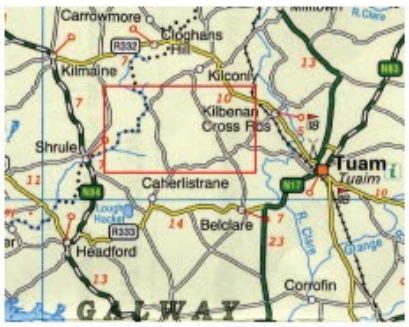
All feedback received from this pre-planning consultation and engagement with the local community will help inform the design of the proposed wind farm.

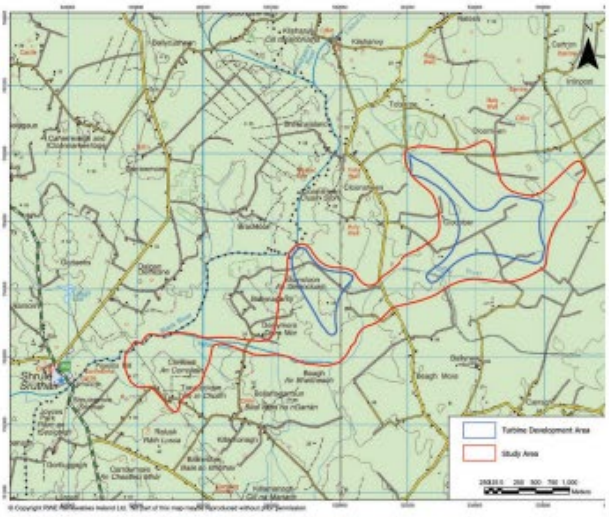
Once we have incorporated your feedback into the proposed project we will reach out to the community once again to update you.

Project Road Map









Why is Shancloon Suitable for a Wind Farm?

Identifying a site suitable for a wind farm encompasses several considerations as outlined in more detail below in the section on "How Developers Decide Where a Wind Farm might be Placed".

In summary, the proposed Shancloon project is located in an area of appropriate wind speeds with suitable available land on which to develop a wind farm. The land is in an area designated in the Galway County Council Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategy (June 2022) as "Open to Consideration" for wind farm development.

The proposed Shancloon project site does not contain areas designated as European Protected Natura 2000 sites, meaning that it is not a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) or a Special Protection Area (SPA) and also does not contain any nationally designated Natural Heritage Areas (NHA).

The proposed site occupies a sufficient area of land to accommodate a wind farm while keeping an appropriate distance from dwellings in line with government guidelines, that of 4 times tip height which for a 180m tip height turbine is 720m .

Facts about the Proposed Shancloon Wind Farm

- The proposed wind farm is located approximately 12km West of Tuam, 8.5km North East of Headford and within 3.5km of the Co Mayo border.
- The study area comprises lands at Shancloon, Cloonbar, Beagh More, Derrymore, Cloonteen and Cloonsheen and measures approximately 689 hectares.
- The majority of the proposed wind farm area under consideration consists of agricultural land and cutover bog. These land uses could continue with a wind farm development at the site.
- Based on the results of initial studies it is considered that the proposed wind farm could accommodate up to 13 turbines.
- Each wind turbine could be between 150m and 180 metres in height (from the turbine base to the top of the turbine blade, when blades are in an upright position).
- Based on current available turbine technology, the capacity of each proposed turbine could be between 4.5MW and 6.6MW resulting in a total estimated capacity for the proposed wind farm of between 59MW and 86MW.

What Benefits are there for the Local Community?

If Shancloon Wind Farm is granted planning permission, RWE is committed to setting up a community benefit package to support the residents living closest to the project. We will work closely with the community to tailor this package of financial support ensuring that local people are at the heart of how this support works and how decisions are made.

If the project is successful in the Renewable Energy Support Scheme (RESS) auction and a community benefit fund is required at part of RESS, RWE will deliver a community benefit fund in line with all requirements of RESS.

Community Benefit Fund & the RESS Scheme

In 2020 the Government launched the Renewable Electricity Support Scheme (RESS) for communties living close to onshore wind farms. A key feature of RESS is that all renewable electricity generation projects must establish a Community Benefit Fund to be used for the wider economic, environmental, social and cultural well-being of the local community.

RESS currently stipulates that for every megawatt hour (MWh) of electricity generated, each wind farm project will contribute €2 to a Community Benefit Fund every year (as defined under the current RESS2 T&Cs) of the project for the full duration of the RESS support, typically 15 years. This fund will be under the control of the local community. The fund is also governed by the Terms and Conditions of RESS which includes a list of stipulations that the fund must adhere to.

The proposed wind farm in Shancloon has a potential installed capacity of up to 86MW. If future terms and conditions are similar to RESS2 requirements, this could mean that up to €526,000 is paid into a community fund each year (based on the amount of electricity that could be generated by the wind farm every year). The amount of funding will be dependent on the final capacity of the wind farm and the amount of electricity generated by the turbines when operational.

The current Government RESS Guidelines stipulate that the Community Benefit Funds generated will be distributed as per the guidelines which are prescribed as follows:

A. *"In respect of Onshore Wind RESS 2 Projects, a minimum of €1,000 shall be paid to each household located within a distance of a 1 kilometre radius from the RESS Project"*

B. *"A minimum of 40% of the funds shall be paid to not-for-profit community enterprises whose primary focus or aim is the promotion of initiatives towards the delivery of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goals 4 (Quality Education), 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy), 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) and 13 (Climate Action)"*

C. *"A maximum of 10% of the funds may be spent on administration. This is to ensure successful outcomes and good governance of the Community Benefit Fund. The Generator may supplement this spend on administration from its own funds should it be deemed necessary to do so"*

D. *"The balance of the funds shall be spent on initiatives successful in the annual application process, as proposed by clubs and societies and similar not-for-profit entities, and in respect of Onshore Wind RESS2 Projects, on "near neighbour payments" for households located outside a distance of 1 kilometre from the RESS 2 Project but within a distance of 2 kilometres from such RESS 2 Project"*

Community Benefit Fund post 15 Years - RWE extra Community Benefit

In addition to the 15 years of Community Benefit Funds as stipulated in RESS, RWE will commit to maintaining a community benefit fund for the full lifetime of the windfarm (up to 35 years) in line with best practice and guidelines.

Administration of the Fund

As per the current RESS Guidelines, each Community Benefit Fund will be administered transparently by an independent organisation and any administration costs will be paid out of the Community Benefit Fund (up to 10% of the fund).

RWE supports the development of a funding process that puts decision making firmly into the hands of local communities. A panel of local community representatives would form a committee to decide how best to invest the fund in a variety of projects that could benefit residents, local businesses and the community. This could include skills development and creating job opportunities, tourism initiatives and area regeneration projects.

Jobs and Supply Chain Opportunities

Up to 100 jobs could be created during the 1.5 – 2 years of construction and then operation of the proposed Shancloon Wind Farm. The majority of construction materials will be sourced locally where possible, promoting employment in the area.

Once the main civil engineering and turbine contracts have been placed, there will be opportunities for local supply chain companies to tender for contracts including traffic management, materials supply, plant hire, fencing, fuel supply, security, waste management, signing & lighting, telecommunications, drainage and hospitality.

Business Rates

A significant wider benefit of the proposed Shancloon Wind Farm would be the annual business rates contribution paid to Galway County Council (based on the installed capacity of the project) to be paid for the full operational life of the wind farm. These business rates will significantly benefit the wider local economy and could represent an annual contribution of approximately €18,000 per MW per annum to the County, equating to between approximately €1 million and €1.5 million annually.

Wind Energy Development Guidelines

Wind farm design in Ireland is governed by a series of Governmental and environmental planning laws, regulations and guidelines including the Wind Energy Development Guidelines (2006), the Planning & Development Act & Regulations and the EPA Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) & Appropriate Assessment (AA) Guidelines. These take account of many factors and criteria. RWE will adhere to the latest planning laws and guidelines.

The Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (DHPLG) published "Draft Revised Wind Energy Development Guidelines" in December 2019 and these draft guidelines were under public consultation until 19th February 2020. At the time of production, the 2019 Draft Revised Wind Energy Development Guidelines are not yet finalised and may be subject to further change on foot of completion of the public consultation process, so the relevant guidelines remain those published in 2006.

As prescribed under EU and National Legislation, proposed wind farm developments with more than 5 turbines or having a total output greater than 50MW, must undergo an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and require the preparation and submission of a comprehensive Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) by a prospective planning applicant. Subject to screening for the requirement for an Appropriate Assessment (AA), proposed wind farm developments may also require the preparation of a Natura Impact Statement (NIS). The results of the EIAR, AA screening and/or NIS feeds into the decision process in designing the layout of a wind farm.

RWE Pledge – "A Living Legacy"

RWE has pledged that the company will strive to leave a living legacy behind on each of its sites, not just in the development of clean renewable energy but also by increasing biodiversity and habitats while helping Ireland reduce the country's carbon emissions. RWE has pledged that it will deliver positive biodiversity elements in each of its new wind farm projects as they are developed.

During the planning and construction of a wind farm it is often possible to include improvements to biodiversity within the project boundary, such as the development of ponds or wetland areas, wildflower meadows, planting of native trees, shrubs, butterfly & bird friendly zones and provision of "wild" areas on the site.

RWE will work with local landowners and ecologists to develop areas within the wind farm that can be rewilded or otherwise enhanced and improved for the benefit of wildlife, enabling RWE leave a living legacy behind at each of its wind farms.

How Developers Decide Where a Wind Farm might be Placed

1. Assess the areas of wind potential ranging from areas with extensive wind energy resources to lesser wind resources using SEAI's Wind Atlas for Ireland.
2. Review the County Development Plan to identify those areas which have been zoned strategically for wind development by the County Council / local planning authority. In conjunction with the plan prepare an evaluation of the landscape and its sensitivity for wind energy developments.
3. Identify suitable lands in the area large enough to accommodate a wind farm, while maintaining an appropriate distance from houses in line with national guidance and best practice.
4. Identify any Natura 2000 Sites or national environmentally designated sites in the area are identified and avoided.
5. Integrate the areas identified in the above steps with information regarding accessibility to electricity transmission and distribution grids.
6. After these initial investigations, a potential area for development is identified and the next step is to identify 'constraints'. A constraint is a limiting factor on selection of a site such as nearby houses, cultural heritage, environmental or technical / physical factors (mountains / rivers / lakes/ geology, etc.).
7. These are then mapped and the remaining parcels of land that could potentially accommodate a wind farm are identified.

Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR)

The EIAR is a document that describes the proposed development and reports on all issues relating to the potential impact of the proposed wind farm on the environment. It forms part of the planning application which is submitted for consideration to the Local Authority or to An Bord Pleanála.

The Report includes many detailed chapters including Background to the Proposed Development, Site Selection and what the alternatives might have been and a Description of the Project.

The Report looks at the direct and indirect potential effects of a project on the following factors: a) population and human health; b) biodiversity, with particular attention to species and habitats protected under Directive 92/43/EEC and Directive 2009/147/EC; c) land, soil, water, noise, air and climate; d) material assets, cultural heritage and the landscape; e) the interaction between the factors referred to in points (a) to (d).

What makes up a Wind Farm?

A wind farm is made up of several structures including turbines, underground cabling from the turbines to an electrical substation and the substation structure itself. There would also be a network of roads on site linking the turbines and substation together for staff operations and maintenance.

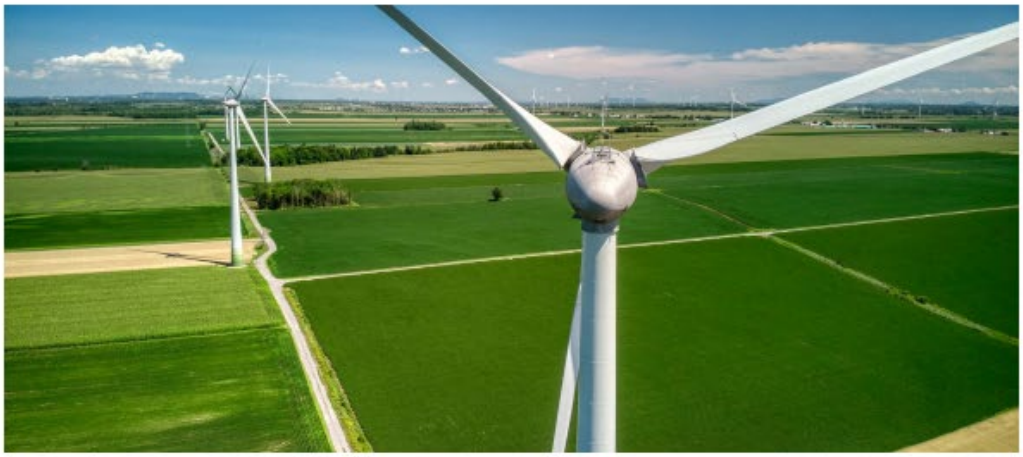
A wind farm needs to be connected to the electricity grid which can be done either by linking to a suitable overhead powerline nearby or using underground cables to get the renewable energy to a nearby substation.

Wind Turbines

The wind turbines harness the wind energy and convert it to electricity before transporting it to the national grid for distribution. Generally the larger the turbine the more energy it can produce. In Ireland, wind farms are increasingly designed with smaller numbers of more powerful turbines to maximise the renewable wind energy from the site.

Access Roads

A network of access roads are needed to deliver the components to site and facilitate access by the operations team to the turbines for routine maintenance. We endeavour to use existing tracks and we aim to design roads along field boundaries to reduce potential impact. Landowners have use of these tracks once they are built.

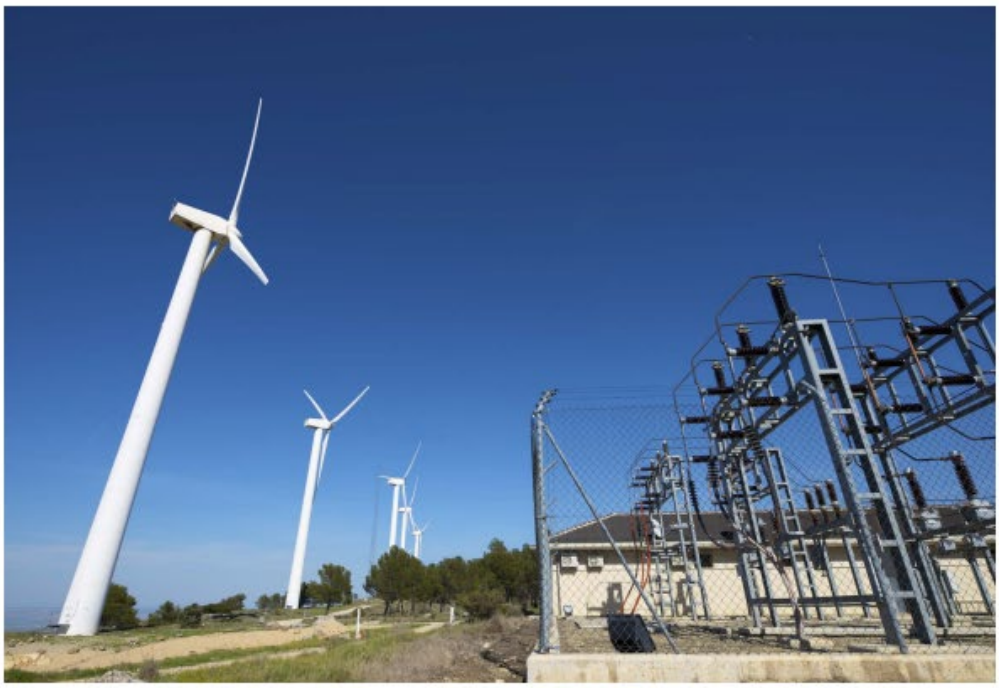


Underground Cables

Each wind turbine is connected to the substation via an underground cable, generally running alongside the network of access roads.

Substation

All the electricity generated by the turbines is fed back through the underground cables to the substation before being transmitted off-site to the national grid network.



Your Views Matter To Us

We want to hear from the local community and provide you with the opportunity to find out more about the project, enable you to ask any questions and to feed your thoughts & concerns into the design evolution of the project.

More information can be found on the website at **www.rwe.com/shancloon**

Telephone **087 151 9219** and a member of our team will speak to you

Email us at **shancloon@rwe.com**

Write to us at
Shancloon Wind Farm,
RWE Renewables Ireland Limited,
Desart House,
Lower New Street,
Co. Kilkenny,
R95 H488

RWE Renewables in Ireland

RWE Renewables Ireland (RWE) ranks among the largest companies in renewable power generation with its technology portfolio covering onshore and offshore wind farm projects, utility-scale photovoltaic (PV) solar power projects and energy or battery storage.

The Company has been in Ireland since 2016, and now has two offices, one in Kilkenny City and one in Dun Laoghaire, Co Dublin.

RWE's objective is to be a long-term energy partner for Ireland during the country's energy transition to zero carbon emissions. In line with this, RWE is aiming to further expand its portfolio in Ireland and is actively seeking new opportunities to expand the use of renewable energies with technologies that address the concerns about energy security, energy affordability and climate change.

Appendix B

Correspondence November 2023

November 2023

Ref: Information on the Proposed Shancloon Wind Farm

Dear Resident,

We reached out to the community in September with a short note saying that we were still working through the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and that the Design works were ongoing. At that time we also said that we had submitted a pre-application consultation request for Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) determination to An Bord Pleanála (ABP). We said we would be back to the community with a further update on the proposed wind farm later in the year.

We have since met with ABP for a second time, with a view to obtaining a determination into whether the project meets the criteria for an SID. We hope to have a final decision after Christmas from the Bord. Should ABP confirm the project meets the criteria for SID, the project will be submitted directly to them. In the event that the project does not meet their criteria for SID, then the project will be submitted to Galway Co. Co.

When we reached out to the community in March and September we were investigating the potential of installing 13 turbines on the site. Following extensive detailed engineering and environmental studies, we have now selected 11 turbine locations which are presented on the map attached. These locations are being progressed through the full Environmental Impact Assessment. The proposed turbines are up to 180m in height, with an installed capacity of between 6 and 6.6MW It is anticipated that the planning application will be lodged in Q1 2024. This project, as currently proposed, will generate sufficient electricity for up to 85,000 homes.

We are going door to door today and over the next few days to discuss the proposed wind farm with residents. We also hope to organise a drop in clinic next year when we will have more information to discuss with you before we go to final planning on the project.

Again, I would like to thank everyone who has submitted feedback and questions during the public consultations conducted to date and I look forward to meeting you again hopefully before the end of the year, or early next year.

Kind regards,

Kieran

Kieran O'Byrne
Stakeholder Engagement / Communications – Onshore
RWE Renewables Ireland

RWE Renewables Ireland Limited
Unit 5 • Desart House • Lower New Street • Co. Kilkenny • Ireland
Registered Office: RWE Renewables Ireland Limited • Unit 5 • Desart House • Lower New Street • Kilkenny • Ireland
Registered in Ireland no. 589120
Directors: Cathal Hennessy • Cliona O'Sullivan • Peter Lefroy • Benjamin Freeman (British)

Email to Councillors 8th December 2024

Dear Councillor

Just to keep you informed.

We began consultation last March 2023 when we delivered a brochure with details about the proposed wind farm including my contact details (phone number and email address). The day after the brochure was delivered, we began our door to door meetings. We subsequently outreached to the community during the week of 27th November with the proposed turbine locations and again went door to door. The letter also again included my contact details should people want to talk to us, if they were not at home at the time. During those two outreaches we managed to speak directly with 82 out of the 228 houses – 35% of the residents.

Anyone who followed up with us by phone or email we reached out to, and called to them to give them individual briefings. We continue to reach out to residents as they require and get in touch with us, and we are happy to do so to answer any questions they might have.

During these consultations we have had a number of questions and concerns put to us at our door to door consultations, in writing and by email as well as receiving many telephone calls. The questions people are generally asking are as follows:

- Potential for shadow flicker and the process for managing it?
- Construction and operational noise?
- What about health issues?
- What impacts on local wildlife?
- Will there be a decrease in property values around the proposed wind farm?
- Detrimental effect on an area of natural beauty.
- Why are such large turbines proposed for this site?
- Where will the turbines and access points be positioned?
- When can we access the detailed impact assessments?

A summary of these answers is provided below. The website (www.rwe.com/shancloon) will also be updated regularly as we go through the process.

We need all of our renewable resources up and running (onshore wind, offshore wind and solar) as soon as possible to provide clean, secure and affordable energy for all. The Irish Government intends to double the onshore wind capacity in the country by 2030 and increase the proportion of renewable electricity to 80% by that time. This proposed development could generate renewable energy for use in the national grid helping to displace thousands of tonnes of carbon dioxide over its lifetime. It will lead to cheaper electricity, energy security and help Ireland meet its climate change and decarbonisation targets and also help reduce our dependence on imported fossil fuels.

I would be delighted to hear from you as we continue to progress through this engagement process. I would also be more than happy to give you an individual briefing on the proposed wind farm at your convenience. If you have any questions about the project at any stage, please feel free to contact me on my mobile 087 151 9219 or by email, or you can write to me at RWE Renewables Ireland Limited, Desart House, Lower New Street, Co. Kilkenny R95 H488.

Many thanks for your time and I look forward to meeting you in person in the near future.

Kind regards,

Kieran

Kieran O'Byrne
Stakeholder Engagement / Communications – Onshore
RWE Renewables Ireland