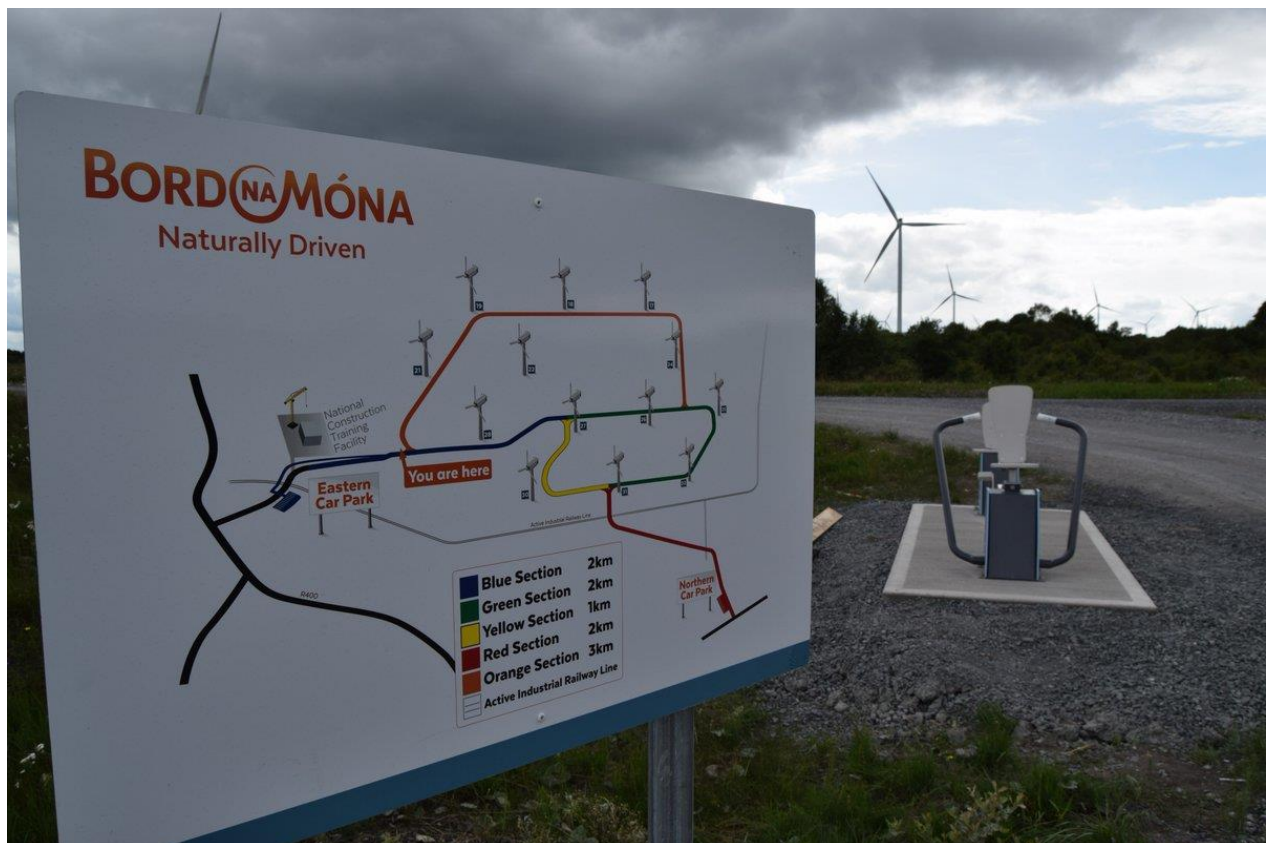


BORD NA MÓNA

Naturally Driven

Community Report for the Proposed Derryadd Wind Farm



Contents

1.0 INTRODUCTION	3
1.1 Background to Community report	3
2.0 Public Consultation with the Local Community	3
2.1 Introduction of project to local representatives	3
2.2 Introduction of project to local community	4
2.3 Public Consultations Sessions Series One	4
2.3.1 Print Advertisement of Public Consultations	4
2.3.2 Broadcast Advertisement of Public Consultations	4
2.3.3 Attendance and Feedback	4
2.4 Public Consultations Sessions Series Two	5
2.4.1 Print Advertisement of Public Consultations	6
2.4.2 Broadcast Advertisement of Public Consultations	6
2.4.3 Attendance and Feedback	6
2.5 Visits to Mountlucas Wind Farm	7
2.6 Direct Correspondence and meetings	7
2.7 Project Clinic	8
2.8 Dedicated Contact Details	8
2.9 Project Website	8
2.10 Community Liaison	8
2.11 Engagement with Community Groups	8
2.12 Community Engagement Forum	10
2.12.1 Independent Expert Advice	11
2.12.2 Visit to Mountlucas Wind Farm	11
2.12.3 Public Clinic	11
2.12.4 Impact on Livestock	11
2.12.5 Community Benefits	12
2.12.6 Environmental Impact Statement	12
2.12.7 Amenity Plan	12
3.0 Impact of Community Engagement on proposed development	13
3.1 Number of turbines/Setback distance	13
3.2 Substation location	13
3.3 Access points and Carparks	13
4.0 Enduring Economic Benefit	14

4.1 Short Term Economic Benefits.....	14
4.2 Long Term Economic Benefits	14
4.2.1 Employment	14
4.2.2 Rates	14
4.2.3 Road Upgrades.....	15
4.2.4 Community Gain Scheme	15
4.2.5 Near Neighbour Scheme.....	15
4.2.6 Renewable Electricity Support Scheme (RESS)/Community Ownership.....	15
4.2.7 Amenity Cycleway/walkway.....	15
5.0 Conclusion	16

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to Community report

This report has been prepared in order to record the consultation carried out in respect of this proposed development with the local community. Bord na Móna Powergen has carried out extensive consultation in relation to the proposed development with members of the public, including local residents, community groups and representative individuals. The objective of these consultations is to ensure that the views and concerns of all are taken into account in the EIA process.

This report outlines the consultation and community engagement initiatives taken by Bord na Móna Powergen prior to the planning application and the main issues identified during this process. It also specifies how the final proposal reflects community consultation.

This report also outlines steps taken to ensure that the proposed development will be of enduring economic benefit to the communities concerned.

This report is also produced in line with the requirements set out in the Preferred Draft Approach to Wind Energy Development in Ireland published in June 2017. The Preferred Draft Guidelines request that planning applications for wind farms “*must contain a Community Report prepared by the applicant which will specify how the final proposal reflects community consultation. The Community Report must also outline steps taken to ensure that the proposed development will be of enduring economic benefit to the communities concerned*”¹.

2.0 Public Consultation with the Local Community

While it is not a mandatory requirement, it is strongly recommended that developers of a wind energy project should engage in active consultation and dialogue with the local community at an early stage in the planning process, ideally prior to submitting a planning application².

2.1 Introduction of project to local representatives

In advance of public engagement with the local community about the proposed development Bord na Móna Powergen informed Longford and Roscommon County Councillors, by way of written communication in early November of Bord na Móna Powergen’s intention to develop a wind farm on Derryadd, Derryarogue and Lough Bannow bogs. In order to provide Councillors with more detailed information on the proposed project Councillors were invited to attend a briefing session on 27th November 2015 at Bord na Móna Peat works located near Lanesborough to inform them about the proposed development. Six Longford County Councillors one Roscommon County Councillor attended the information session. In addition, all TDs representing Longford – Westmeath and Roscommon – South Leitrim (now known as Roscommon - Galway) Dáil Éireann Constituencies were briefed in November 2015 on the proposed development.

¹ The Department of Communications, Climate Action & Environment and Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government, Information Note Review of the Wind Energy Development Guidelines 2006 “Preferred Draft Approach”, 2017 p.8

² The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Wind Energy Planning Guidelines, p. 19

2.2 Introduction of project to local community

In order to inform residents of the proposed development Bord na Móna Powergen circulated information pertaining to the proposal to the immediate population whose properties are within approx. 2km of the proposed wind energy development. A representative on behalf of Bord na Móna Powergen visited approx. 340 homes within 2km of the boundary of the proposed development between 10th December 2015 – 25th January 2016 to provide them with an information leaflet on the proposed development (See Appendix A). The project leaflet contained:

- Detail location (small map) of the proposed location of the development
- Detail of anticipated project timetable (including public exhibitions)
- Information on the necessity of wind energy development in a context of national and international policy
- Information on the potential benefits of the project to the local community
- Provided contact information for the project team: dedicated project email address, contact number and written address
- Informed residents that a series of Public Consultations would be held in January 2016 in Keenagh, Killashee, Lanesborough and Newtowncashel to inform the communities about the proposed project.

2.3 Public Consultations Sessions Series One

In proximity to the three bogs are the towns and villages of Lanesborough, Derraghan, Keenagh and Killashee. Therefore, Bord na Móna Powergen organised a series of Public Consultations to be held in these four locations between 27th – 30th January 2016 from 3-9pm each day. Public Consultations were held in the following venues between:

1. 27th January 2016: Keenagh Community Centre
2. 28th January 2016: St Brigid's GAA Killashee
3. 29th January: The Hill Newtowncashel
4. 30th January: St Mary's Parish Hall Lanesborough

2.3.1 Print Advertisement of Public Consultations

In order to inform members of the community about the public consultation events advertisements were placed in three local papers – The Longford Leader, Roscommon People and Roscommon Herald the week prior to the consultations events.

An information note was circulated to the Longford Leader local notes correspondents for Killashee, Lanesborough, Newtowncashel and Keenagh and also to the Parish Priest for each of the four parishes for inclusion in the weekly mass newsletter.

2.3.2 Broadcast Advertisement of Public Consultations

Details of the public consultation sessions were broadcast on local radio, Shannonside FM three times daily on the 23rd, 25th and 26th of January 2016 to inform the local community of the dates, times and venues of the sessions.

2.3.3 Attendance and Feedback

Over the four days approx. 250 people attended the sessions. Attendees were provided with an A3 map of the proposed location of the development. As the project was at a very early stage, Bord na Móna Powergen did not have any proposed locations for turbines identified but

did indicate that the project could potentially consist of between 20-30 turbines. At the sessions, there were a series of information panels that contained details on the following:

- Proposed location of the development
- The necessity of wind energy development in the context of national and international policy
- The suitability of Bord na Móna Powergen peatlands for wind energy
- Criteria for site selection
- The principal issues associated with wind farm development
- Visual Impact Assessment
- Project Benefits
- Community Engagement
- Project Schedule
- Amenity access at Bord na Móna Powergen's Mountlucas Wind Farm
- Ecotourism and Derryadd Wind Farm

Members of the public were invited to submit comments, concerns and opinions regarding the proposed development through a feedback form at the event. Attendees were also given the opportunity to put their name forward for a visit to Mountlucas Wind Farm in Co. Offaly. In total 60 people expressed interest in visiting Mountlucas Wind Farm. The main queries raised during this stage of the consultation, as recorded by Bord na Móna Powergen staff at the sessions, were:

1. Proximity of turbines to houses
2. Noise
3. Community Benefits
4. Visual Impact
5. Shadow Flicker
6. Amenities
7. Ecological Sensitivity
8. Grid Access
9. Road Infrastructure
10. Cumulative Impact

2.4 Public Consultations Sessions Series Two

As the initial public consultation sessions outlined above were at a very early stage of the project with no layout available, a second series were held in late 2016. Bord na Móna Powergen organised for a series of Public Consultations to be held in the same four locations between 28th September – 1st October 2016 from 3-9pm each day. Public Consultations were held in the following venues:

- 28th September 2016: St Brigid's GAA Killashee
- 29th September 2016: The Hill, Newtowncashel
- 30th September 2016: Keenagh Community Centre
- 1st October 2016: St Mary's Parish Hall Lanesborough

2.4.1 Print Advertisement of Public Consultations

In order to inform members of the community about the public consultation events advertisements were placed in three local papers – The Longford Leader, Roscommon People and Roscommon Herald the week prior to the consultations events.

An information note was circulated to the Longford Leader local notes correspondents for Killashee, Lanesborough, Newtowncashel and Keenagh and also to the Parish Priest for each of the four parishes for inclusion in the weekly mass newsletter.

Letters were circulated to over 300 homes within 2km of the proposed development to inform them of the dates, times and venues of the public consultation sessions.

For homes outside 2km, Bord na Móna Powergen utilised An Post Ad Mailer system that circulated notification of the event to almost 1,300 homes.

2.4.2 Broadcast Advertisement of Public Consultations

Details of the public consultation sessions were broadcast on local radio, Shannonside FM three times daily on the 23rd, 24th 25th, 26th and 27th of September 2016 to inform the local community of the dates, times and venues of the sessions.

2.4.3 Attendance and Feedback

Over the four days approx. 170 people attended the sessions. Attendees were provided with an A2, double sided map of the proposed development. The maps also contained distance bands from the proposed locations of the turbines to enable members of the community identify the proximity of the nearest turbine to their residential property (Appendix B). An information brochure was also available for attendees to provide them with more comprehensive information on the proposed development (Appendix C). At the sessions, there were a series of information panels that contained details on the following:

- Proposed Turbine locations
- Setback distance from properties
- Photomontages of the proposed development
- Common Concerns
- Local benefits of the project
- Details of Bord na Móna Powergen's existing Community Gain Scheme and examples of projects undertaken by the Communities of Mountlucas and Bruckana Wind Farms
- Engagement Forum
- Eco-Tourism and the linkage of the proposed project to the proposed Mid Shannon Wilderness Park
- Project Timeline

The main queries raised during this stage of the consultation, as recorded by Bord na Móna Powergen staff at the sessions, were:

1. Proximity of turbines to houses
2. Wind Farm Amenities
3. Community Gain Scheme
4. Near Neighbour Scheme
5. Visual Impact

6. Number of turbines
7. High of turbines
8. Noise
9. Site Boundary

Following the above public consultation sessions, a copy of the brochure and map that was available at the sessions was circulated to homes within 2km of the proposed development.

In addition to the above public engagement in relation to the proposed wind farm, a Community Engagement Forum was established with voluntary members from the nearest townlands adjacent to the proposed development.

2.5 Visits to Mountlucas Wind Farm

2.5.1 Local Community

At the public consultation session's members of the community were given the opportunity to sign up for a free tour of Mountlucas Wind Farm in Co. Offaly. There were two tour options available, 1) to visit the wind farm as part of a group tour or 2) to take part in an individual tour of the wind farm. There were 6 individual tours in 2016 catering for 13 people. Details of the group tours were also advertised through the local notes section of the Longford Leader. Two group tours held on the 7th May and 12th July 2016 with 43 people from the local community visiting the site. Attendees were given a presentation on the development and operation of Mountlucas Wind Farm and taken on a tour around the site to see the wind turbines, road infrastructure and substation. Members of the Community Engagement Forum also visited Mountlucas Wind Farm which is discussed in more detail in section 2.12.2.

2.5.2 Local Representatives

In advance of the second series of the public consultations in September 2016, Local Representatives from the Ballymahon District Electoral Division (DED) were invited to Mountlucas Wind Farm. The purpose of this invite was to present the proposed layout for Derryadd Wind Farm and to provide them with a tour of Mountlucas Wind Farm as it is a similar setting to the proposed wind farm in Co. Longford. Four representatives from Ballymahon DED attended this event.

2.6 Direct Correspondence and meetings

Throughout the preplanning stage Bord na Móna Powergen continued to engage with the community on an ongoing basis through written communications and meetings with local representatives and members of the community. In April 2017, Bord na Móna Powergen issued the revised layout (29 to 28 turbines) to over 300 homes within 2km of a proposed turbine. In May residents were also circulated information on a project clinic to discuss the revised layout with Bord na Móna Powergen. At the request of individuals, Bord na Móna Powergen also facilitated six meetings with individual residents to discuss the proposed project and concerns they have in related to the proposed development. In March 2018, Bord na Móna Powergen also met with nine council members of Longford County Council to present the second revised layout, which included further reduction in turbine numbers, increase in height of turbines and increase in setback distances.

2.7 Project Clinic

At the request of the Community Engagement Forum (See section 2.12) Bord na Móna Powergen organised a drop-in project clinic on the 25th May 2017 for members of the local community to meet Bord na Móna Powergen and discuss the revised layout that had been circulated to them the previous month. 60 people attended the clinic.

2.8 Dedicated Contact Details

Since the project was first announced in November 2015, Bord na Móna Powergen has provided dedicated contact details for the proposed project, including a dedicated phone number, email address and postal address. To date, these channels have facilitated over 120 enquiries about the proposed development.

2.9 Project Website

In June 2017, Bord na Móna Powergen launched a dedicated project website, www.derryaddwindfarm.ie. The website is an additional communications channel to inform members of the public about the proposed development. Details on the proposed location, information leaflets, layout maps and dedicated contact details for the project can be found on the website.

2.10 Community Liaison

In May 2017, Bord na Móna Powergen appointed a dedicated Community Liaison for the proposed development to ensure continued on the ground engagement with the local community. The Community Liaison has visited homes within 2km of the proposed development on a number of occasions to ensure they are informed about the project as outlined below:

August 2017: To provide residents with a copy of the summer 2017 Project Newsletter

October 2017: To provide residents with an update on the planning timeline in respect of the publication of the Preferred Draft Approach to Wind Energy Development in Ireland.

February 2018: To provide residents with a copy of the revised layout that would be submitted for planning. (Appendix D)

2.11 Engagement with Community Groups

Following the publication of the “Code of Practice for Wind Energy Development in Ireland Guidelines for Community Engagement” Bord na Móna Powergen included the local community groups listed in table 2.11.1 on their circulation list. The Code of Practice requests that developers should circulate information packs to community and voluntary organisations. Since June 2017, all information circulated to local residents is also circulated to community organisations as the Code of Practice requests that “each individual and community organization engaged with should receive the same information”³. These groups have been communicated with through postal communication and have been circulated the following:

³ The Department of Communications, Climate Action & Environment, Code of Practice for Wind Energy Development in Ireland Guidelines for Community Engagement, 2016, p.3

September 2017: Summer 2017 Project Newsletter, cover letter explaining the purpose for them receiving the Newsletter and also to provide them with contact details for the dedicated Community Liaison Officer.

October 2017: Update on the planning timeline in respect of the publication of the Preferred Draft Approach to Wind Energy Development in Ireland.

February 2018: A copy of the revised layout that would be submitted for planning

Table: 2.11.1 List of Community Groups

1. Cashel GAA	2. Lanesborough Tidy Towns
3. Cloontagh National School	4. Lanesborough Tourism Co-op
5. Derraghan Development Association	6. Lanesborough Triathlon Club
7. Fermoy National School	8. Lough Ree Athletic Club
9. Keenagh Community Co-Op	10. Lough Ree Defibrillator Group
11. Kenagh & District Development Association	12. Lough Ree Development Group
13. Kenagh Badminton Club	14. Lough Ree Monster festival
15. Killashee National School	16. Lough Ree Sub Aqua Club
17. Killashee Tidy Towns	18. Newtowncashel Community Centre
19. Lanesboro Gun Club	20. Newtowncashel National School
21. Lanesborough National School	22. Newtowncashel Rural Development Group
23. Lanesborough All Weather Track Committee	24. Newtowncashel Shooting & Conservation Club
25. Lanesborough Angling Hub	26. Newtowncashel Tidy Towns
27. Lanesborough Badminton Club	28. Rathcline GAA
29. Lanesborough Community Centre	30. Rathcline L.F.C.
31. Lanesborough Community College	32. St Dominic's National School
33. Lanesborough Horse Fair	34. St. Mary's Hall
35. Lanesborough Karate Club	36. St. Brigids Killashee S.F.C.

In addition to the above communications, Bord na Móna Powergen also meet with the Rural Development Association Groups representing Keenagh, Lanesborough and Newtowncashel on 13th March 2018. Representatives of Killashee Tidy Towns were invited to attend but were unavailable on that day. The purpose of these meetings was to present and discuss the proposed layout and amenity plan for the wind farm to the respective groups.

Bord na Móna Powergen Management also met with representatives of The No to Derryadd Wind Farm Community Group on the 12th December 2018 in the Co-Op Hall in Lanesborough. This meeting was requested by the No to Derryadd Wind Farm Community Group in order to discuss alternatives to the proposed development. Other topics discussed at the meeting included the proposed development, Mid Shannon Wilderness Park proposal, The Community Engagement Forum and an invite for Bord na Móna to attend a Community meeting in January 2019.

2.12 Community Engagement Forum

The Derryadd Community Engagement Forum was established as an additional communications channel to enable Bord na Móna Powergen to engage with interested groups and communities in the vicinity of the proposed development. The Forum was formulated with an Independent Chairperson. The Community Engagement Forum met on an ongoing basis from November 2016 – November 2017 to ensure that community concerns, ideas, views and opinions on the proposed wind farm were raised and discussed with Bord na Móna Powergen. There were 23 voluntary members on the Forum from the townlands that are in closest proximity to the proposed development. Meetings were held with the Community Engagement Forum, during which representatives of Bord na Móna Powergen updated the community members on the progress of the Derryadd Wind Farm project, presented draft and final turbine layout iterations for review and clarified design details. Meetings were held as follows:

- 1st November 2016
- 8th December 2016
- 26th January 2017
- 2nd March 2017
- 28th March 2017
- 6th April 2017
- 13th April 2017
- 4th May 2017
- 8th June 2017
- 26th July 2017
- 11th October 2017
- 16th November 2017

The key issues and concerns raised by the community through the Forum process included:

- Impact of Noise Levels – Day & Night – for Residents and Animals
- Shadow Flicker – Residents & Animals
- Visual Impact
- Property Devaluation
- Construction Issue
- Drainage & Fencing
- Substation
- Amenities
- Enterprise / Tourism
- Incentive Schemes – Community Gain / Near Neighbour

As part of the Forum process the Independent Chairperson kept a running action log to ensure key issues/concerns could be addressed in a timely manner.

2.12.1 Independent Expert Advice

At the request of members of the Forum Bord na Móna Powergen organised for Independent Expert Advice on issues of concern to the Forum.

1. Planning Process: A Senior Planner from Longford County Council attended one of the Forum meetings to explain the planning process, if the project was deemed to be a Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) project the stages involved in this process and how members of the community could make a submission to the relevant consenting authority.
2. Noise: AWN Noise Consultants attended a dedicated meeting on noise to give a comprehensive presentation on how noise modelling is done for propose development, expected noise limits for wind energy developments and how noise is measured and monitored.

In addition, to the Independent Expert Advice, Bord na Móna Powergen also organised for members from other divisions within Bord na Móna Powergen to meet the Forum and address concerns/queries members had at the request of the Forum. This included, Bord na Móna Ecology Department to discuss the after use and rehabilitation plans for Bord na Móna peatlands, Bord na Móna Powergen Operations department to discuss the operational aspects of a wind farm, wind turbines and how they produce electricity and Bord na Móna Peat Division to discuss existing site Boundary Management issues.

2.12.2 Visit to Mountlucas Wind Farm

Members of the Forum requested a visit to Mountlucas Wind Farm to meet with residents around that wind farm. This visit was organised by the Independent Chair, who through a local contact in the area of the wind farm arranged for members of the community around the wind farm to meet representatives from the Forum on the 6th May 2017. Bord na Móna Powergen personnel did not attend at this meeting. Representatives from Derryadd Community Engagement Forum raised a number of questions during this information sharing session and these were responded to by people from Mountlucas. Following this meeting, the representative group of the Forum communicated details on the visit back to the wider Forum meeting in June.

2.12.3 Public Clinic

Following the publication of the revised layout in April 2017, members of the Forum requested that Bord na Móna Powergen hold more information sessions like those held previously to enable other members of the community to meet the project team and discuss the proposed, revised layout. To facilitate this, Bord na Móna Powergen organised a public drop in clinic session at its local works – Mounddillon on the evening of the 25th May 2017, details of which were circulated to residents in advance.

2.12.4 Impact on Livestock

Members of the Forum requested Bord na Móna Powergen provide them with studies done on the potential impact of turbines on livestock. In response to this request members of the Forum were provided with the following two documents:

1. BHS Wind Turbine Guidance for Planners and Developers 2015
2. Vindall 2012- The Impacts of Power on Terrestrial Mammals

2.12.5 Community Benefits

Bord na Móna Powergen also presented the Forum details of its existing Community Gain Scheme in operation at its other operational wind farms. Details were provided on how the fund is calculated, how the awards committee is structured, the process for applying for funding through this Scheme and the weighted scoring system that Bord na Móna Powergen applies to ensure those local to the development benefit from the fund. Copies of existing application forms were made available to the Forum should they wish to see in more detail the stages involved for groups applying for support.

As Bord na Móna Powergen was in the process of developing its Near Neighbour Scheme for its existing wind farms a high-level overview of the Scheme was given to the members of the Forum, outlining the types of benefits that Bord na Móna Powergen was proposing to offer to local residents within a prescribed distance of Mountlucas or Bruckana Wind Farm.

As the Derryadd project is at an early stage of its development, it was outlined to residents that the exact nature and structure of the schemes for this proposed development were not finalized but that this topic would be revisited with the Forum at a later stage.

2.12.6 Environmental Impact Statement

Members of the Forum expressed concern about the size and volume of Environmental Impact Statements that accompany large scale developments. In order to give local residents an opportunity to familiarize themselves with the structure of an EIS, Bord na Móna Powergen made a copy of the EIS for its Cloncreen Wind Farm available to the Forum –through its local works at Mountdillon. Bord na Móna Powergen also provided members of the Forum with a copy of the Contents pages of Cloncreen Wind Farm EIS to explain to them what is included in it, a copy of the Non-Technical Summary, and copy of specific chapters, such as the Noise and Vibration Chapter and Population and Human Health Chapter. The purpose of this was to address concerns on these key topics and also to enable them to familiarise themselves with an EIS and the content so when the Derryadd Wind Farm EIS is published they would have a better understanding of the various chapters and types of information that would be contained in it.

2.12.7 Amenity Plan

Bord na Móna Powergen also organised for a Landscape Architect to present a proposed amenity plan to the members of the Forum. The Landscape Architect presented potential walkway/cycleway routes and potential connectivity and access to the site from local villages and also from the Royal Canal Greenway. A number of amenity ideas for the proposed wind farm were submitted by members of the Forum to the Landscape Architect. Where feasible these have been incorporated into the design such as carparks and connectivity routes. It is Bord na Móna Powergen's intention to engage with the community at a later stage and generate further ideas for potential amenity plans for the proposed development some of which may be supported through the Community Gain Scheme outlined in section 4.2.4.

3.0 Impact of Community Engagement on proposed development

3.1 Number of turbines/Setback distance

The initial layout of the proposed development was revised from 29 to 28 turbines following the second series of Public Consultations in September 2016. At the consultation sessions, a local resident identified to the project team that one of the turbines located on the Derryadd bog appeared to be within the recommended setback distance of 650 meters of their property. This was investigated by the project team and it transpired that during the initial design phase this property was identified as a disused outhouse. Following feedback from the member of the community, this was investigated further and the building was confirmed as a sensitive receptor. The building was then added to the sensitive receptor data set and the turbine layout remodeled to take the new receptor into account. This resulted in a reduction of the turbines numbers from 29 to 28 turbines and was necessary to maintain the proposed setback distance of 650m from all sensitive receptors.

Following the issuing of the proposed turbine layout, the feedback received was that the proximity of turbines to local residents was a cause for concern. In June of 2017 the Preferred Draft Approach for Wind Energy Development in Ireland was published by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government. These draft guidelines indicated that a setback distance of four times the tip height of a turbine is appropriate. It is important to state that the initial wind turbine layout design would be considered to be appropriate and suitable with respect to the proximity of the sensitive receptors and is in line with existing guidance. Bord na Móna Powergen took a strategic decision, as a result of the feedback received and the publication of the Preferred Draft Approach to amend the constraints that impact on the design of the layout. The updated constraint applied was a setback distance of in excess of 750m that was applied to the wind farm design and an increase in tip height from 170m to 185m. This constraint is in line with the postulated four times tip height design constraint proposed in the preferred draft approach. This resulted in a significant increase in the setback distance and a significant reduction in the number of turbines from 28 down to 24.

3.2 Substation location

The application includes 2 no. substations locations and associated grid connections (Option A and Option B). However, only one substation and associated grid connection will ultimately be constructed. In March 2017 Bord na Móna Powergen presented the updated layout to the Forum including the proposed locations for the substations, arising from that meeting local knowledge on the nature of the subsoil and drainage pattern at the original Option B location was provided to the project team by members of the Forum. Following further site investigations by Bord na Móna Powergen, in response to this information, the location was moved away from the original area and moved to the eastern side of the existing railway line. The new location is the finalised location of the proposed Option B substation location.

3.3 Access points and Carparks

During the consultation and engagement process members of the community expressed a desire to link the proposed walkways/cycleways for the wind farm with Corlea Trackway Visitor Centre. On this basis Bord na Móna Powergen has included an entrance on the southern end of Lough Bannow bog to facilitate link up with the Corlea Trackway Visitor and also the recently completed Corlea Amenity Walk project.

In addition, members of the community also expressed interest in providing access from the Royal Canal into the wind farm and vice versa. This proposal would also compliment and feed into the Mid Shannon Wilderness Park proposed for the area. Bord na Móna Powergen explored the potential for this and designed an amenity roadway in order to facilitate access from the Royal Canal into the wind farm. Feedback received from the local community in relation to connectivity between the site and the surrounding population centers and the royal canal was also reflected in feedback received from Longford County Council.

Following feedback from both the local community and other bodies dedicated amenity access points to the site were designed and presented to the Community Engagement Forum. Arising from this presentation the access point proposed from Derryarogue bog into Lanesborough was significantly amended as a result of feedback given from the local community. This access point now links into the local road that creates a direct link between Lanesborough and the Derryarogue element of the proposed development.

4.0 Enduring Economic Benefit

Bord na Móna Powergen recognises that the Code of Practice for Wind Energy Development in Ireland stipulates that wind farm developers should identify enduring economic benefit to the communities concerned from the proposed development and should also highlight short term economic benefits to the communities concerned.

4.1 Short Term Economic Benefits

During construction, it is estimated that at peak construction between 100-120 jobs will be created. This in turn will have a knock on effect on the local economy through the supply of services to the workforce. While at a regional level additional employment will be created in the region through the supply of services and materials (such as stone and concrete) to the wind farm.

Additionally, the payment of a development contribution to Longford County Council in respect of public infrastructure and facilities will provide benefits to the local community such as refurbishment, upgrading, enlargement or replacement of roads, car parks, car parking places, sewers, waste water facilities, drains or water mains, the provision of open spaces, parks, community facilities and amenities and landscaping works etc. in the county.

4.2 Long Term Economic Benefits

The proposed project will provide many long term economic benefits to the communities surrounding the proposed development.

4.2.1 Employment

Once operational, the wind farm will support 6-8 long term, high quality technical jobs in operation and maintenance.

4.2.2 Rates

Annual rates paid by the wind farm to Longford County Council will support the provision of local services.

4.2.3 Road Upgrades

Potential Road upgrades to the local road network during and following the construction of the proposed development will also provide enduring economic benefit to the local communities.

4.2.4 Community Gain Scheme

In addition, a range of other benefits associated with the development will be provided to the local community through the annual Community Gain Scheme. The annual fund of this Scheme will be determined by the total installed MW of the wind farm. The Irish Wind Energy Association recommends that a minimum of €1,000 per installed MW be provided to an annual community fund. The aim of the fund is to provide financial assistance to local community and not-for-profit organisations around the development. In order to be eligible for funding projects must fall within the thematic areas of: Amenities, Community Facilities, Culture/Heritage, Education and Recreation/Health. A key criterion is that the projects and initiatives will benefit the communities surrounding the wind farm.

4.2.5 Near Neighbour Scheme

The proposed Near Neighbour Scheme will offer electricity bill payers living within a prescribed distance of a wind turbine an annual contribution towards their electricity usage. In addition to the electricity contribution payment, the Scheme will also offer participants a contribution towards the completion of energy measures on the property and/or education support. This is in line with existing near neighbor schemes that are active at other Bord na Móna Powergen Wind Farms.

4.2.6 Renewable Electricity Support Scheme (RESS)/Community Ownership

Public Consultation on the Renewable Electricity Support Scheme ended in November 2017. The draft scheme published for consultation outlined a range of measures in Section 5.2 Community Policy Detailed Design⁴. The key elements proposed include:

- A community benefit payment is introduced
- Trusted intermediaries are made available or appointed to manage or oversee the community benefit schemes
- Communities are given the opportunity to invest

Bord na Móna are currently developing a community ownership model which it will explore as part of the community benefit arising from wind farm development. The Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment envisage finalisation of the RESS scheme by the end of 2019. If the proposed development utilizes the RESS then any community benefit stipulations that are outlined in the finalized RESS will have to be incorporated into the operation of the wind farm and will be of enduring benefit to the local community.

4.2.7 Amenity Cycleway/walkway

The proposed development will also provide enduring economic benefits to the local communities through the provision of a large-scale amenity facility. The proposed development consists of over 30km of permanent road network that can be used for walking/running and cycling once the wind farm is operational. It will also provide the opportunity for linkage with the Royal Canal Greenway. The use of wind farms as amenity areas has been successfully

⁴ Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment, Public Consultation on the Design of a new Renewable Electricity Support Scheme in Ireland, September 2017, p. 44

demonstrated at Bord na Móna Powergen's Mountlucas Wind Farm. In 2017, over 32,000 visits were recorded at the amenity facility. It is being used for cycling, walking and running by both local people and schools, sports and athletics clubs and societies on a frequent basis. In mid-2017, the wind farm was chosen as Offaly's first parkrun venue. The parkrun event is a free, weekly, 5km timed run, which takes place in different venues around the world. Currently there are 100 parkrun venues in Ireland. Every Saturday there are now over approx. 80 people taking part in the parkrun on the wind farm. The Operation Transformation Walk for Co Offaly took place at Mountlucas Wind Farm in with over 100 people taking part. In 2018, Mountlucas Wind Farm also hosted the MCI Marathon and Half Marathon. Both the level and frequency of use of the existing amenity elements in the Mountlucas Wind Farm demonstrates a clear long term enduring benefit to the local community. The proposed development of an even larger and more integrated infrastructure as part of the Derryadd project will also provide an enduring benefit to the local community in that area.

5.0 Conclusion

Bord na Móna Powergen has engaged in active engagement, consultation and dialogue with the local community from an early stage during the pre-application stage. The consultation process has been an extremely valuable exercise and has provided a detailed, and enhanced understanding of the key issues and concerns of the local community, which have ultimately shaped the final project proposal.

The development of the proposed Derryadd Wind Farm will provide an enduring economic benefit to the communities surrounding the propose project as outlined in section 4.0 through the extensive amenity plans and linkage with other amenity facilities and tourist attractions in the region, the community benefit package for both residents and community groups, employment during the construction and operation of the development and also through the annual rates payable to the local authority.