



APPENDIX 2-2

COMMUNITY REPORT

**COMMUNITY CONSULTATION &
STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT REPORT**

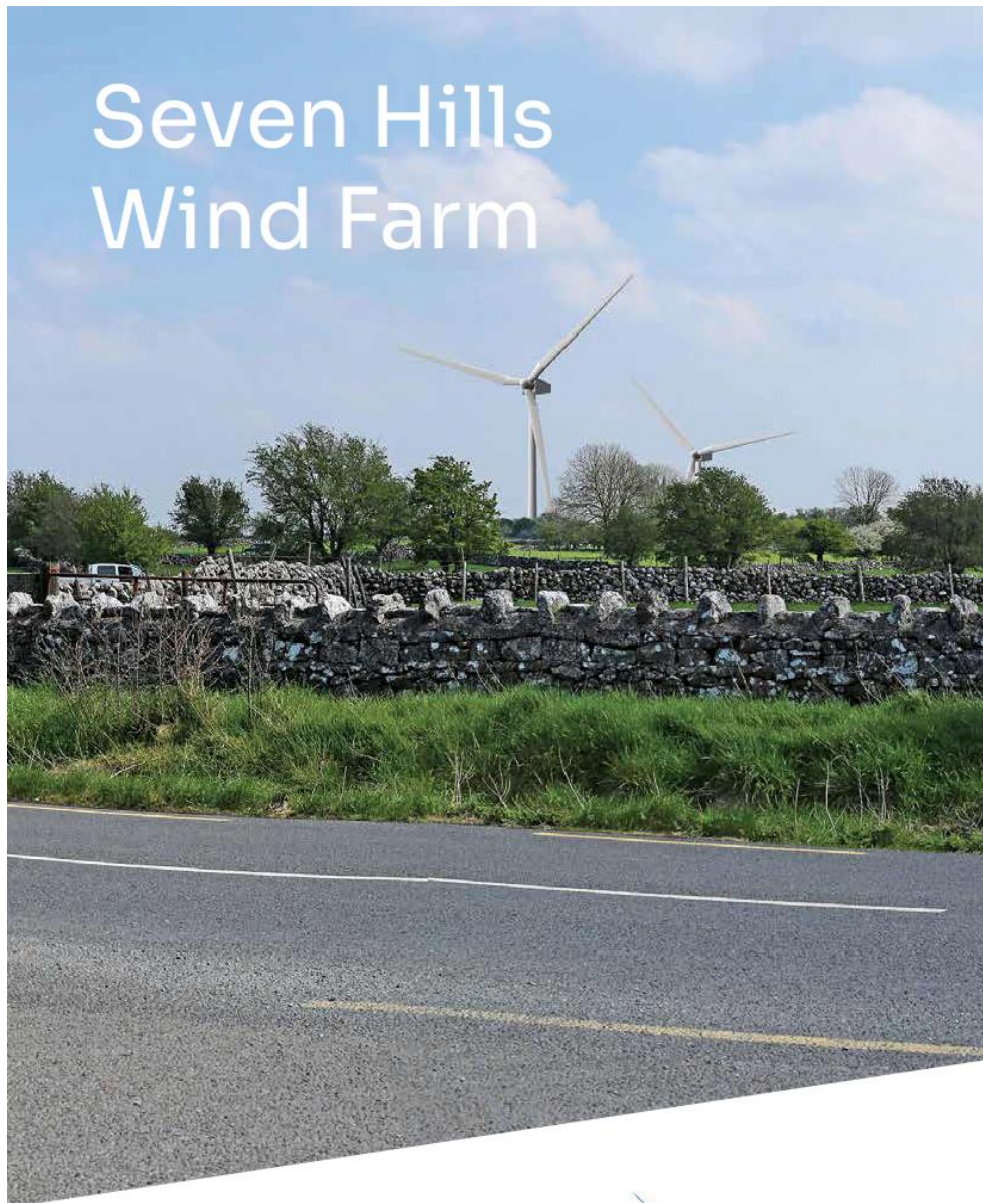


Table of Contents

1.0 Introduction	3
1.1 Background to Community Consultation	3
1.2 Objectives of Community Consultation	4
2.0 Consultation Process	4
2.1 Consultation with Local Representatives	5
2.2 Consultation with Local Community	5
2.2.1 Promotion of Public Consultation Events	8
2.2.2 Clinic Consultation Events – Day One	8
2.2.3 Clinic Consultation Events – Day Two	9
2.2.4 Clinic Consultation Events – Day Three	9
2.2.5 Clinic Consultation Events – Day Four	9
2.2.6 Clinic Consultation Events – Day Five	9
2.2.7 Virtual exhibition	10
2.2.8 Promotion of Public Consultation Events 2021	10
2.2.9 Clinic Consultation Events – July 2021 – Day One	10
2.2.10 Clinic Consultation Events – July 2021 – Day Two	11
2.2.11 Clinic Consultation Events – July 2021 – Day Three	11
2.2.12 Public Consultation Overview/Issues Raised	11
2.3 Impact of Community Consultation on Proposed Development	11
2.3.1 Design of Project	12
2.3.2 Project General Including Visual Impact	12
2.3.3 Community Grants	13
2.3.4 Noise	13
2.3.5 Environmental/ Wildlife (Ecological Sensitivities)	13
2.3.6 Map & Location	14
2.3.7 Property Values	14
2.4 Ongoing Consultation	14
2.5 Socio-Economic Benefits	14
2.5.1 Short Term	14
2.5.2 Long Term	15
2.5.3 Neighbour Scheme	15
2.5.4 Community Fund	16
3.0 Conclusions	16
4.0 Community Consultation Map	17

Appendices

Appendices 1 – 16 Attached Document

1.0 Introduction

This Community Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement Report has been produced by Seven Hills Wind Farm Limited (SHWFL) to meet the objectives for the Seven Hills Wind Farm (SHWF) project under a model of continuous community engagement during all phases of the proposed development. It demonstrates SHWF's commitment to a programme of genuine positive engagement with the local community and stakeholders, which values their continuous contribution and involvement.

The purpose of this report is to demonstrate the approach SHWFL has taken since project inception and to outline the principles and objectives of the approach to consultation and stakeholder engagement.

This report specifically relates to the development phase of the project and includes a detailed Community Engagement and Stakeholder Management (CESM) plan, including references to the construction and operational phases. This plan will be continually reviewed and updated throughout the lifetime of the proposed development.

The report has been prepared in line with the requirements set out in the *Draft Revised Wind Energy Development Guidelines 2019¹ (Draft WEDGs)* and the *Guidelines for Community Engagement (2016)²*.

The draft WEDGs state that wind energy developers “... are therefore now required, in advance of submitting applications for permission, to take active steps to: inform local communities as they begin to develop their proposals; take the views of local communities into account in designing their proposals; demonstrate what practical effect that process of engagement has had; and, set out how the project will perform as a good neighbour in the context of the long-term economic and social development of the community or communities within which it is situated”.

It is acknowledged that active consultation and dialogue with the local community from an early stage is a vital part of any proposed wind energy development.

1.1 Background to Community Consultation

Prior to the commencement of community consultation, the SHWF team organised and undertook a series of internal community consultation workshops to develop a Community Liaison Strategy. These workshops were arranged to educate SHWF personnel and to develop community consultation skills for those who have worked and who will continue to work with the community on the ground. The Project Manager, Community Liaison Officers, and members of the assigned community engagement team participated in the workshops.

SHWFL developed a toolkit for stakeholder engagement as part of the Community Liaison Strategy, which has been utilised throughout this consultation process. It should be noted that, while SHWFL utilised a number of stakeholder management toolkits to record contact details and issues raised by the public, this information cannot be made publicly available in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2016.

¹ Draft Revised Wind Energy Development Guidelines (December 2019)

² Code of Practice for Wind Energy Development in Ireland - Guidelines for Community Engagement issued by the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (2016)

This report sets out how SHWFL carried out the community consultation process in the area of the proposed wind farm. The SHWF team has carried out extensive consultation in relation to the proposed development with members of the public, including residents, business owners, community groups, schools, church bodies and local political representatives. The objective of the community consultation process has been to ensure that the views and concerns of the local community have been addressed and considered in the project design process.

In accordance with the *Guidelines for Community Engagement* (2016), Mr Malachy McGee (Galetech Energy Developments), Ms Deirdre Keegan (Galetech Energy Developments) & Ms Rosy Billingham (Energia Renewables) were appointed as the Community Liaison Officer team (CLO) for the proposed SHWF. The CLO has the authority to make publicly available full, clear and comprehensive information about the project during key milestone stages of the proposed development and the resources to receive, record, investigate, respond to and address queries and complaints during the various stages of development and operation.

1.2 Objectives of Community Consultation

The overriding philosophy of SHWFL is to manage communications, to disseminate information proactively in a planned and systematic manner, to consult with stakeholders at key stages of the project life cycle, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy and make adjustments to increase its effectiveness over all phases.

The objectives of this plan are therefore as follows:

- Describe the approach to community engagement and stakeholder management for the project.
- Identify how community engagement and stakeholder management issues pertaining to the proposed development have been managed to date.
- Identify the main stakeholders, their issues and concerns, influence, and participation levels.
- Identify key messages used in communicating with stakeholders and the project phases, where they are likely to be impacted or interested.

This plan identifies activities that will facilitate a flow of information between SHWFL, the community and stakeholders throughout the life of the project. The plan will be regularly reviewed and will continue to be iteratively shaped and adapted to reflect the needs of the community and key stakeholders, as the consultation develops and changes and new issues emerge.

2.0 Consultation Process

The approach to consultation adopted by SHWFL comprised a range of methodologies including:

- Dedicated project Community Liaison Officer (CLO) – one-on-one meetings
- Consultation with local elected representatives
- Door-to-door visits to local residences and freepost feedback contact cards
- Conversations with the local groups, community hall committees & local elected representatives, where appropriate

- Project website: www.sevenhillswindfarm.ie and virtual exhibition
- Public consultation clinics
- Freephone call-back service, e-mail, letter, leaflet and brochure
- Print and radio adverts in local media

2.1 Consultation with Local Representatives

Local elected representatives within the Roscommon County Council Municipal District were initially contacted by email in March 2020 in order to provide an outline of the proposed development and to obtain initial feedback. The email correspondence included detailed information on the proposed development, including contact details for further engagement (see **Appendix 1**).

All Oireachtas members and Councillors from the Roscommon Municipal District and Westmeath Municipal District were consulted and provided with information brochures. A decision to contact both constituencies was based on the grid route going towards Athlone town.

Local representatives were also contacted on the following dates via various means of communication:

• 08.03.2020 – Email regarding open public consultation event in local halls
• 11.03.2020 - Email statement advising of the cancellation of a public meeting due to Covid-19 restrictions
• 03.07.2020 - Invitation sent regarding consultation clinics for July 2020
• 16.02.2021 - Phone calls made to representatives to see if they had any queries on the project
• 07.07.2021 - Email regarding the online exhibition, grid route map & updated brochure sent to local representatives
• 20.07.2021 – Emailed letter and invitation to new follow-up clinic dates
• February 2020 - August 2021 – General phone call, email and clinic follow-up correspondence

2.2 Consultation with Local Community

Whilst it is noted that community consultation is currently not a statutory requirement, it is an important element of a wind energy development and, as noted above, SHWFL recognises the importance of an extensive community consultation process and the benefit that community involvement brings to this proposed development as a whole. SHWFL has also been mindful of the requirements set out in the draft WEDGs.

The first point of contact for the community consultation process was the SHWF website. This was launched in February 2020 (www.sevenhillswindfarm.ie).

The website was live before any consultation letters were sent out or clinics were held as a central point of contact. The web page was initially hosted on the Energia Group site www.energiagroup.com. It was converted to a stand-alone website in line with SID project requirements in May 2021. It has been updated on a regular basis at various stages of the project since its launch, as and when information has become available through the project design and assessment process.

Door-to-door visits

Door-to-door visits commenced in February 2020 in the early stages of the community consultation process. A flyer containing details of the proposed development, website address, timelines and milestones, together with contact details for the CLO, was handed out on these door-to-door initial contacts (see **Appendix 2**). This engagement with residents within the immediate vicinity of the development was continued until Mid-March 2020. Covid-19 restrictions led to this contact being temporarily put on hold.

At this first initial contact, local residents were advised of the intention to develop a wind energy project in the area and were provided with details of the project. They were also advised of the intention to carry out community consultation meetings and details of where to find out further information. All residents were provided with contact details for the community engagement team, who could be contacted with any further queries.

A total of 300 houses were visited during this stage of the consultation. A “Sorry I Missed You” leaflet was left with every household, if there was no response at the door (see **Appendix 3**).

On 25.09.20 door-to-door visitation re-commenced. Three days of door-to-door visits were completed. Covid-19 restrictions were then put back into force, which halted this face-to-face engagement for a second time.

Subsequently, in October 2020, a letter was sent to all residents updating the community about the impact of Covid-19 restrictions on the ongoing consultation, as the community engagement team was aware that there was an outstanding number of households which had not yet been visited in person (see **Appendix 4**).

It should be noted that any resident, who was initially contacted by the SHWF team but who made a direct request to be removed from the project contact list, was duly removed from the mailing list. These wishes were respected with regard to any future information mailing.

Consultation clinics

In March 2020 the SHWF team prepared local hall meetings and advertised these meetings via notices, local church newsletter, post offices and local shops, and radio and newspaper (see **Appendix 5**).

These meetings were postponed on 12.03.20 due to Covid-19 restrictions (see **Appendix 6**).

The SHWF community engagement team sent letters on 07.04.20 to all local residents within a 2-kilometre radius of the proposed project to continue engagement. This decision was made due to the cancellation of the community event in March 2020 (see **Appendix 7**).

The letter included:

- Letter
- Copy of the media release
- Freepost comment card
- Colouring page for children

The SHWF community engagement team sent further letters on 22.06.20 to all local residents, outlining plans to facilitate a series of community consultation clinics in July 2020.

These clinic dates were put in place in order to consult in a way which was compliant with the Covid-19 restrictions, regulations and guidelines. The clinics were held on a one-to-one basis by appointment only. Four members of the SHWF community team were present and up to two members of each household at any given time. One member of the SHWF community team remained at the door and each member of the public was asked to wait outside for a telephone call from the team before entering the clinic. This controlled environment ensured compliance with Covid-19 restrictions, ensuring the safety of local residents and staff members. Perspex screens were installed between the team and the local residents (see **Appendix 8**).

Four clinics were organised as follows:

Dysart Hall	Monday	6th July 2020	Time: Between 12 noon and 8 pm.
Taughmaconnell Hall	Tuesday	14th July 2020	Time: Between 12 noon and 8 pm.
CAM Brideswell	Wednesday	22nd July 2020	Time: Between 12 noon and 8 pm.
Athlone Springs Hotel	Thursday	30th July 2020	Time: Between 12 noon and 8 pm.

A second Taughmaconnell Hall date on 29.07.20 was added due to public demand.

After conversations with local residents and representatives, the venue for the final clinic on 30.07.20 was changed from the Athlone Springs Hotel to Dysart Hall – again due to public demand.

At these clinics, local residents were advised of the intention to develop a wind energy project in the area and were provided with initial design details of the project. They were also advised of the intention to carry out community consultation meetings and details of where to find out further information. All residents were provided with contact details for the community engagement team, who were available to answer any further queries. Residents were also shown a draft design layout. Photomontages were also produced for the draft plan for the purposes of this clinic in order to supply a visual representation of what the proposed wind farm would look like (see **Appendix 9**).

A number of local residents were unable to make any consultation date and an individual house call, following Covid-19 guidelines, was provided to anyone requesting a visit.

A commitment was made to 12 local residents to supply a photomontage of the view of the draft layout from their house. These were all carried out in August and September 2020 and 11 photomontages were hand-delivered to residents with one resident declining to accept the photomontage, when an attempt was made to deliver it safely within Covid-19 guidelines.

On 25.01.21 an updated timeline of events was shared on the SHWF website:
www.sevenhillswindfarm.ie.

A decision was made by the SHWF team to place monthly advertisements in the local newspapers in order to keep contact with local residents and reach out to the wider community (see **Appendix 10**).

It is important to note that, as part of the consultation events, printed copies of maps and leaflets were made available to the clinic attendees.

A clinic sign-in sheet was not provided, due to Covid-19 restrictions. However, attendees had an opportunity to provide their name and contact details to facilitate any further queries. A feedback form was also provided (via email and available at the public consultations).

Telephone consultation

In addition to the measures outlined above, a dedicated project freephone number (1800 140976) was launched on 01.02.20. This was a main telephone line for the local community to contact with any queries, comments or requests for a call-back.

The telephone line enabled all residents, or community members, to have direct access with the CLO and indeed any member of the project team. This line was set up in conjunction with the launch of the website and has remained open throughout the consultation process. All queries made via this method have been responded to, depending on the availability of the information required at the time of request.

Email Consultation

A dedicated email address (sevenhillswindfarm@galetechenergy.com and clo@energia.ie) was also launched in February 2020. This email address provided the local community with another method of contact. Queries, comments and requests received via the email address have been dealt with in the same manner as telephone queries.

2.2.1 Promotion of Consultation Clinic Event

As identified above, SHWFL hosted a total of five consultation clinics during July 2020. A number of mechanisms were used to promote the consultation clinic events, including radio advertisements, local newspaper advertisements and a notice on the dedicated website. A letter was also mailed to each resident within the 2-kilometer radius on 22.06.20 (see **Appendix 11**).

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the clinics were held in a controlled environment, where each member of the SHWF team sat 2.5 meters apart and perspex screens were placed between the team and members of the public. Masks were provided and worn as part of the process. Sanitiser was in place at the point of entry and made available on each table in the room.

Attendees were asked to remain outside and wait for a telephone call from the clinic team before entering the hall. Each area was sanitised before and after entry.

Safeguards included a Covid-19 symptom checklist. Mechanisms were in place so that any member of the public feeling unwell, or showing signs of Covid symptoms, would be offered a rescheduled appointment (see **Appendix 12**).

An offer of a home visit was provided for anyone unable to attend the clinic requiring further information.

2.2.2 Clinic Consultation Events - Day One

The first of the three public consultation days took place in Dysart Hall from 12 noon until 8 pm on 06.07.20.

The venue was chosen due to its accessible location and proximity to the development and the schedule and time slots were designed to allow as many people as possible to attend.

The clinic attracted a large number of people who engaged fully with the SHWF community engagement team. Over the course of the day, the appointment schedule was fully booked with 15 slots for groups of two from each household.

Where members of the public arrived without an appointment, they were facilitated within the busy schedule, adhering to all Covid guidelines. All participants chose to leave contact details on file for future correspondence and agreed to be contacted with further updates on the proposed development. The clinic attendees were shown a visual power point presentation (see **Appendix 13**).

2.2.3 Clinic Consultation Events - Day Two

The second consultation day was held in Taughmaconnell Hall, Co. Roscommon on 14.07.20. Over the course of the second day, the appointment schedule had 13 slots with participants mainly attending in groups of two. Each slot consisted of a 40-minute consultation with the team.

2.2.4 Clinic Consultation Events - Day Three

The third consultation event took place on 22.07.20 in Cam, Brideswell, Co. Roscommon.

This day had 10 booked slots with participants mainly attending in groups of two. The community engagement team provided responses to each of the questions posed and clarified any follow-up queries which were raised.

2.2.5 Clinic Consultation Events - Day Four

The fourth day of consultation brought the SHWF team back to Dysart Hall on 30.07.20.

The venue for this date had previously been advertised as the Athlone Springs hotel in order to engage with residents from the wider area and to provide an alternative location for local residents who requested this during door-to-door conversations. However, the venue was changed to Dysart Hall due to a lack of bookings in Athlone and a number of requests from residents for an additional clinic to be held in Dysart.

This day consisted of 11 appointments with households mainly attending in groups of two.

2.2.6 Clinic Consultation Event – Day Five

A half-day consultation clinic was held in Taughmaconnell Hall from 10am – 3pm.

The SHWF community liaison team waited an extra hour in case any further residents wished to attend. Residents who were unable to attend previous consultation clinics were contacted to see if this date and venue was suitable. None took up this offer.

After speaking with the general public, local elected representatives and local residents at the clinics, a commitment was made to revisit the SHWF locality with further clinic dates, when the final turbine layout was available for viewing.

These additional follow-up clinics were duly organised in July 2021.

2.2.7 Online Virtual exhibition

Due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, a decision was made to create an online virtual exhibition to inform residents about SHWF updated plans, in case the 2021 planned public consultation clinics had to be cancelled in line with public health guidance.

This platform created a ‘virtual village hall’, enabling users to click and view nine information banners, as well as photomontages, maps and community benefits details. A welcome video launched on entry, outlining how to use the exhibition and explaining that, due to broadband coverage in the area, the exhibition might take time to load.

Users of the platform were also able to leave feedback and contact the SHWF team for further information. A copy of the brochure, which was posted to households within 2km of the proposed development, was also available to download.

Feedback from Virtual Exhibition:

The virtual exhibition was available from June 2021 – November 2021.

During this period, there were 493 visits to the room. Most activity took place around the launch date, between 04.07.21 – 08.07.21. Thereafter, there were spikes on 20.07.21 and again between 26.07.21 – 29.07.21. Site visits in August did not exceed 10 visits on any one day.

The “Welcome Video” was the most popular part of the virtual exhibition. This is to be expected, as the video launches automatically upon entry. This is followed by the “Photomontage Viewer” and the “Site Layout Map” with 178 and 170 clicks respectively. The “Seven Hills Wind Farm” introductory banner attracted 100 clicks, while the “Site Potential” banner received 53 clicks (see **Appendix 14 for exhibition link and report**).

2.2.8 Promotion of Public Consultation Events 2021

SHWFL hosted three follow-up consultation clinics during July 2021. A number of mechanisms were used to promote these consultation events, including radio advertisements, local paper advertisements and an advertisement on the dedicated website. A letter was also sent to each resident in the immediate area on 22.06.2021 (see **Appendix 15**).

2.2.9 Clinic Consultation Events – July 2021 – Day One

The first of the three public consultation days took place in Dysart Hall from 12 noon until 8 pm on the 27.07.21.

The clinic had four returning residents from the previous event held in 2020. The appointment schedule offered a reduced amount of time per slot (30 minutes per slot in comparison to 45-minute slots offered in 2020). This was to accommodate as many attendees as possible.

The clinic attendees were shown a series of visual pull-up information banners, as well as detailed mapping of the development and updated photomontage images from key viewpoints in the surrounding area.

2.2.10 Clinic Consultation Events – July 2021 – Day Two

Day two of the consultation clinic events was held on 28.07.21 in Cam, Brideswell, Co. Roscommon. There were four members of the SHWF team on hand to meet members of the public.

Twelve slots were booked before arrival. There were four returning residents from the previous clinic held in 2020. The community engagement team provided responses to each of the questions posed and clarified any queries which were raised. All attendees were again provided with project maps, grid route details and offered a notification when the planning application had been submitted.

2.2.11 Clinic Consultation Events – July 2021 – Day Three

Day three of the clinic events was held on 29.07.21 in Taughmaconnell Hall, Co. Roscommon. At the beginning of the day only one resident had booked an appointment slot but, by evening time, the SHWF team had facilitated seven appointments. The clinic finished at 8 pm.

2.2.12 Public Consultation Overview/Issues Raised

Members of the public were invited to make comments, raise any concerns and opinions regarding the proposed development during the clinic events and door-to-door meetings.

Local residents and attendees were given the opportunity to put their names forward to take part in a visit to an operational wind farm development, which the CLO planned to organise at a time that suited all concerned. SHWFL intended, post Covid, to facilitate a group visit when restrictions allowed. However, with restrictions continuing in place until May 2021 and due to ongoing health and safety concerns, the team instead provided information on wind farms which were similar to the proposed project so that residents could organise their own visit at their convenience.

The SHWF team received further requests for photomontages. These residents were offered the opportunity to visualise the wind farm using a “TruView” digital reality lens viewer at their property. In all, 13 residents were offered this service. Eight accepted. The remaining five declined the offer.

2.3 Impact of Community Consultation on Proposed Development

The main issues raised during the consultation process are as follows:

Design of the Project	359
Project General queries, including visual impact	293
Community Grants	60
Noise Levels	55
Environmental/ Wildlife	57
Map and Location	37
Property Values	25

The feedback received from the public consultation process has been a key contributory factor in shaping and influencing the design process of the proposed development, in conjunction with scoping activities and environmental evaluations.

As identified above, some key issues have been highlighted during the public consultation phase. These issues are outlined below.

2.3.1 Design of the Project

The design and proposed location of the project and turbine layout were raised by numerous members of the public, during public information clinics, door-to-door visits and phone calls, as well as via comment cards and emails. Residents and members of the public were advised that the key criteria for the selection of the site as a feasible location were as follows:

- It is designated suitable for wind energy generation in the 2022-2028 Roscommon County Development Plan with the majority of turbines being in the 'Most Favoured' area
- Suitable separation distances could be provided between wind turbines and dwellings
- It is not designated as a Natura 2000 site (i.e. Special Area of Conservation, Special Protection Area or Natural Heritage Area)
- The site is in a good location for connection to the national grid
- The site is close to the M6 for transport of large components
- The site has good annual average wind speeds.

During the July 2020 clinics, the SHWF team committed to review the precise turbine locations and, subsequently, some alterations were made to the layout of the proposed development. This included a reduction in the number of proposed turbines from 21 to 20.

2.3.2 Project General queries including visual impact

While there were many specific general queries regarding the SHWF project, visual impact was a common concern raised during the community consultation process.

Some residents raised a concern regarding the viewpoint images shown in the visual presentation. They felt there weren't sufficient photomontage views and the SHWF team explained that the final

viewpoint locations, to be used in the EIAR, would be selected by an independent consultancy in the process of carrying out a full landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA).

Residents enquired about pylons on the development and were informed that the cable for the SHWF would be an underground link to the grid and the SHWF team highlighted that this would remove some visual impact.

Furthermore, in response to queries regarding the visual impact of the substation, the SHWF team informed residents this would be taken into consideration as part of the planning decision-making process.

2.3.3 Community Grants

The SHWF project team spoke to numerous residents about the local impact of the project.

A frequently asked question was how SHWFL would give back to the community. The SHWF project team hired an independent researcher, with a background in community charitable funding, to carry out an assessment of the local area and how a wind farm community benefit fund could benefit the region. The work was undertaken during February and March 2021. The consultant contacted a total of 46 individuals who were all members of local organisations. These community groups were mainly located in Dysart, Taughmaconnell, Four Roads, Curraghboy, Rahara and Brideswell. Almost all those who participated in the research were living in these areas.

Engagements were typically conducted via phone calls, although video meetings over Zoom were also offered. The typical meeting/call duration was 50 minutes to one hour and involved a structured conversation following a set questionnaire. This process was explained at the start of each call, as was the fact that the focus of the research was not the development of the wind farm itself but rather the projected community benefit fund and how it could be used (see **Appendix 16**).

The aim of this research was to engage with local community groups and to start a local discussion, generating ideas about how best to use a community benefit fund. Grants will be made available to support projects that are aligned with the needs of the local area with a focus on sustainability.

2.3.4 Noise Impacts

Noise was again a common theme of the consultation process. Where concerns were raised, the SHWF team was able to advise interested parties that noise levels would be compliant with the limits set out in the Wind Energy Development Guidelines. In addition, SHWFL also advised that the development would be required, by law, to comply with any planning conditions set out by the Planning Authority.

2.3.5 Environmental/ Wildlife (Ecological Sensitivities)

The ecological sensitivity of the site was also raised by a number of concerned residents. In response, SHWFL advised that extensive ecological and biodiversity surveys - including birds, bats, mammals, aquatic species and habitats - had been carried out by an independent consultancy for a number of years and that these surveys were still continuing across the site to inform the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR).

2.3.6 Map & Location

Members of the public raised questions regarding the map and location of the proposed wind turbines. In public consultation in 2020, a draft layout map was made available. The SHWF team advised that extensive surveying of the area was in progress and that a final layout map would be shared with the public, once surveys had been completed.

An updated map with finalised turbine locations and grid route was made available in July 2021 during consultation clinics and via the website and online exhibition.

2.3.7 Property Values

A number of residents expressed concern in relation to residential property values in the immediate area. A number of those who visited the clinics in 2020 and in 2021 raised concerns about potential impact on property prices. The SHWF team explained that no research had yet been undertaken in Ireland. Published research in the UK and at a European level, suggests that wind farms have not materially impacted on property values. This a reasonable assumption based on the available literature.

The SHWF team explained that, based on their experience working on other wind energy developments in Ireland, the additional income generated for land owners, substantial annual community benefit funds and council rates payments have helped to support the local community and helped to ensure that residents benefit directly from renewable energy developments.

2.4 Ongoing consultation

Contact details of the community engagement team have been provided to the public throughout the door-to-door consultations, via letter and at clinic events. They have been shared in local newspapers and advertised on local radio.

SHWFL launched a dedicated project website: www.sevenhillswindfarm.ie. The website is an additional communications channel designed to inform members of the public about the proposed development with regular online updates. Details of the proposed location, layout drawings and dedicated contact details for the project can be found on the website.

SHWFL also launched an online exhibition, where details of the proposed project could be viewed, along with team members' details. The SHWF community engagement team has, and will continue to have, a CLO on hand at all stages to answer any questions or comments.

2.5 Socio-economic Benefits

SHWFL acknowledges that the Code of Practice for Wind Energy Development in Ireland stipulates that wind energy developers should identify enduring economic and socio-economic benefit to the communities living and working in the vicinity of proposed developments.

These benefits, which were highlighted in SHWF brochures, on the project website, in the virtual exhibition and during consultation clinics and door-to-door visits, are explained further in the sections below.

2.5.1 Short Term

At a local level, SHWF will create up to 100 temporary construction jobs. The wind farm will also have a positive impact on the local economy through the generation of local expenditure in local shops and businesses.

2.5.2 Long Term

Employment

Once operational, the wind farm will support long-term, high-quality jobs in operation and maintenance, as well as ancillary functions.

This will, in turn, have a beneficial effect on the local economy through the generation of local employment and the potential for increased expenditure in local shops and businesses.

Rates

Once the wind farm is operational, SHWF will pay annual rates to Roscommon County Council, estimated to be in the region of €900,000 per annum. This annual revenue will support the provision of local council services and public infrastructure. These substantial annual payments will bring benefits to the community such as upgraded roads, waste water facilities, water supply infrastructure, community facilities and local amenities.

Across the wider Midlands region, this new proposed development will help to meet the rising demand for electricity, particularly renewable electricity, resulting in renewed economic growth in the Midlands.

The proposed SHWF will play a worthy part in assisting Ireland's commitment to increasing its renewable energy sources with the production of renewable electricity. The Government's new pledge in November 2021 to generate 80% of electricity from renewable sources by 2030 will form part of the new Climate Action Plan, which is being overseen by the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC).

The proposed SHWF project will also play a key part in reducing national greenhouse gas emissions. In doing so, it will reduce Ireland's dependence on external energy sources and help to improve security of energy supply.

2.5.3 Neighbour Scheme

The proposed near neighbour proximity payment scheme will offer electricity bill payers living within 1km of a wind turbine an annual contribution of €1,000 towards their electricity usage as part of the proposed community benefit fund.

2.5.4 Community Benefit Fund

The SHWF development has the potential to provide significant additional investment in community initiatives which will benefit local residents and businesses through an annual wind farm community benefit fund.

If this project is constructed as currently designed, the fund will invest in excess of €300,000 a year in local community projects, based on a minimum annual investment of €16,000 per turbine. This represents a dependable source of investment for the communities living in the vicinity of SHWF.

The fund will be administered by an independent charitable trust on behalf of SHWFL and will prioritise energy efficiency and sustainability goals. It will be designed and regularly reviewed in conjunction with local community groups to meet local needs. Any funds not spent within the corresponding twelve months will be rolled over to spend the following year. An annual record of all project funding, together with an impact assessment, will be made publicly accessible.

The fund will prioritise households within 1km of the wind turbines by offering electricity bill payers an annual contribution of €1,000 towards their electricity usage.

3.0 Conclusions

SHWFL has actively engaged, consulted and maintained dialogue with the local community and other stakeholders from an early stage of development and throughout the pre-application consultation process. This ongoing engagement 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 helped shape the final project design.

The objective of the of this public consultation process was to ensure the widest possible engagement with individual residents, communities and other stakeholders in line with industry best practice. Every effort was made to identify key stakeholders in a flexible and facilitative manner in order to build strong and effective relationships with the people living in the vicinity of the proposed wind farm and wider area around it.

Community engagement will be maintained throughout the different stages of the project, right through construction, operation and decommissioning.

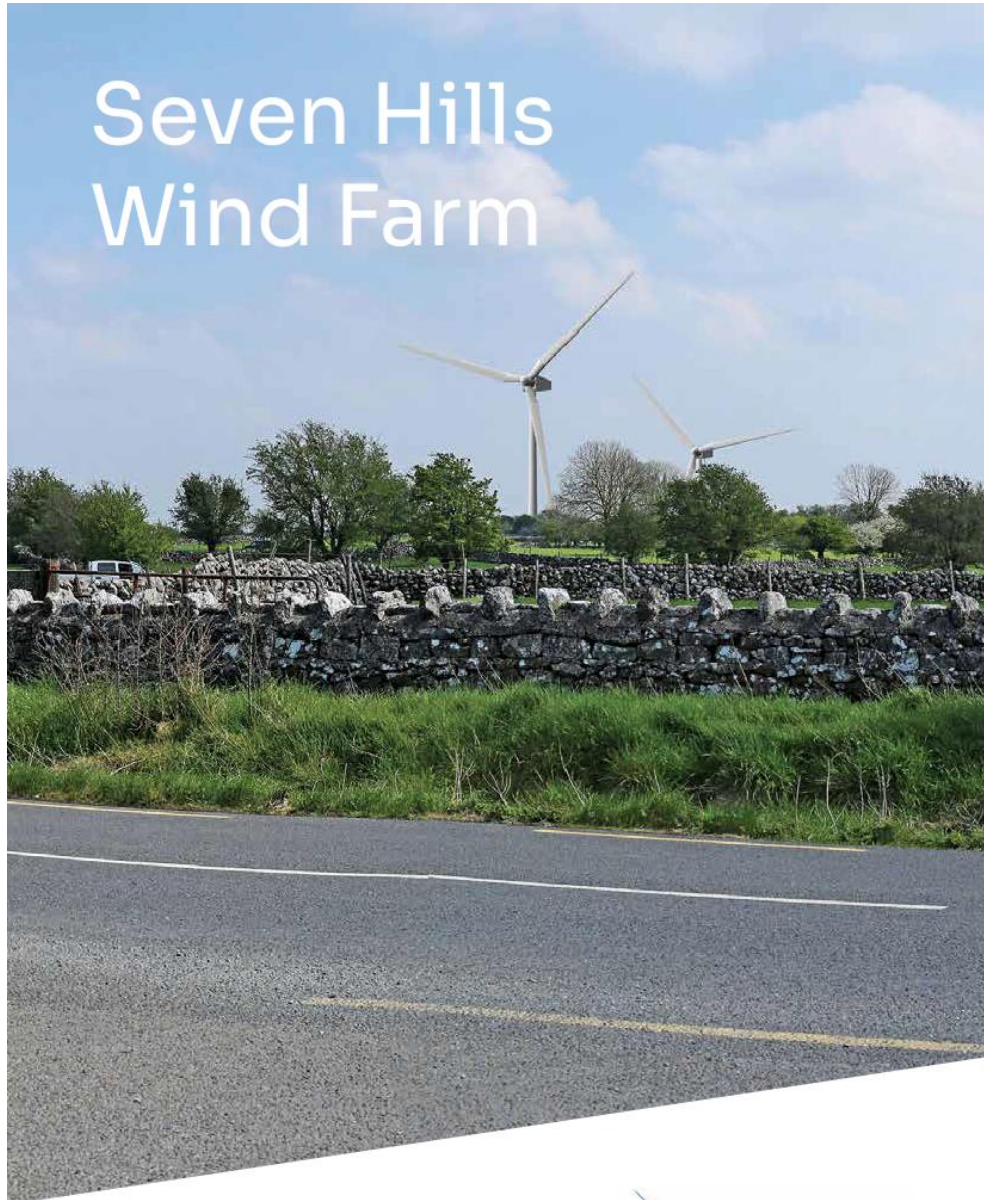
During the planning and consents stage, the CLO will remain available to the community to deal with any local issues that may arise and respond in a timely manner.

SHWFL will prioritise community issues, particularly during the construction phase. e.g., advance warning of any temporary road closures, management of traffic flows and execution of all required

4.0 Consultation Map



COMMUNITY CONSULTATION &
STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT REPORT
APPENDICES 1 - 16



energia



APPENDIX 1

Local Representatives

Dáil Éireann: Roscommon-Galway Constituency		
Michael Fitzmaurice TD Roscommon-Galway	michael.fitzmaurice@oireachtas.ie	(086) 191 4565
Denis Naughten TD Roscommon-Galway	dnaughten@oir.ie	086 170 8800
Clare Kerrane TD Roscommon-Galway	claire.kerrane@oireachtas.ie	0871945254 or (090) 9644901
Roscommon County Council		
Cllr John Naughton (FG) Athlone MD	cllrjnaughten@roscommoncoco.ie	087 9019334
Cllr Orla Leyden (FF) Roscommon MD	cllroleiden@roscommoncoco.ie	087 2819918
Cllr Kathleen Shanagher (Non-Party) Roscommon MD	cllrkshanagher@roscommoncoco.ie	086 3726743
Cllr Paschal Fitzmaurice (FF) Roscommon MD	cllrpfitzmaurice@roscommoncoco.ie	087 2299980
Cllr Liam Callaghan (FG) Boyle MD	cllrlcallaghan@roscommoncoco.ie	086 3325839
Cllr Tony Ward (Non-Party) Athlone MD	cllrtward@roscommoncoco.ie	087 9165226
Cllr Donal Kilduff (Non-Party) Athlone MD	donal@kilduff.ie	086 8579459
Ivan Connaughton (Non-Party)	cllriconnaughton@roscommoncoco.ie	086 8985013
Cllr John Keogh (FF) Athlone MD	cllrjkeogh@roscommoncoco.ie	087 6440534

Cllr Laurence Fallon (Non- Party) Athlone MD	cllrlfallon@roscommoncoco.ie	086 8575512
Cllr Nigel Dineen (Non-Party) Roscommon MD	cllrndineen@roscommoncoco.ie	086 2130723
Cllr Anthony Waldron (Non-Party) Roscommon MD	cllrawaldron@roscommoncoco.ie	086 7866774
Cllr Marty McDermott (FF) Roscommon MD	marty.mcdermott1@gmail.com	087 3466064
Cllr Valerie Byrne (Non-Party) Boyle MD	cllrvbyrne@roscommoncoco.ie	086 8887897
Cllr Michael Patrick Mulligan (SF) Boyle MD	cllrmmulligan@roscommoncoco.ie	087 7799781
Cllr Tom Crosby (Non-Party) Boyle MD	cllrtomcrosby@gmail.com	086 6005530
Cllr John Cummins (FF) Boyle MD	cllrjcummins@roscommoncoco.ie	086 8234050
Cllr Joe Murphy (FF) Boyle MD	cllrjmurphy@roscommoncoco.ie	086 1052197
Malachy Hand (FF Candidate)	handmalachyff@gmail.com	086 3184165
Seanad Éireann		
Sen. Frank Feighan (Now TD for Sligo-Leitrim and Minister of State for Public Health, Well Being & National Drugs Strategy)	frank.feighan@oir.ie	071 9149444
Sen. Maura Hopkins (Fine Gael Seanad Spokesperson for Regional, Rural, Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht Affairs)		

Sen.Terry Leyden	terry.leyden@oireachtas.ie	087 7978922
European Parliament: Midlands-North-West		
Luke Ming Flanagan MEP	lukeming.flanagan@ep.europa.eu	
Mairead McGuinness MEP	Mairead.mcguinness@ep.europa.eu	Now European Commissioner
Maria Walsh MEP	Maria.walsh@ep.europa.eu	
Matt McCarthy MEP	Matt.carthy@ep.europa.eu	Now TD for Cavan Monaghan

Initial Contact 08.03.2021 – Email RE: Local Clinic

clr

Current Folder

Results

By Date

Today

Seven Hills Windfarm First Consultation Day

Clr. Shanagher, Please find attached details of our planned public

12:46

Seven Hills Windfarm First Consultation Day

Clr. Fallon, Please find attached details of our planned public

12:43

'cllrbyrne@roscommoncoco.ie'

Seven Hills Windfarm First Consultation Day

Clr. Byrne, Please find attached details of our planned public

12:31

'cllrmmulligan@roscommoncoco.ie'

Seven Hills Windfarm First Consultation Day

Clr. Mulligan, Please find attached details of our planned public

12:31

'cllrcrosby@roscommoncoco.ie'

Seven Hills Windfarm First Consultation Day

Clr. Crosby, Please find attached details of our planned public

12:31

Seven Hills Windfarm First Consultation Day

MM

Malachy Magee <malachy@galetechenergy.cor>

To

'cllrmmulligan@roscommoncoco.ie'

12:31

Seven Hills Wind Farm_A5 poster flyer-01.jpg

2 MB

Flyer_Seven Hills Wind Farm a5 brochure.pdf

3 MB

Clr. Mulligan,

Please find attached details of our planned public consultation with the local community on the 12th March 2020 in Dysart Village Hall between 3pm and 8 pm. I also enclose soft copy information brochure for your information.

This open information day will be a chance to find out more about the new development plans for the Seven Hills wind farm from project partners Energia and Galetech Energy Developments who will answer any of your queries regarding their proposed Windfarm.

This is the first local community public consultation and stakeholder engagement event to take place regarding this proposed development and everyone is welcome to attend.

clr	Current Folder
Results	
'cllr@crosby@roscommoncoco.ie'	12:31
Seven Hills Windfarm First Consultation Day	
Cllr. Crosby, Please find attached details of our planned public	
'cllr@cummings@roscommoncoco.ie'	12:30
Seven Hills Windfarm First Consultation Day	
Cllr. Cummins, Please find attached details of our planned public	
'cllr@keogh@roscommoncoco.ie'	12:28
Seven Hills Windfarm First Consultation Day	
Cllr. Keogh, Please find attached details of our planned public	
'cllr@fallon@roscommoncoco.ie'	12:28
Seven Hills Windfarm First Consultation Day	
Cllr. Fallon, Please find attached details of our planned public	
'cllr@callaghan@roscommoncoco.ie'	12:23
Seven Hills Windfarm First Consultation Day	
Cllr. Callaghan, Please find attached details of our planned public	
'cllr@ward@roscommoncoco.ie'	12:23
Seven Hills Windfarm First Consultation Day	
Cllr. Ward, Please find attached details of our planned public	

Results	
'cllr@connaughton@roscommoncoco.ie'	12:23
Seven Hills Windfarm First Consultation Day	
Cllr. Connaughton, Please find attached details of our planned public	
'cllr@murphy@roscommoncoco.ie'	12:23
Seven Hills Windfarm First Consultation Day	
Cllr. Murphy, Please find attached details of our planned public	
'cllr@kilduff@roscommoncoco.ie'	12:20
Seven Hills Windfarm First Consultation Day	
Cllr. Kilduff, Please find attached details of our planned public	
'cllr@mcdermott@roscommoncoco.ie'	12:20
Seven Hills Windfarm First Consultation Day	
Cllr. McDermott, Please find attached details of our planned public	
'cllr@waldron@roscommoncoco.ie'	12:18
Seven Hills Windfarm First Consultation Day	
Cllr. Waldron, Please find attached details of our planned public	
'cllr@dineen@roscommoncoco.ie'	12:17
Seven Hills Windfarm First Consultation Day	
Cllr. Dineen, Please find attached details of our planned public	
'cllr@fitzmaurice@roscommoncoco.ie'	12:15
Seven Hills Windfarm First Consultation Day	
Cllr. Fitzmaurice, Please find attached details of our planned public	
'cllr@leyden@roscommoncoco.ie'	12:11
Seven Hills Windfarm First Consultation Day	
Cllr. Leyden, Please find attached details of our planned public	
'cllr@shanagher@roscommoncoco.ie'	12:09
Seven Hills Windfarm First Consultation Day	
Cllr. Shanagher, Please find attached details of our planned public	

Seven Hills Windfarm First Consultation Day	12:40
Senator Feighan, Please find attached details of our planned public	
Seven Hills Windfarm First Consultation Day	12:40
Senator Hopkins, Please find attached details of our planned public	
terry.leyden@oir.ie	12:38
Seven Hills Windfarm First Consultation Day	
Senator Leyden, Please find attached details of our planned public	
Billionaire Deal	

Seven Hills Windfarm First Consultation Day

Malachy Magee <malachy@galetechenergy.cor>
To: 'cllr@mulligan@roscommoncoco.ie'

- Seven Hills Wind Farm_A5 poster flyer-01.jpg 2 MB
- Flyer_Seven Hills Wind Farm a5 brochure.pdf 3 MB

Cllr. Mulligan,

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Malachy Magee <malachy@galetechenergy.cor>
To: 'cllr@mulligan@roscommoncoco.ie'

- Seven Hills Wind Farm_A5 poster flyer-01.jpg 2 MB
- Flyer_Seven Hills Wind Farm a5 brochure.pdf 3 MB

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Malachy Magee <malachy@galetechenergy.cor>
To: 'cllr@mulligan@roscommoncoco.ie'

- Seven Hills Wind Farm_A5 poster flyer-01.jpg 2 MB
- Flyer_Seven Hills Wind Farm a5 brochure.pdf 3 MB

Cllr. Mulligan,

Please find attached details of our planned public consultation with the local community on the 12th March 2020 in Dysart Village Hall between 3pm and 8 pm. I also


To: 'frank.feighan@oir.ie'


- Seven Hills Wind Farm_A5 poster flyer-01.jpg 2 MB
- Flyer_Seven Hills Wind Farm a5 brochure.pdf 3 MB


Senator Feighan,

Please find attached details of our planned public consultation with the local community on the 12th March 2020 in Dysart Village Hall between 3pm and 8 pm. I also

'michael.fitzmaurice@oir.ie'	12:34
Seven Hills Windfarm First Consultation Day	
Michael Fitzmaurice T.D., Please find attached details of our planned	
Seven Hills Windfarm First Consultation Day	12:34
Ms. Kerrane T.D., Please find attached details of our planned public	
Seven Hills Windfarm First Consultation Day	12:34
Denis Naughten T.D., Please find attached details of our planned	


To 'michael.fitzmaurice@oir.ie'
12:34


Seven Hills Wind Farm_A5 poster flyer-01.jpg
2 MB


Flyer_Seven Hills Wind Farm a5 brochure.pdf
3 MB

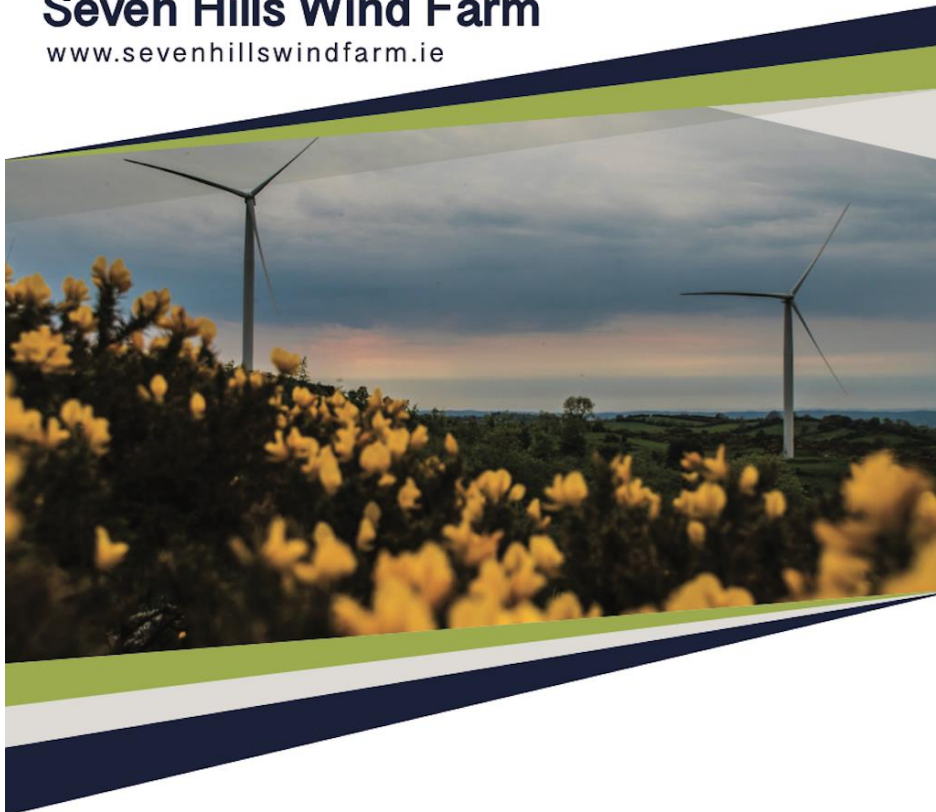
Michael Fitzmaurice T.D.,

Please find attached details of our planned public consultation with the local community on the 12th March 2020 in Dysart Village Hall between 3pm and 8 pm. I also enclose soft copy information brochure for your information.

APPENDIX 2

Seven Hills Wind Farm

www.sevenhillswindfarm.ie



Seven Hills Wind Farm Project is a proposed wind energy development of approximately 21 wind turbines with a typical output of 5-6 megawatts per turbine of renewable energy - enough to provide approximately 84,800* Irish households with green energy every year. The proposed development is within the area of Dysart and surrounding townlands.

The proposed development is being designed to the latest best industry standards and we are appealing to local residents to have their say at an early stage of the development so as to maximise the project benefits to the neighbouring community.

www.sevenhillswindfarm.ie

PROJECT MILESTONES AND TIMELINES

Oct 2016-Dec 2022

Initial Project Feasibility & Baseline Surveys

Feb 2020 - Dec 2025

Community Consultation & Stakeholder Engagement

Dec 2019 - Dec 2020

Detailed Surveys & Engineering Design

Winter 2020

Final Turbine Layout & Design Proposals

Winter 2020 - Spring 2021

Planning Application completion & submission

Further Projects Milestones

Planning Decision will determine Further Project Milestones

The proposed wind farm will give rise to a range of benefits including up to 100 workers employed on the project during construction. It will also support long term high quality technical jobs in operation and maintenance as well as ancillary functions.

The wind farm will provide a substantial community benefit fund to help support local community projects and ensure that residents benefit directly from the renewable energy development. The fund will be administered in accordance with Irish Wind Energy Association (IWEA) best practice and grants will be made available after one year of wind farm operation.

*based on CRU 2017 annual report of 4,200KWhrs electricity consumption per household per annum based on an average dwelling.

CONTACTS

Steven Drury, Community Liaison Officer (CLO)

T. 049 489 0023

M. 086 150 0258

E. sevenhillswindfarm@galetechenergy.com

W. www.sevenhillswindfarm.ie

Rosy Billingham, Community Liaison Officer (CLO)

T. 048 906 85992

E. clo@energia.ie

W. www.sevenhillswindfarm.ie

Malachy Magee, Community Engagement

T. 049 489 0021

M. 087 669 0803

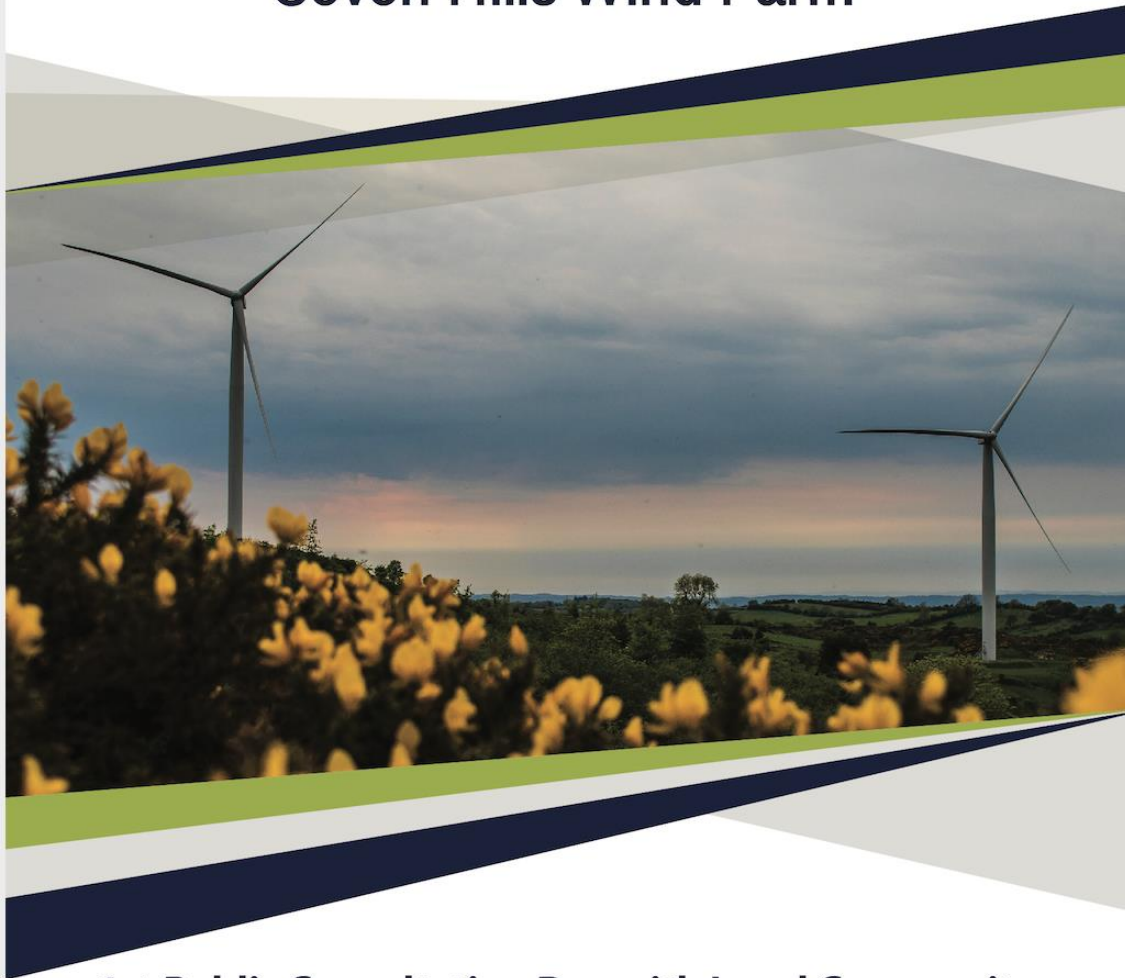
E. sevenhillswindfarm@galetechenergy.com

W. www.sevenhillswindfarm.ie

Seven Hills Wind Farm

www.sevenhillswindfarm.ie

Seven Hills Wind Farm



1st Public Consultation Day with Local Community

Thursday 12th March 2020

Location: Dysart Village Hall

Time: Between 3pm and 8pm

SORRY I MISSED YOU _____ **PH NUMBER** _____

energia



www.sevenhillswindfarm.ie

APPENDIX 4



Seven Hills Wind Farm
Co. Roscommon

Tel: Freephone 1800 140 232
Email: sevenhillswindfarm@galetechenergy.com
Web: www.sevenhillswindfarm.ie

28.10.2020

Dear Householder,

Covid 19 update: Community consultation update for proposed Seven Hills wind farm

As you already know, Irish energy provider, Energia and Gaitech Energy Developments are developing plans for a proposed wind farm near Dysart in South Roscommon.

You should have received letters detailing our engagement plans with a freephone number to call in March, at the start of the lockdown and again in June, when we announced that we would be holding face to face clinics by appointment. These clinics were well attended and provided us with valuable feedback on our draft site layout.

As Community Liaison Officer for this project, I recommenced door to door visits in your area in September. However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic and in line with government guidance, we have postponed these visits again until the restriction of movement has ended.

We are committed to keeping the communities we engage in safe.

We are writing to you because we haven't yet been able to visit every home in person and are keen to use other channels of engagement as part of our ongoing community consultation

- We have a freephone number 1800 140 232 which you can dial free of charge to request a call back from the project team
- We are on hand to answer any questions by email at: sevenhillswindfarm@galetechenergy.com
- We will post regular updates on our project website at www.sevenhillswindfarm.ie

We are still at an early design stage and are committed to continue to engaging with the local community within a 2km radius of the proposed site and beyond.

We look forward to hearing from you and answering any queries you may have,

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Deirdre Keegan'.

Deirdre Keegan – Community Liaison Officer
On behalf of the Seven Hills Wind Farm Project Team

APPENDIX 5

PARISH OF BALLYFORAN, DYSART & TISRARA - Tel. 090 6623313

MASSES THIS WEEK
TISRARA
Mon: 9.30am Pat & Mary Gately, Camtleva.
Tues: 10am Special Intention.
Wed: 7.30pm Peg Hynes
Thurs: 10am Special Intention.
Fri: 10am Special Intention.
Sun: 11am Third Sunday of Lent - Mass Willie & Mary Fallon, Errickmore.
BALLYFORAN
Tues: 7pm First Reconciliation
Sat: 7pm Vigil Mass of the Third Sunday of Lent - Mass for Tom Dowd, Cornapallis.
DYSART
Thurs: 7pm Denis Dempsey, Feevagh.
Sun: 10 am Third Sunday of Lent - Month's Mind Mass for the late Chrissie Donnelly, Tiberney.
Words of the Wise:
 "The real art of conversation is not only to say the right thing at the right place but to leave unsaid the wrong thing at the tempting moment." (Dorothy Nevill).
PROFOUND WORDS: Every saint has a past and every sinner a future." (O.Wilde)
A LENTEN REMINDER "Fasting without prayer is only dieting."
STRESS is the inability to tell the difference between what you think is happening and what is actually happening.
ROSARY FOR LENT: The Rosary will be recited fifteen minutes before all Masses for the duration of Lent.

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION on this Sunday in **Dysart Church** from 4 pm until 5pm and on next Sunday in **Tisrara Church** at the same time. It will continue for the remaining Sundays of Lent. People are encouraged to spend time in adoration before the Blessed Sacrament during Lent.
BAPISTED ON SUNDAY
 We welcome into the family of God **Elisha Mary Murray** of Lenanamalla, Four Roads, who was baptised on Sunday in the Church of Christ the Good Shepherd, Tisrara. We congratulate her parents and pray that this child will be blessed with faith, health and happiness throughout her life.
DIED RECENTLY: We pray this week for the eternal rest of the following who died recently **Tom Mulligan** formerly of Funshinagh, Four Roads who died recently in Birmingham England and **Una Finneran nee Gately** formerly of Caltraduff, Ballyforan who died last Sunday in Galway. We commend their souls to the mercy of God and offer our deepest and heartfelt sympathy to their families and all who mourn their deaths. **Solas siorraí dá n-anamnacha agus do anamnacha na mairbh go léir.**
WEDDING BELLS: Heartiest congratulations and prayerful good wishes are extended this week to **Colette McSpadden & Brendan McDonagh** of Carrownterriffe, Dysart who were married on Saturday in St Patrick's Church, Dysart. We wish them all God's blessings for a long and happy married life together and may their lives be enriched with faith and good health.

FIRST RECONCILIATION IN BALLYFORAN CHURCH
 The children of second class from Ballintlewa, Ballyforan, Feevagh & Tisrara schools will receive their First Confession on this **Tuesday, 10th March at 7pm in Ballyforan Church.** Please pray for the children on this important day of their life so that they will always see a need to receive the Sacrament throughout their childhood and adult lives.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS - A MODERN VERSION
 1 - Love the Lord your God alone with all your heart.
 2 - Respect the Lord's name.
 3 - Keep the Lord's Day holy.
 4 - Honour your parents.
 5 - All life is in God's hands; do not destroy life.
 6 - Be faithful in marriage.
 7 - Do not steal.
 8 - Do not speak falsely of others.
 9 - Do not desire a person who already belongs to another.
 10 - Do not be greedy for things which already belong to others.

SPRING STATION MASSES:
 The Spring Station Masses continue as follows:
 Thurs. 12th March for **Liswilliam & Turrock** at Mark & Maura Delaney, 8pm.

Fri. 13th March for **Killaderry & Caltraduff** at **Anthony & Patricia Verdon**, 7.30pm. Fri. 20th March for **Miltown, Ballyglass, Ballyminton** at **John & Chris Carty**, 7.30pm. Sat. 21st March **Cuilleenoolagh, Cummeen, Cuileenirwan** at **Robbie & Sadie Glennon**, 9.30am. Tues 31st March **Carrickbeg, Errick, Attiknockan, Cullawinna, Correal, Funshinagh** at **Colette McDermott** at 7.30pm.

INFO & CONSULTATION PROCESS hosted by Energia Renewables & Galetch Energy Developments will be held on this Thurs 12th March in Dysart Community Centre from 3pm to 8pm concerning the proposed Seven Hills wind farm. All welcome to attend.

TISRARA 25 CARD DRIVE
 The winners of the 25 Card Drive held on last Wed in Tisrara Community Centre were 1st Prize: **John Hynes & Mal Lyons**. 2nd Prize: **Padraic & Damien Murray**. Table Prize: **Marty McLoughlin & John Killalea**. Cards as usual on this Wed at 8.30pm.

EASTER CAMP 2020 in Dysart Community Centre from 6th - 10th April (9am - 1pm) in aid of Roscommon Hospice and St Columba's, Kitui, Kenya for 4 to 12 years. Further info, contact 087 9562764/ 086 7313345.

OFFERTORY COLLECTIONS in support of the upkeep and maintenance of the churches of our Parish last weekend were as follows - Tisrara: €597.00; Dysart €580; Ballyforan: €459. Many thanks for your much appreciated support.

It's never right to do wrong, and it's never wrong to do right.

Sign post locations for advertising Clinics:

- Sign Post 1: <https://goo.gl/maps/k7e3QBRgQKShkxeT6>
 Sign Post 2: <https://goo.gl/maps/gHjG3qPyd569CoJ69>
 Sign Post 3: <https://goo.gl/maps/dh4T4BUBk4zRU9ks5>
 Sign Post 4: <https://goo.gl/maps/dh4T4BUBk4zRU9ks5>
 Sign Post 5: <https://goo.gl/maps/86AE4qPrsM79Mn9u6>
 Sign Post 6: <https://goo.gl/maps/gJabPtJDA5xWakJi6>
 Sign Post 7: <https://goo.gl/maps/2THHbWXdbEFshMyf7>

A banner for the Seven Hills Wind Farm project. The top right features a photograph of wind turbines in a field of yellow gorse under a cloudy sky. The text on the left is as follows:

SEVEN HILLS WIND FARM
Dysart- South Roscommon

Project Partners include:

en^{er}gia  **GALETECH**
ENERGY SERVICES

**1st Public Consultation Day with Local
Community for this project on Friday 28th February 2020**

Location: Dysart Village Hall Time: Between 3pm & 8pm

The banner has a green footer bar containing the location and time information.

Consultation information for Radio: (ROS FM)

Listen here:

[Advert](#)

Seven Hills Wind Farm

Your chance to find out more about new development plans
for the Seven Hills wind farm site from Energia Renewables
and Galetech Energy Developments.

First local community consultation and stakeholder engagement event
is on Thursday 12th March at Dysart Community Centre from 3pm to 8pm

Everyone Welcome

APPENDIX 6

Website Postponement notice:

Energia Group and Galetch Energy Developments have taken the decision to **postpone** our planned community consultation event, which was scheduled to take place on Thursday 12th March, at Dysart Community Centre, Co. Roscommon. The event will now be rescheduled and held at a later date.

This postponement announcement follows daily risk assessments by project partners, Energia and Galetch, regarding the rapidly evolving Covid-19 situation and public health advice issued by the HSE.

We acknowledge our responsibility to take reasonable measures to reduce the spread of the Coronavirus and are committed to following all necessary steps to safeguard community centre staff, attendees and employees.

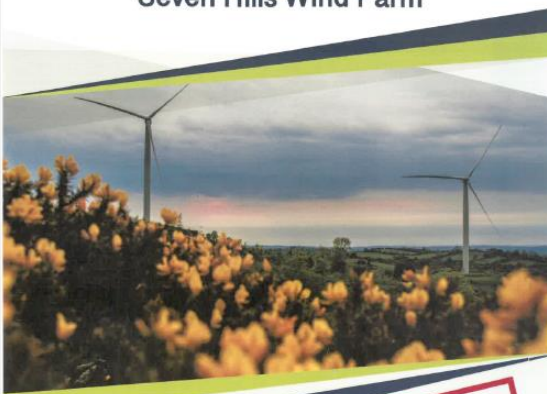
1st Public Consultation Day with Local Community
Thursday 12th March 2020
Location: Dysart Village Hall
Time: Between 5pm and 8pm

POSTPONED

energía GALETECH
Energy Developments

Postponement (Due to covid) poster for Shops & on Community Hall Door:

Seven Hills Wind Farm



POSTPONED

Consultation day is Postponed due to Covid 19 concerns.

Follow updates on our website
www.sevenhillswindfarm.ie

energía GALETECH
Energy Developments

www.sevenhillswindfarm.ie

Postponement (Due to covid) notice on Hall door:



Postponement notice (due to covid) also advertised on local radio stations

APPENDIX 7

Letter printed 31.03.2020 & issued 07.04.2020



**Seven Hills Windfarm
Co. Roscommon**

Tel: Freephone 1800140232
Email: sevenhillswindfarm@galetechenergy.com
Web: www.sevenhillswindfarm.ie

31st March 2020

Dear Homeowner

Covid-19 update: community consultation for proposed Seven Hills wind farm

As you may already know, Irish energy provider, Energia, and Galetech Energy Developments are developing plans for a proposed wind farm near Dysart in South Roscommon.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and in line with government guidance, we have postponed public meetings and halted face-to-face consultations and door-to-door visits, until the restriction of movement has ended. We are committed to keeping communities safe.

As a result, the Seven Hills project team is exploring every opportunity at this early design stage to continue with its engagement with the local community by providing information and answering questions using freepost, freephone and online services.

- We enclose information on the proposed Seven Hills development, together with a **pre-paid envelope and comment card** for you to send back to us with the option of requesting a follow-up telephone call from one of our team.
- We have a **freephone number 1800140232**, which you can dial free of charge to request a call back from the project team.
- We will post regular updates on our **project website** at www.sevenhillswindfarm.ie.

We will also be posting answers to the most commonly asked questions on the website. For instance, a lot of people have asked when we could submit a planning application. That won't be until next year. We're at a very early design stage and want to continue to engage with the local community within the 2km radius of the proposed site and beyond.

Finally, we have also enclosed a colouring page for young children stuck at home during these difficult times.

We look forward to hearing from you and answering any queries you may have.

Yours faithfully

Malachy Magee - Community Engagement Officer
On behalf of the Seven Hills Windfarm Project Team

Media Release:

New community engagement methods for proposed Seven Hills wind farm

Irish energy provider, Energia, and Galetech Energy Developments (GED) have announced they will be using remote communications methods to engage with local residents and businesses regarding the proposed Seven Hills wind farm energy development, near Dysart, County Roscommon in light of the Covid-19 pandemic.

In line with the Irish Government and HSE guidance, the Seven Hills project team has postponed all public meetings and halted face-to-face consultations and door-to-door visits, until the restriction of movement has come to an end.

Energia and Galetech are committed to safe and proactive engagement with members of the public and have introduced the following measures to facilitate community consultation:

- Households within a 2km radius of the proposed wind farm development will receive information about the proposals by post, together with a pre-paid envelope and comment card, which residents can use to ask questions and request a follow-up telephone call from the project team.
- Residents can call the freephone number **1800140232** to request a call back from a member of the team.
- Over the coming months, the Seven Hills project team will reach out to the wider community in South Roscommon and are encouraging people to visit the project website for regular updates at www.sevenhillswindfarm.ie.

A spokesperson for the project team said, "We are following government guidance and will reschedule a series of public information drop-in sessions, but only when it is safe to do so. In the meantime, we are urging local people to use the freepost facility and freephone number to contact us with their questions.

"We'll be posting regular updates on our project website, including answers to the most frequently asked questions. For instance, a lot of people have asked when we could submit a planning application. That won't be until next year. We're at a very early design stage and we want to continue to engage with the local community within the 2km radius of the proposed site and beyond."

The Seven Hills wind energy development will potentially consist of up to 21 turbines with a typical output of up to 6MW per turbine - capable of generating enough green energy to power nearly 85,000 Irish homes.

It is estimated that up to 100 jobs will be created during construction.

The Seven Hills wind farm will also provide a substantial community benefit fund to help support local community projects, taking account of local needs.

Energia is one of Ireland's leading and most experienced renewable energy providers and has a strong track record in providing best practice community benefit schemes. The full

scheme will be operational in the first year after the windfarm commences operation and an initial scheme would apply during construction.

GED is part of the wider Galetech Energy Group, based in Co. Cavan, with branches across the island of Ireland. The Group focusses on development, planning, construction, operation and maintenance of renewable energy projects in Ireland and currently employs over 100 people and operates over 350 wind turbines.]

ENDS

Notes to Editors

Contact
Kathryn Moley
MKC Communications
086-6083532

About Energia Group



Established in 1999, Energia Group is a leading Irish energy provider and infrastructure investor across Renewables, Flexible Generation and Customer Solutions. With offices in Dublin, Galway, Cork and Belfast, Energia supplies approximately 25% of the island of Ireland's total electricity requirements and 21% of the island's total wind power meeting the energy needs of over 58,000 business customers and over 200,000 homes with competitive electricity and gas services. The company supplies over 1 Gigawatt of green power to the market, including power from 22 owned and invested wind farms on the island and also operates two major gas-fired power stations in north County Dublin. Energia is one of Ireland's Top 50 businesses, employing 450 members of staff directly and a further 100 indirectly.

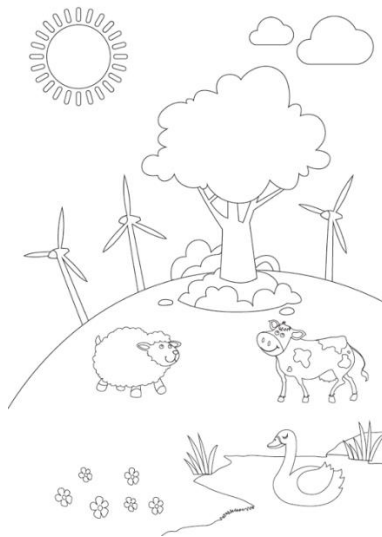
About Galetech Energy Developments

Galetech Energy Developments is part of the wider Galetech Energy Group, based in Co. Cavan, with branches across the island of Ireland. The Group focusses on development, planning, construction, operation and maintenance of renewable energy projects in Ireland and currently employs over 100 people and operates over 350 wind turbines.

Freepost comment card:

A5 card 170gsm

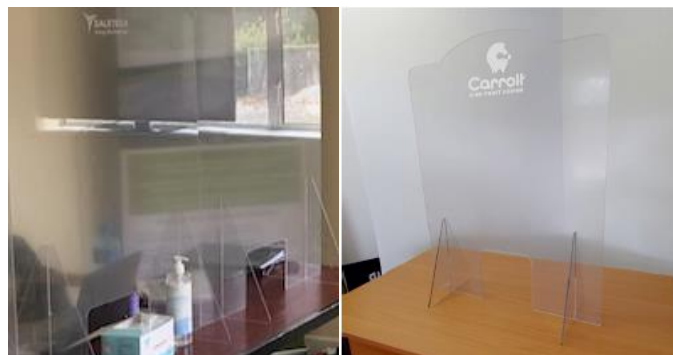
Seven Hills Windfarm	
CONNECT WITH US	
Name	Ph
Email	
Address	
Questions or comments	
<input type="checkbox"/> Callback <input type="checkbox"/> if you do not wish to be contacted in the future	
<small>To find out what personal data we keep, how we process it and how we use it, please read our Privacy Notices at www.sevenhillswindfarm.ie</small>	
 	



Colouring page for children:

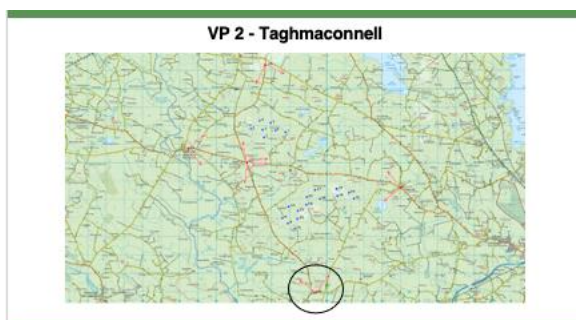
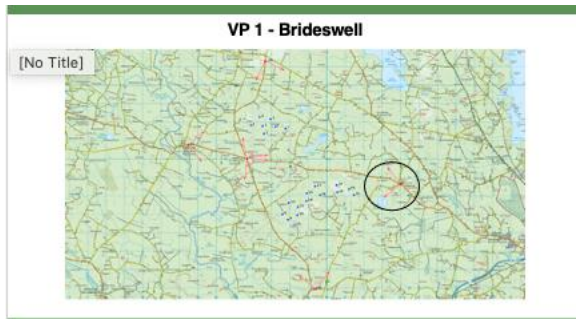
APPENDIX 8

Perspex screens:



APPENDIX 9

Photomontages:

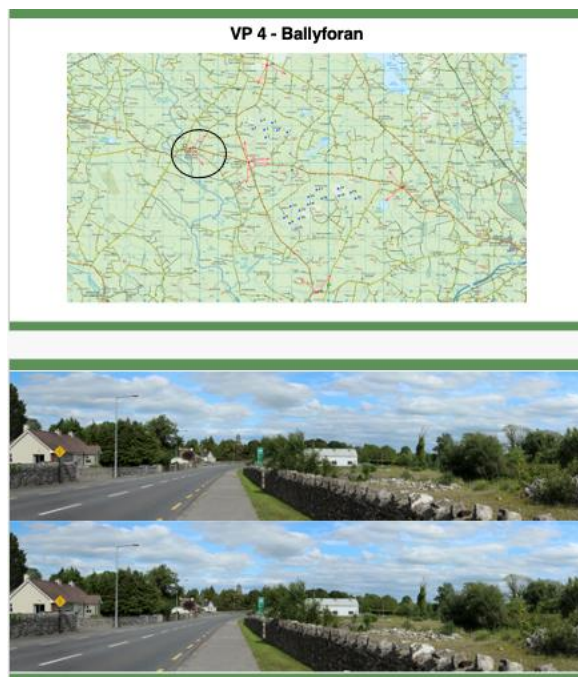


VP 3 - Dysart (1)



VP 3 - Dysart (2)





APPENDIX 10:

Advertisement in local newspapers:

Roscommon Herald & Westmeath Independent

SEVEN HILLS WIND FARM

Galetech and Energia are continuing
Community Engagement on Seven Hills
Wind Farm in Dysart, South Roscommon

Call 1800 140232
or email sevenhillswindfarm@galetechenergy.com
with your questions and comments

enèrgia

GALETECH
Energy Developments

Seven Hills Wind Farm

Galetech and Energia
are continuing Community Engagement
on **Seven Hills Wind farm**
in Dysart, South Roscommon

Call **1800 140232** or email
sevenhillswindfarm@galetechenergy.com
with your questions or comments

enèrgia

GALETECH
Energy Developments

APPENDIX 11

Letter to residents within 2 kilometres



Seven Hills Wind farm Co. Roscommon

Tel: Freephone 1800140232
Email: sevenhillswindfarm@galetechenergy.com
Web: www.sevenhillswindfarm.ie

Seven Hills Wind farm
~~Clondargan~~
~~Stradone~~
Co Cavan
H12 NV06

18/06/2020

Community Consultation Clinics for Proposed Seven Hills Wind Farm

Dear Householder,

Seven Hills Wind Farm project team are grateful for all your engagement with us to date through our **freephone number :1800140232** as well as returning your questions and comments in our freepost envelopes. In response to our earlier door to door engagements and our posted correspondence and information flyer we are now happy to provide further consultation opportunities by providing drop in Clinic opportunities for you by appointment starting on **Monday 6th July** while observing social distancing arrangements.

The Venue, Dates and Times for our Four consultation clinics are as follows:

Dysart Hall	Monday	6 th July 2020	Time: Between 12 noon and 8 pm.
Taughmaconnell Hall	Tuesday	14 th July 2020	Time: Between 12 noon and 8 pm.
CAM Brideswell	Wednesday	22 nd July 2020	Time: Between 12 noon and 8 pm.
Athlone Springs Hotel	Thursday	30 th July 2020	Time: Between 12 noon and 8 pm.

An 80 meter high temporary guyed anemometer mast will be erected in the next few weeks to collect wind speed, wind direction, temperature, humidity and air pressure which will be used to predict and analyse the energy that the wind farm can produce on the site.

Our ongoing surveying, environmental impact assessments and ecologist reports will ensure that any potential impacts on wildlife and the environment are fully mitigated in our draft layout design. Our proposal with draft layout map will also be updated and shared on our website www.sevenhillswindfarm.ie after the **1st July 2020**. We will take all your comments on board and we look forward to engaging with you further and answering any further queries you may have.

Looking forward to meeting you all at our upcoming clinics starting Monday 6th July at Dysart Hall. I enclose a copy of our latest A4 brochure for your information which will also be posted on our project website.

It is important to book your appointment by ringing our **freephone number :1800140232**, and **state your preferred venue and time**. We will abide with all restrictions imposed as per Government regulations. Additional clinics will be arranged if and when required. There will be hand sanitiser and face masks provided at each venue for our clinics and social distancing measures will also be strictly adhered to.

Thanking you,

Yours faithfully,

Malachy Magee
Community Engagement Officer
Seven Hills Wind Farm Project

Deirdre Keegan
Community Liaison Officer
Seven Hills Wind Farm Project

APPENDIX 12

Questions before the Clinic appt can be confirmed

To be answered by you and person attending clinic with you:

- Have you returned to Ireland from any other country or NI in the past 14 days?
- Are you a close contact of a confirmed or suspected case?
- Are you experiencing any of the following symptoms: Cough, Shortness of Breath, Breathing difficulties, High temperature?
- Are you in a high-risk bracket (IE pregnant, over 70, organ transplant, currently having chemo/radiation, steroid taking, lung condition) If so, we can reschedule appointment when Covid Restrictions change.

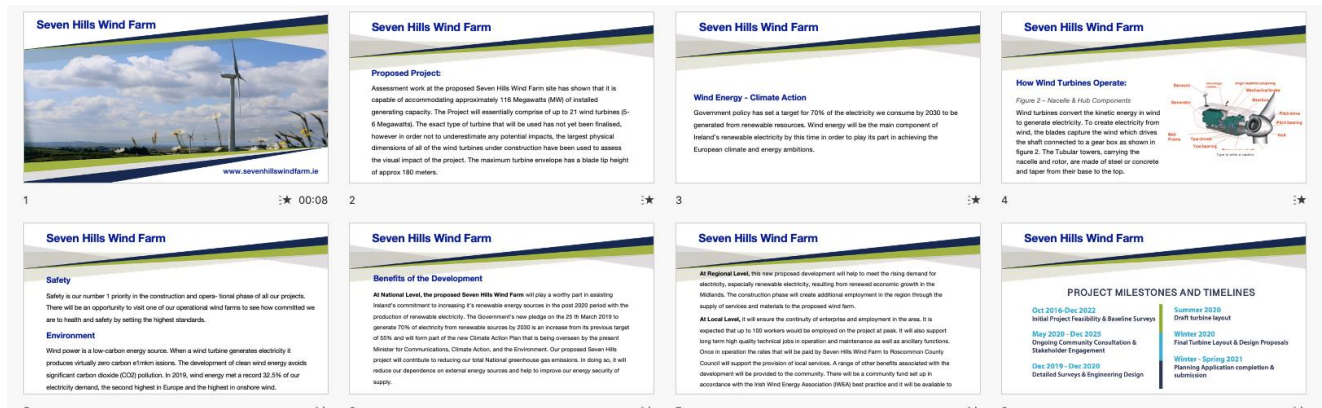
Rules:

- Appointment must be made via freephone number
- Only 2 people per appointment & no children
- Name, Address, phone number and Eircode supplied for Identification purposes
- Arrive at location
- 40-minute time slots – 5 minutes clean down between appointments
- We will give you a phone call before entering the meeting room
- All sanitised before entry and after exit – (IE door handles & frames, glass Perspex, seats)
- Perspex between attendee and staff member
- Hand Sanitising station at door and on tables in room
- Masks to be worn where necessary
- 2 meters distance between members of staff as well as members of the public at all times
- If you are sick, running a temperature or have a cough, shortness of breath, please do not attend your appointment – we will accommodate you at a later stage, outside clinic times if necessary
- Covid information course completed by all staff
- Location guidelines also in place

APPENDIX 13

Presentation

Link: [Presentation](#)



APPENDIX 14

Virtual exhibition

Link: [Seven Hills | innovision](#)

Link: [Full Virtual Exhibition Report](#)



Welcome to the proposed Seven Hills Wind Farm Virtual Public Exhibition

Read through the brief guide below and then click the "enter exhibition" button at the bottom of the page to proceed to the exhibition.


For the best experience, please use a desktop / laptop computer running Google Chrome as your web browser. Please note, Internet Explorer is not supported and users may experience issues if trying to access the exhibition using this web browser.



Enter Exhibition



Summary:


innovision

Virtual Public Exhibition – Web Traffic Report
Seven Hills Wind Farm

Executive Summary

- The total number of visits to the site during the consultation period was 493.
- The most popular parts of the site were the "Welcome Video" followed by the "Photomontage Viewer".
- 38 visitors (8%) spent more than 5 minutes in the room.
- 79% of visitors were from Ireland with 34% of those in the Dublin area.
- A mobile device was the most common device used to access the site.
- The most common platform in use was Windows.
- The browser used most frequently to access the site was Chrome.

APPENDIX 15

July 2021 Clinic Letters



Seven Hills Windfarm
Co. Roscommon

Tel: Freephone 1800140232
Email: sevenhillswindfarm@galetechenergy.com
Web: www.sevenhillswindfarm.ie

15.07.2021

Dear Householder,

Further community engagement for proposed Seven Hills wind farm

Irish energy provider, Energia and Galetech Energy Developments are furthering their development plans for a wind farm near Dysart in South Roscommon and are nearing planning application stage. We previously promised local residents we would communicate updates when we had a final design.

In light of the revised Covid guidelines, we are now happy to provide face to face clinic sessions, as promised previously, **by appointment** starting on **Tuesday 27th July 2021** while observing social distancing arrangements & government guidelines.

The Venue, Dates and Times for our Four consultation clinics are as follows:

Dysart Hall	Tuesday 27 th July 2021 - Time: 12 noon – 8pm
CAM Brideswell	Wednesday 28 th July 2021 - Time: 12 noon – 8pm
Taughmaconnell Hall	Thursday 29 th July 2021 – Time: 12 noon – 8pm

It is important to book your appointment by ringing our **freephone number :1800140232**, and **state your preferred venue and time**. We will abide with all restrictions imposed as per Government regulations. Additional clinics will be arranged if and when required. There will be hand sanitiser and face masks provided at each venue for our clinics and social distancing measures will also be strictly adhered to.

We have also launched an **online exhibition** to share with you which can be found at www.sevenhillswindfarm.ie

As always we are available to contact on:

- **Email:** sevenhillswindfarm@galetechenergy.com
- We have a **freephone number 1800 140 232**, which you can dial free of charge to request a call back from the project team.

Seven Hills wind farm will also play its part in assisting in Ireland's commitment to increase its renewable energy sources in the post 2020 period, with the Government pledging to generate 70% of electricity from renewable sources by 2030 forming part of the new climate action plan.

We look forward to hearing from you and answering any further queries you may have.

Yours faithfully,

Deirdre Keegan
Community Liaison Officer
On behalf of the Seven Hills Windfarm Project Team

Advertisements: (Westmeath Independent and Roscommon Herald)

Further community engagement for proposed Seven Hills Wind Farm

Face to face clinic sessions by appointment while observing social distancing arrangements & government guidelines.

The Venue, Dates and Times for our consultation clinics are as follows:

Dysart Hall: Tuesday 27th July 2021
Time: 12 noon - 8pm

CAM Brideswell: Wednesday 28th July 2021
Time: 12 noon - 8pm

Taughmaconnell Hall: Thursday 29th July 2021
Time: 12 noon - 8pm

Book your appointment by ringing our freephone number: **1800140232** and state your preferred venue and time.

Online exhibition also available which can be found at:
www.sevenhillswindfarm.ie

Tel: Freephone 1800140232
Email: sevenhillswindfarm@galetecheenergy.com
Web: www.sevenhillswindfarm.ie

Further Community Engagement for proposed Seven Hills Wind Farm

Face to face clinic sessions by appointment

The Venue, Dates and Times for our Consultation Clinics are as follows:

Dysart Hall	Tuesday 27th July 2021	Time: 12 noon - 8pm
CAM Brideswell	Wednesday 28th July 2021	Time: 12 noon - 8pm
Taughmaconnell Hall	Thursday 29th July 2021	Time: 12 noon - 8pm

Book your appointment by ringing our freephone number: **1800 140 232** and state your preferred venue and time.

We will adhere to all restrictions imposed as per Government regulations

Online exhibition also available which can be found at
www.sevenhillswindfarm.ie

Tel: Freephone 1800 140 232
Email: sevenhillswindfarm@galetecheenergy.com
Web: www.sevenhillswindfarm.ie

APPENDIX 16

Community Benefit Fund Consultation Report

Link to full report:

[Independent Community Research Report - Benefit Fund](#)

[Further information](#)

**Community Benefit Fund
Consultation Report**

Client: Energia / Galettech

**Prepared by
The Philanthropy Adviser**

12 April 2021

Introduction

COVID restrictions have limited how Energia / Galettech (the companies) can engage locally in relation to the Seven Hills proposed windfarm. The project is at pre-planning stage. The companies engaged an independent consultant, Niall O'Sullivan of The Philanthropy Adviser, to in turn engage with people connected with local sports and community groups and other not for profits in the area and latterly with agencies locally and one consultant, undertaking a related project in the area also. Eight local national schools were also contacted, they were closed for a period and then by re-opening in March. The Easter holidays also meant some people were not contactable.

The purpose of the work was to help identify how best the companies could, if the windfarm progressed, maximise the impact for the locality, of a community benefit fund. Niall has worked as a philanthropy and fundraising consultant in the not for profit sector as well as working in local development during his career. He has experience of community benefit funds through a previous employment also.

Process

The work was undertaken during February and March 2021. The consultant contacted 46 individuals who are part of organisations as outlined in the introduction. The local organisations are mostly in Dysart, Taughmaconnell, Four Roads, Curraghboy, Rahara and Brideswell. Almost all spoken to were living in these areas.

Contact was made based on available contact details, which in some cases was a telephone number, in other cases an email, and for some, both. The contact list was gradually expanded as a result of additional desk research and suggestions from those met also.

Engagements were typically via phone calls, though meetings over Zoom were also offered. Only a small number of meetings were completed by Zoom as it transpired. The typical meeting / call duration was 50 minutes to one hour; with a small number being shorter or longer.

The process was in most cases a structured conversation following questions from a questionnaire. This was explained at the start as was the fact that the

conversation was not about the development of the wind farm but about the fund which could emanate if planning were to be successful. Some people did reference opposition to the wind farms, but more often than not, those who took part were more open to the project proceeding. However no further detail or stats are provided in that regard as it was not part of the brief. Three people declined to continue the conversation, two because they were opposed to the development and one who was asked by the organisation's board / chair not to take part.

Of those contacted, 15 resulted in full conversations. It proved more difficult to engage with people from some areas, despite a number of attempts. It should also be recognised that contact details were not always complete and of course this was a COVID Lockdown time. The consultant has undertaken other research on a different topic at the same time and it was also difficult to make contact in many cases due to work pressures etc. Some people who engaged have lived in the area all their lives, some had moved in / married in to the area.

An additional four conversations were initiated but not completed. Three of the four people in question would have had strong opinions about the proposed development and the other person simply preferred not to be involved.

The report follows generally the format of the questionnaire as in Appendix 1, but does not reference any individuals. A separate document with the organisations and the individuals met has been provided to Energia / Galetech, but not the details of the conversations. Note, while percentages are included in some cases, it should be borne in mind the relatively small sample size. Where unattributed quotes are included, they would generally be representative of a broader similar viewpoint.

Examples of needs identified include (in some cases these are common to a number of groups):

- Astro turf pitches
- Playgrounds – improve existing + additional
- Walking tracks and possible link ups with other existing trails
- Walkway around soccer pitch and associated lighting
- Community hall upgrade
- Signposted cycle routes
- Team kits
- Projects for young people who may not be into club sports (GAA and soccer)
- Community enhancement projects – maintenance and upkeep for local areas.

21 projects / project areas were referenced, some with multiple strands. These are included in a separate document. One person also referenced suicide as an issue to be addressed.

Sources of Funding:

The following are most typically the sources of funding.

- Roscommon Co County
- Leader
- Community Employment Community Employment Scheme
- Roscommon Sports Partnership
- Capital Sports Grants scheme

These typically require a match funding element. It is clear from discussions with and about groups generally that some community groups are stronger than others when it comes to their enthusiasm and capacity to seek funding. This has also been an issue at a community benefit fund associated with another wind farm also where the stronger more engaged groups are the ones making more and often better applications. A later question addressed the issue of 'capacity development' which did not appear to be a broadly understood concept.

The Public Participation Network was also referenced as was the Just Transition Fund (linked to Bord na Mona). The latter requires a 20% local contribution.

Examples of projects supported by Roscommon Co County have included putting power cables underground, a walk, street lighting and more.

Part of the area may be designated as a Clár area.

Fundraising Methods include:

- Club Lotto
- Raffles
- Membership
- Race night
- Charity cycle

There seems to be generally good support from the community for fundraising efforts. Some of the groups also undertake fundraising on behalf of other organisations, an example mentioned was for The Brothers of Charity in Roscommon which supports people with intellectual disabilities. It was mentioned that it had been very difficult to fundraise because of COVID as most fundraising was community based.

There was no mention of grant applications to foundations. Note: one of the GAA clubs mentioned receiving funding from the JP McManus Trust – but this was by default – in 2018 when Limerick won the All Ireland €1m was shared out among all the GAA clubs of Ireland by the Trust.

Area Plan

Respondents were asked if there was a local area development plan and if not, should there be?

Most people felt that their area was too small to merit a plan. There was some reference to the Co Roscommon development plan – a new one was in preparation at time of this consultation. There was reference to the parish of

Knockcroghery / St Johns being in the initial stages of a plan. Also spoken about was the parish of Athleague which had completed a plan in 2019 - it was driven by a broad group of local groups there. A link to this and other plans is included as Appendix 2. The Elphin plan was also mentioned, but this appears to be a more a subset of the county plan.

It was only at the very end of the process that this consultant became aware of the area plan that is nearing completion which covers the **Ballyforan, Dysart and Four Roads** areas. This is a very positive development for the area. It was funded by Leader. The process was complicated by COVID, but there appears to have been good local engagement. The report as of the time of writing was not complete but was hoped to be ready by summer 2021.

Leader are also going to be working with the local community in **Brideswell** also on developing a community plan there.

Rating of Needs

The following is based on eight of the respondents providing detailed ratings:

Area	Very High	High	Medium	Low	Don't know
Improve existing Sports facilities	4	2	2		
Community Halls	2	5	1		
Environment	1	3	4		
Walks or trails	1	5	1	1	
Other new Sports Facilities		2	4	2	
Local schools	1	3	3	1	
Scholarships e.g. to AIT		2	4	2	
Adult Education		2	1	5	
Capacity Development	1	2	3	2	1
Social Entrepreneurship		2	2	3	1
Area Plan	1	4	2	1	

- There was a sense that sports wise, certainly for team sports, the focus should be on improving existing, rather than significant investment in new facilities.
- Community halls scored well but only some respondents referred to how they could be made more sustainable when / if upgraded
- The Environment was a bit catch-all but was considered important.
- Walks and trails scored well.
- Scholarships were considered innovative by some and not important by others.
- The general consensus was that adult education is well covered already.
- Capacity Development wasn't necessarily well understood to begin with but ended up scoring reasonably well. Lessons from the nearby Sliabh Bawn would be worth considering however.
- Again the area plan scored reasonably well, but wouldn't have been a project area that was in any way top of mind for most people ahead of the meetings.

Comments

"Improving existing sports facilities helps keep people in the area"

"Ladies and girls sports becoming more important"

"Roads are not safe to walk, tracks around pitches with lighting needed too, would be welcome"

"More adult education could be good for e.g. farmers in the area"

"Adult education primarily sorter, with options already in Athlone or Ballinasloe"

"Re the community hall, we are always looking for money"

"Could be opportunities there to links walks and trails"

"Capacity development, worthwhile but..."

"There is very little social entrepreneurship in Roscommon, and most is in the northern part of the county... could be looked at though"

Groups of People Thought to be Most in Need

- People were asked which groups needed most support. **Older people** ranked top overall, with everyone providing a rank, making them top or second ranked out of the seven options. There was mention of the Dysart

Men's Shed and the possibility of additional Men's Sheds, an active age group and fitness programmes. The Taughmaconnell Christmas parish dinner for older people was also mentioned.

- **Children** scored next, which included younger people / teenagers
- **Parents** scored third, but little detail as to why was provided.
- Regarding **LGBT** and **Immigrant groups**, there was no malice whatsoever, its just that there didn't appear to a particular need. Immigrant numbers are low. Reference was made to the meat plant in Athleague and that the many Brazilians could be better supported. Some are involved in local soccer, e.g. Rahara. House prices are higher in south Roscommon than in the north of the county and this may in part explain lower immigrant household numbers. Those who are in the areas are said to be well integrated. Having said that that, all who were met were Irish, so the cohort was not part of the survey. LGBT specific issues were not identified either.
- **Special needs** was seen more a factor for particular families rather than there being an issue affecting a large group of people in this category. Reference was made also to a fundraising drive currently ongoing for a specific family.
- Two respondents identified specifically the **traveller** site and that it could benefit from additional resources.

Note: There is an Older People Network in Co Roscommon which promotes independent living. Mens groups are a large part of this.

In general terms, the project identification was not especially especially innovative. The only example of social entrepreneurship mentioned was of a local shop or pub that delivered meals to older people.

Charities Outside any Fund Area but Supporting People Locally

With some community benefit funds associated with some wind farms, charities outside the designated area are sometimes also supported if they can demonstrate their support for local people, e.g. an organisation in the nearest town that supports a catchment area beyond the town.

Ove the course of the meetings, very few other charities were referenced. Those that were, are listed:

- Brothers of Charity, Roscommon - supports people with intellectual disabilities.
- St Hildas, Athlone – provides services to people with mild, moderate and severe intellectual disabilities.
- Reference was made to a social services project that collected people by bus and “brought them into town”, but it was thought this is probably government run
- St Vincent de Paul.

A desk review was also undertaken and a small number of additional organisations were identified. These are included in Appendix 3.

Large, Small or Mix of Grants Sizes?

If the fund is established there was a sense that both small and larger projects could be supported.

12.5%	- Small number of larger grants every year
37.5%	- Larger number of smaller grants every year
62.5%	- A mix of both

Some comments capture some of the thoughts around a fund.

“Perhaps look at what other funds have done”
“Start with a larger number of smaller grants, then mix it up”
“Better for the companies perhaps to spread it around”
“Capital leave s a legacy”
“Capacity building initially would help those less organised”

Some larger scale projects were identified and these are included in the separate list provided. The sense of innovation was missing overall and this seems to be reflective of the fact that the area is quite dispersed and some other agencies have also found it difficult at times to engage locally.

The consultant would have concerns that, subject to planning and the fund is established, it could prove difficult to spend the monies available in the fund as these are quite substantial.

Community Engagement / Involvement

Five people indicated their willingness to be involved, and some others who said they would not, the consultant believes, could be in future years – be excellent too. The reason for not putting their name forward was due to how busy they were. People also referenced other people they thought could be good, either as a Chair or regular community representative. From the perspective of having local involvement, as would be hoped for, by the companies, this was a good outcome. One person specifically said yes to potentially being involved, but only post planning. Another said perhaps down the line, but not now, due to the local politics.

It would seem logical also to include someone from a local agency such as Leader.

There was good engagement also in helping the consultant with getting further meetings with people in the area which was very much appreciated. The Dysart and surrounding area stood out for the silence in engaging which was unfortunate.

Names are not included in this report, but have been provided to Energia / Galetch.

Permanent Fund / Legacy

There was no surprise that people had not heard of endowment funds as they are little known in Ireland generally. There was more support for the idea, or certainly looking more closely at the idea than may have been anticipated.

Comments:

“An endowment fund – could be seen as exotic”

“I like the idea, some may be dubious about raising money not being used”

“Bird in the hand is worth two in the bush”

“It would need to be very transparent”

“Could be considered as a ‘What if?’... Local people / committees could discuss idea”

Options for an endowment fund could be to:

- Allocate a percentage every year.
- Allocate a percentage after an agreed timeframe, e.g. from Year 5, ensuring a good flow of income to local to local projects in the early years.
- In years where money is not committed, could commit the unallocated amount to endowment.

Any of the above options would be hugely innovative as no other wind farm has been known to be creating a fund that will last beyond the lifetime of the community benefit fund. Given the new scale of funds as a result of RESS guidance from 2020, it may become a more attractive option in the future for new solar and wind developments. As an aside, it should be noted that the fund would not need to be branded / linked to the wind farm after the community benefit fund is completed. Such a fund could also prove attractive for local people to consider leaving something in their will for their local community, so that this is seen as a starting point. Admittedly, a long-term lense is required.

Of interest was reference to a fundraising initiative for Lecarrow Benevolent Fund. It apparently raises €40k - €50k annually which is then given out in local grants. Details of it are also included in Appendix 4.

Summary of Recommendations

Possible areas that could be considered by a future fund include:

- Funding for capacity development for local groups – perhaps involving a number of groups at a time.
- Include a person from a local agency such as Leader on the local committee / panel.
- In the initial years, combine a mix of smaller grants with a small number of larger grants.
- Identify projects where possible that have wider social impact in the earlier years, e.g a community hall upgrade and the development of an associated plan to help make it more sustainable
- Consider option of developing a permanent endowment fund.

Other wind farms in the county mentioned are listed in Appendix 4.

Other Final Comments

It is acknowledged that mistakes were made in the past when a wind farm was first proposed. This was mentioned by a small number of interviewees. There are clear local sensitivities to the new project on the one hand and for the fact that it has lead to local sensitivities. There are also people, it has to be acknowledged who are either ambivalent or in a number of cases supportive of the project and of the development of wind energy generally.

Appendix 1 – Questionnaire

Community Benefit Fund Consultation Questionnaire

Client: Energia / Galetch

Interviewee: _____

Business/Organisation: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Interviewer: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____

Location / Method of Contact: _____

1. Explain rationale for call, confirm if it is ok to talk about the area and some questions regarding the potential Community Benefit Fund. Explain how information will be used, that the questionnaires will aid the writing up of a report, but that no comments will be attributed, it will be anonymous so your name will not appear in the report as a contributor. We will retain information regarding the organisation which could be useful down the line regarding e.g. a call for grant application.

Yes ☐ No ☐ If no, _____

2. Interviewee contacted because of link to Organisation:

Organisation Name: _____

Involvement in any other Organisation(s): _____

3. Confirm person's relationship with Organisation?

- ☐ Committee: Position: _____
☐ Parent (if a school or other entity involving children)
☐ Service User
☐ Member
☐ Other Please state: _____

When was the group established? _____

4. Any additional information about organisation you might like to share in terms of possible future needs / grant applications it might want to make

5. I wonder, what are the other typical sources of local funding for organisations?

6. Is match funding ever required for any of the above?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Explain: _____

7. Is there a local area development plan?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Explain: _____

8. If no, should there be?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Explain: _____

9. Are there any aspects of the area generally which you feel could be improved upon?

10. What, in general terms, do you consider the priorities for the future?

11. How would you rate the following needs?

Improve existing Sports facilities	<input type="checkbox"/> Very High	<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Low
Community Halls	<input type="checkbox"/> Very High	<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Low
Environment	<input type="checkbox"/> Very High	<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Low
Walks or trails	<input type="checkbox"/> Very High	<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Low
Other new Sports Facilities	<input type="checkbox"/> Very High	<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Low
Local schools	<input type="checkbox"/> Very High	<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Low
Scholarships e.g. to AIT	<input type="checkbox"/> Very High	<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Low
Adult Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Very High	<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Low
Capacity Development	<input type="checkbox"/> Very High	<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Low
Social Entrepreneurship	<input type="checkbox"/> Very High	<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Low
Area Plan	<input type="checkbox"/> Very High	<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Low
Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Very High	<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Low

Other: _____ ☐ Very High ☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low

Minority groups - which

Notes: _____

12. Which groups locally are currently most in need of support: Please Rank 1-5

Children	1	2	3	4	5
Parents	1	2	3	4	5
Older People	1	2	3	4	5
LGBT	1	2	3	4	5
Immigrant community	1	2	3	4	5
Special Needs	1	2	3	4	5
Any other minority groups	1	2	3	4	5
Other:	1	2	3	4	5

Notes: _____

13. Other major needs not addressed?

-
-
14. Some community benefit funds give grants to organisation outside the areas if they support / provide services to local people local to the windfarms, e.g. in or near Dysart, Brideswell and Taughmaconnell? What are the charities or social services which provide services to people in the local area but are outside the local area, e.g. in Athlone, Athleague or Ballinasloe, that might you think be considered for a grant from the fund?

Notes: _____

15. Would you have any preference or thoughts on whether there should, over the 20 years, be a:

- ☐ Small number of larger grants every year
☐ Larger number of smaller grants every year
☐ A mix of both

16. Do you think there would be interest for larger scale community projects and have you any thoughts on what could be priorities?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Maybe ☐

Group / Comment: _____

17. Explain preference by operators for establishing a local voluntary committee. With regard to your own involvement, would you consider:

A. Being involved in such a local committee?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Maybe ☐

B. Approaching anyone else to help?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Maybe ☐

18. Is there else anyone you think would be good? Perhaps somebody from the interest groups we mentioned above:

General Chairperson(s) _____

Other members

19. How (email, phone etc) would you suggest approaching those discussed above and do you think they might consider being involved?

20. Have you ever heard of Community Forever Funds / Endowment Funds?

Yes ☐ No ☐ If no, explain

As part of a potential future community benefit fund might the community consider allocating a % so as to continue fund beyond the lifetime of the fund?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Maybe ☐

Comment: _____

21. Are there any other individuals who should be contacted during this community consultation? Are there any additional comments or suggestions you would like to make at this stage?

Thank you for taking the time help with this questionnaire.

Appendix 2 – Area Plans

A Community and Economic Plan for Athleague 2019



<http://athleague.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Athleague-Strategy-Plan.pdf>

County Development Plan

<https://www.rosdevplan.ie/> 2021 – 2027

[http://www.roscommoncoco.ie/en/Services/Planning/Roscommon-County-Council-Planning-Publications/Roscommon-County-Council-Planning-Publications/County Development Plan 2014 - 2020/County-Development-Plan-2014-2020/](http://www.roscommoncoco.ie/en/Services/Planning/Roscommon-County-Council-Planning-Publications/Roscommon-County-Council-Planning-Publications/County%20Development%20Plan%202014%20-%202020/County-Development-Plan-2014-2020/) 2014 - 2020

Elphin Area Plan

[http://www.roscommoncoco.ie/en/Services/Planning/Roscommon-County-Council-Planning-Publications/Roscommon-County-Council-Planning-Publications/County Development Plan 2014 - 2020/County-Development-Plan-2014-2020/5-Elphin-Area-Plan.pdf](http://www.roscommoncoco.ie/en/Services/Planning/Roscommon-County-Council-Planning-Publications/Roscommon-County-Council-Planning-Publications/County%20Development%20Plan%202014%20-%202020/County-Development-Plan-2014-2020/5-Elphin-Area-Plan.pdf)

See also the link below for **other area plans**:

[www.roscommoncoco.ie/en/Services/Planning/Roscommon-County-Council-Planning-Publications/Roscommon-County-Council-Planning-Publications/Archived-Plans/Elphin Local Area Plan 2009-2015/](http://www.roscommoncoco.ie/en/Services/Planning/Roscommon-County-Council-Planning-Publications/Roscommon-County-Council-Planning-Publications/Archived-Plans/Elphin%20Local%20Area%20Plan%202009-2015/)

This link is a Facebook post about the **Knockcroghery / St Johns Rahara** area plan which was announced in 2021 and online workshops were due to take place in March 2021.

<https://iphone.facebook.com/334678400517269/photos/a.334705357181240/745461812772257/?type=3&source=48>

Appendix 3 - Other Not for Profit Groups in Nearby Towns

Athlone:

- SVdP
- Samaritans
- Safe Ireland
- Barnardos
- National Parent Support Programme
- Rape Crisis Centre
- MS Society
- Midlands Simon Community
- Cura.

Athleague:

- Athleague Community Centre.

Ballinasloe:

- Ballinasloe Social Services
- NCBI
- Ballinasloe Cancer Support.

The following are linked to / located on the grounds owned by The Brothers of Charity.

- Deerpark Services comprises of 6 Residential Houses, 1 Respite House and 6 Day Centres.
- Rainbow Services - programme for the Elderly based in Deerpark Centre.
- TOPE RT - Training Opportunities & Personal Education,
- TOPE Rehabilitative Training is a 3 year programme which is run in partnership with HSE West and with the support of the GRETB.
- Fia Nua day service supports individuals with complex needs.

Appendix 4 – Other Community Benefit Funds

Other wind farms with community benefit funds in the county mentioned by people were:

Skrine Wind farm

<http://roscommonppn.ie/2020/08/19/the-skrine-windfarm-community-benefit-fund/>

Sliabh Bawn Wind farm

<https://www.sliabhbawnwindfarm.ie/community-benefit/>

Additionally...

Lecarrow Benevolent Fund

Established in 2001, the fund had raised over €200,000 by 2017. The fund has benefitted a wide range of local and national organisations, from Barretstown and Barnardo's to senior citizens' groups from nearby parishes. It was initially established with a view to assist those who may find themselves in a difficult financial position through no fault of their own. Funds raised have also contributed to the development of Lecarrow itself by supporting community events, initiatives and groups in the area.

<https://www.facebook.com/st.johns.heritage/posts/lecarrow-benevolent-fund-annual-fundraiser-will-be-held-in-kellys-lounge-lecarro/420418667998651/>

<https://www.facebook.com/Lecarrow.News/posts/please-support-lecarrow-benevolent-fund-monster-raffle-and-auction-in-kellys-bar/1256805447767444/>

