



Cush Wind Farm

Environmental Impact Assessment Report

Annex 1.8: Community Consultation Report

Cush Wind Limited

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COMMUNITY CONSULTATION & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT REPORT

**Cush Wind Farm
Co. Offaly**

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1.0 Introduction

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

The purpose of this report is to transparently demonstrate the approach CWL 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.

This report has been prepared in line with the requirements set out in the *Draft Revised Wind Energy Development Guidelines 2019*¹ (*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, CWF team organised and undertook a series of internal community consultation workshops to develop a Community Liaison Strategy. These workshops were arranged to educate CWF personnel and to develop community consultation skills for those who have and will continue to work with the community on the ground. The Project Manager, Community Liaison Officers, Land Development Manager and members of the assigned community engagement team participated in the workshops. On the back of the community consultation workshops, CWL 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 CWL utilised a number of stakeholder management toolkits to record contact details and issues raised by the public. In accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2016, this information cannot be made publicly available.

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 CWF carried out the community consultation process in the surrounding area of the proposed wind farm. CWF team have 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 considered and addressed in the project design process.

In accordance with the *Guidelines for Community Engagement (2016)*, Deirdre Keegan was appointed as Community Liaison Officer for the proposed CWF. 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 CWL is to manage communications and to proactively disseminate information in a planned and systematic manner, to consult with stakeholders at key stages of the project life cycle, and to continuously evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy and make adjustments to increase its effectiveness. 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; and
- 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 CWF, 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, changes and addressing queries from the local community.

2.0 Consultation Process

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

- Dedicated project community liaison officer – one on one meetings
- Consultation with local elected representatives
- Door-to-door visits to local residences
- Conversations with the local groups, community hall committees & local representatives, where appropriate
- Project website: www.cushwindfarm.ie
- Public consultation clinics
- Freephone call back service, e-mail & letter, brochure; and
- Print and radio adverts in local media

2.1 Consultation with Local Representatives

Local elected representatives within the Birr Municipal District were initially contacted by phone in February 2022, to provide an outline of the proposed development and to obtain initial feedback. The email correspondence (See appendix 1) included information on the proposed development, including contact details for further engagement.

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

• November 2022 – Email regarding update on the project
• January 2023 – Invite to Clinic Events
• November 2023 – Email regarding submission of planning application

2.2 Consultation with the Local Community

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

The first point of contact for the community consultation process was through door to door consultation. This was completed in February 2022 which the project name was originally presented as Cush Renewable Energy Park. A flyer (see Appendix 2) with details of the proposed development, milestones, map area, phone number and email contact details was left with each resident within 2 kilometres radius of the development.

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 initial 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 of the community engagement team who could be contacted with any further queries.

A website was in progress at initial contact but not made live until a later stage. A CWL team decision was made to ensure local residents were informed prior to the metmast installation on the site in Spring 2022. This was to keep the local residents informed from the outset.

A website went live shortly after the initial door to door contact. The project website has been updated on a regular basis at various stages since its launch as information became available throughout the project design and assessment process.

A total of 135 houses were visited during this part of the consultation. A “Sorry I Missed You” sticker was left with every household with no response at the door.

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

In August 2022 a decision was made by the CWF team due to feedback from local residents along with further initial investigations and time constraints not to peruse the solar part of the project. This information was published on the website immediately. (See appendix 3)

An interim update regarding the installation of the metmast was published on www.cushwindfarm.ie in September 2022. (See appendix 4)

Further Door to door

A 2nd round of community consultation door to door was carried out in October 2022. This in-depth consultation had further information on the project, ensuring the specific project phone number, email address & CLO contact details were available for each resident.

Again, a sorry we missed you leaflet and a project leaflet (See appendix 5) were left with the residents on this occasion. A total of 135 residents were visited on this round of consultation.

A specific effort was made to travel back to houses that were not contacted on the first round of consultation.

As a result of these door to door consultations, a frequently asked questions document & a series of videos was compiled and shared in November 2022 on the website. (See appendix 6)

Land owner Calls

A specific time was set aside with the land development manager, Steven Drury, in order to identify local needs for residents and groups. The CLO and the land development manager called to each landowner and queried if they had any suggestions or circumstances that may stand out to residents or groups that we could identify at this point to ensure this need is met. Some suggestions were given in regards to schools and groups in order to keep them involved in the project.

As a result of these calls and speaking to residents on the ground an opportunity arose to support a local "Relay of the Parish" fundraiser. In conjunction with the fundraiser, the Cush Wind Farm project sponsored the senior ladies Camogie team. (See appendix 7)

Clinic

CWF team organised local meetings through radio, newspaper & digital advertising on the Midland Tribune Newspaper page.
(See appendix 8).

The CWF community engagement team sent a further letter on 10.01.2023 to all local residents outlining plans to facilitate a community consultation clinic at the end of January 2023 (See appendix 9)

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-one basis by appointment

only. There were 4 members of the CWF community consultation team and up to 2 members of each household at any given time, with some families opting to come together.

Two Clinic days were offered as follows:

Birr Golf Club	Wednesday 25 th January 2023	Time: Between 2pm & 8pm
County Arms Hotel	Thursday 26 th January 2023	Time: Between 12 noon & 8pm

Due to demand, an early start time and late finish time on both dates were offered and taken up.

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 details of where to find out further information & updates. All residents were provided with contact details of the community engagement team who were available to answer any further queries.

Photomontages for the wind farm were also produced for the clinics in order to supply a visual representation of what the proposed wind farm would look like in the community.

A number of local residents were unable to make any of the consultation dates. An individual house call was provided as requested.

A commitment was made to 6 local residents to supply a photomontage of the view of the draft development from their house. These were carried out in April 2023 & residents were informed that it will take 2-3 weeks before they will be ready. It is the intention of CWL to deliver these by hand pre planning application.

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.

Telephone consultation

In addition to the measures outlined above, a dedicated freephone number (1800 140 247) for the proposed development was launched in Spring 2022. This was a main telephone line for the local community to contact should they have any queries, comments or requests for a call-back regarding CWF.

The phone line enabled all residents or community members to have direct access with the CLO and indeed any member of the project team. This line has been open in conjunction with the launch of the website and has remained open. All requested information via this method has been responded to depending on availability of the information required at the time of its request.

Email Consultation

A dedicated email address (clo@cushwindfarm.ie) was also launched in Spring 2022. 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 where all communications were responded to.

2.2.1 Promotion of Public Consultation Event

As identified above, CWF hosted 2 consultation clinics during January 2023. A number of mechanisms were used to promote the consultation clinic events including radio advertisements, local paper advertisements and an advertisement on the project dedicated website. A letter was also sent to each resident within the 2 km area of the wind farm.

Due to Covid-19, the clinics were held in a semi-controlled environment where each member of the CWF team & public were offered masks & sanitiser was in place at point of entry and in the room. Offer of an appointment to reschedule was in place if anyone was feeling unwell.

An offer of a personal visit to the home of a person who was unable to attend the clinic, but required further information was also provided.

2.2.2 – Clinic Consultation Event - Day one

The first of the two public consultation days took place in Birr Golf Club from 12 noon until 8 p.m. on the 25.01.2023.

The venue was chosen due to its local location to the wind farm and appointments were designed to allow as many people as possible to attend.

The clinic attracted a large number of people who engaged fully with the members from CWF's community engagement team. Over the course of the day, the appointment schedule was fully booked with 10 slots of 2 participants. Some members of the public arrived without an appointment and were facilitated within the busy schedule. Some 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 10)

2.2.3 - Clinic Consultation Event - Day two

The second consultation day was held in County Arms Hotel, Birr on the 26.01.2023. Over the course of the second day, the appointment schedule had 14 slots of mostly 2 participants per slot. Each slot consisted of a 40-45 minute consultation with the team.

2.2.4 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 visit an operational wind farm development, which the CLO would organise at a time that suited them. CWL intended, post Covid, to facilitate a group visit when restrictions allowed.

2.3 Impact of Community Consultation on the Proposed Development

CWF is committed to protecting the environment where we develop our projects. We work proactively with the local communities, and take specific concerns into account when assessing a wind farm.

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

Project General	140
Community, Grants & Benefits	40
Visual	37
Design	26
Noise Levels	23
Map/Location	13
Property Values	8

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 Project General

There were many general queries regarding the CWF project varying from site surveying to when the planning application will be submitted. A commitment was made to the local residents that we would inform them when a planning application would be submitted. The clinic, door to door and phone calls allowed the team members to answer individual project wide questions on a one on one basis.

2.3.2 Community Grants & Benefits

A commonly asked question is how CWF would give back to the community.

Due to the location of the wind farm and a recent building of a local wind farm, residents were aware of the community grants that came with this type of project.

Initially the CWF team researched the local area and identified groups and clubs that may wish to get involved. The aim of this research was to initiate the conversation and to encourage stronger interaction and positive engagement with the communities we work in. The funding process was

explained to the individual local residents, groups, clubs and schools and a timeline was indicated about when these funds would be in place. The funds will be available to support projects that are aligned with the needs of the local area. The CWF team are committed to develop social and economic benefits in the locality.

After speaking to the local sports club, CWF were approached to sponsor a local club in their “Relay around the Parish” Fundraiser.

Subsequently, CWF sponsored the camogie club jerseys to show commitment to the local area and support a local venture. This example was used in the clinics and on the doorstep to show the impact a wind farm can have in a locality.

2.3.3 Visual impact

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

A landscape and visual impact assessment has been carried out in respect of the proposed development and this shows how the development will mesh with the local topography.

Some residents raised a concern regarding the viewpoint images shown in the visual presentation. They felt there weren’t sufficient views from the viewpoints. The CWF 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 were enquiring about pylons on the development and were informed that all cables for the CWF will be going underground to the grid connection point and CWF highlighted that this will reduce the visual impact on the local landscape.

Photomontages were also given to residents that requested them. The CWFL team is committed to showing local residents a true visual assessment and explained there will be at least 30 photomontages in the planning application which will be publicly available on the dedicated project website www.cushwindfarmplanning.ie.

2.3.4 Design of the Project

The design and the proposed location of the project was raised by numerous members of the public, both on the public information clinics and on door to door visits. Residents and members of the public were advised that the key criteria for the selection of the site as a feasible location are:

- The site is designated Open For Consideration For Wind Energy Development suitable in the 2021-2027 Offaly County Development Plan
- Favourable separation distances could be provided between wind turbines and dwellings
- The site 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 suitable for transport of large components
- The site has viable commercial supporting wind speeds

2.3.5 - Noise Impacts

Noise was again a common theme of the consultation process. Where concerns were raised, CWF team were able to advise interested parties that noise levels would be compliant with the limits set out in the Wind Energy Development Guidelines. In addition, CWFL also advised that the development would be required, by law, to comply with any planning conditions set out by the Planning Authority. The latest wind turbine models are much quieter than older models. Major improvements in design and technology have significantly reduced mechanically generated noise & motion noise through blades.

2.3.6 Map & Location

The map and location of the proposed wind turbines was raised by members of the public. Just as in the design of the project, a careful robust map was generated for the location of turbines, access roads and substation.

2.3.7 Property Values

A number of residents expressed concern in relation to residential property values in the immediate area. The CWF team explained that while no research has been undertaken in Ireland; studies from the UK and Europe have found that wind farms do not materially impact property values. This is a reasonable assumption based on the available literature. The CWF team explained that it has often been the case in previous wind energy developments that we have been involved in that extra income to landowners together with substantial community benefit funds, improvement of roads and rates to the council have helped to support the local community and helped ensure that residents benefit directly from the renewable energy development.

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 the local newspapers and advertised on local radio.

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

CWF community engagement team have a CLO on hand at all stages and into the future to answer any questions, queries or comments.

2.5 Socio- Economic Benefits

CWFL 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 concerned from the proposed development.

These benefits which were expressed in brochures, in consultation clinics, door to door visits are explained further in the sections below.

2.5.1 Short Term

At Local Level, it will ensure the continuity of enterprise and employment in the area. It is expected that up to 100 workers would be employed during the construction stage.

It will also in turn have a beneficial effect on the local economy through the generation of local expenditure in local shops and service providers.

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 service providers.

Rates

Once in operation; rates, estimated at approximately €900,000 per annum will be paid by CWF to Offaly County Council, will support the provision of local services in respect of public infrastructure. This substantial payment will result in benefits to the community such as upgrading roads, waste water facilities, water supply infrastructure, community facilities and amenities.

Government Policy

In the wider midlands region, this new proposed development will help to meet the rising demand for electricity especially renewable electricity, resulting in renewed economic growth in the midlands.

The proposed CWF will play a worthy part in assisting Ireland's commitment to increasing its renewable energy sources in the post 2020 period with the production of renewable electricity.

Our Government's pledge in November 2021 to generate 80% of electricity from renewable sources by 2030 is an increase from its previous target of 70% and will form part of the new Climate Action Plan that is being overseen by the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC).

Sustainable Use of Land

Wind turbines can be built on farms and coexist with many forms of agricultural and other activities. In some circumstances, wind farms can have a positive effect on biodiversity and can provide a pollinator friendly habitat.

Air Quality

The generation of electricity due to the operation of the wind farm will lead to a net saving in terms of nitrogen oxides (NO_x) emissions. The wind farm will have an export capacity of in excess of 50MW and the supply of renewable electricity to the national grid will lead to a net saving in terms of NO_x emissions which may have been emitted from fossil fuels to produce electricity.

Operating wind turbines do not emit greenhouse gasses like carbon dioxide (CO₂) or any other pollutant.

Security of Supply

Wind is available locally. It does not need to be imported from other countries. The more we use it , the closer we get to energy security.

Our proposed Cush Wind Farm project will also play a key part in reducing our total national greenhouse gas emissions. In doing so, it will reduce our dependence on external energy sources and help to improve our energy security of supply.

2.5.3 Neighbour Scheme

The proposed 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.

2.5.4 Community Benefit Fund

CWF is committed to operating a community benefit fund in accordance with Wind Energy Ireland best practice and it will be available to the community at a rate of €2 euro per megawatt hour (MWh) generated resulting in an investment of approximately €37,000 per turbine per year for a period of 15-years.

The fund will be administered by an independent charitable trust on behalf of CWF. The fund will be designed in conjunction with the local community to meet local needs and prioritise sustainability goals.

Local community groups will be invited to submit funding requests to the committee and preference will be given to local projects, thereby contributing to the vitality of the local population, and to projects which are considered to represent an environmental benefit or incorporate a renewable energy element into the project. This fund will be made available, and distributed annually, for a period of 15 years. Any funds not spent within the corresponding year, will be rolled over to spend the following year. A full transparent record of all projects funded will be publicly accessible.

On door to door and consultation clinics, local residents were informed proximity payments are taken from the community benefit fund.

3.0 Community Update

As promised throughout the consultation engagement, CWFL committed to updating information and notifying the local residents on the planning application submission date. This commitment was followed through in November 2023 with a leaflet drop to each door within 2 kilometres of the proposed development and an updated map of a new layout of 8 turbines. (See appendix 11) Residents were thankful for the updated information.

4. 0 Conclusions

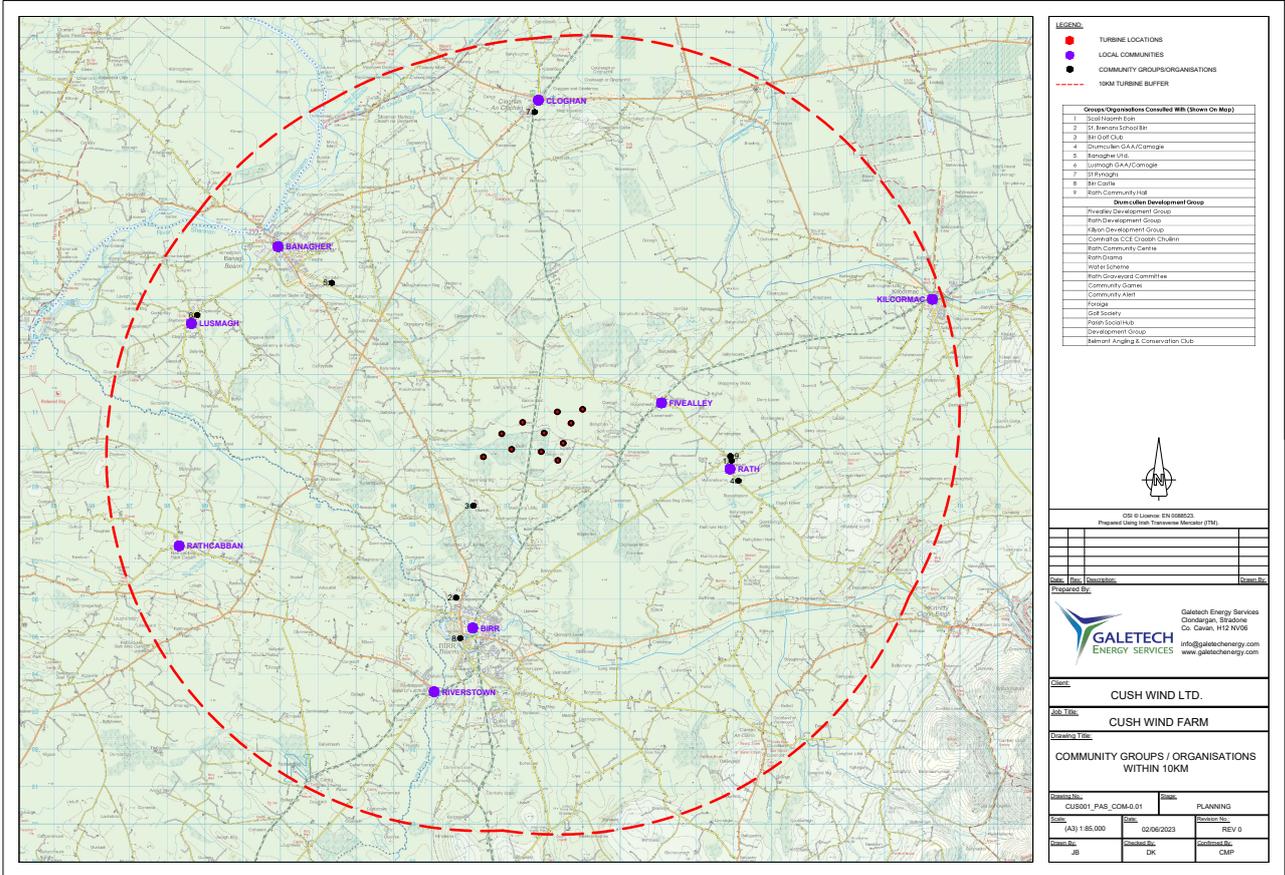
CWFL has actively engaged, consulted and maintained dialogue with the local community and other stakeholders from an early stage during the pre- planning application phase of this project. The consultation process has been an extremely valuable exercise and has provided a detailed and enhanced understanding of the key issues and concerns of the local community, which have ultimately helped shape the final project design.

The objective of the of the public consultation process was to ensure the widest possible consultation with individuals, communities and other stakeholders from the commencement of the project in observance with the best industry practices. Every effort was made to identify those to engage with, in a flexible and facilitative manner, in order to build strong and effective relationships with those that will live in the wider vicinity of the proposed wind farm.

Community engagement will be maintained throughout the different stages of the project, right through construction to the entirety of the operational phase and through to decommissioning. During the planning and consents stage, the CLO will remain available to the community in relation to any local issues and requirements that may arise and respond in a timely manner. It is intended that this approach to good-neighbour community consultation will be continued throughout the construction and operation stage.

CWF will eagerly prioritise community issues, particularly during construction phase e.g., advance warning of any temporary road closures, management of traffic flows and execution of all required mitigation measures and will keep the local community apprised of the net economic benefits of the project, particularly for the local community, through advertisements, letter drops and periodic updates on the website.

5.0 Community Consultation Map



**COMMUNITY CONSULTATION &
STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT REPORT
APPENDIX**

Appendix 1 – Initial Email to local representatives

Appendix 2 – Initial Flyer

Appendix 3 – Project update flyer

Appendix 4 – Met mast information

Appendix 5 – Project Leaflet

Appendix 6 – Frequently asked questions

Appendix 7– Sponsorship

Appendix 8 – Radio & Newspaper adverts

Appendix 9 – Clinic Letters

Appendix 10 Clinic PowerPoint

Appendix 11 - Planning Submission Leaflet

Appendix 1 – Initial Email to local representatives

Proposed Cush Wind Farm



Deirdre <deirdre@galetechenenergy.com>

Friday 18 February 2022 at 17:54

To:



[Download All](#) • [Preview All](#)

Thank you for taking my call.

Please find attached the brochure we spoke about on the phone.

Your very welcome to give me a call should you have any queries.

Have a lovely weekend,

Deirdre Keegan,
Community Liaison Officer,

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Cush Renewable Energy Park



Cush Renewable Energy Park is a proposed renewable energy development of wind turbines and solar photovoltaic (PV) panels used to generate renewable energy from the sun.

The proposed development is within the townland of Cush, Co. Offaly

Why are we calling today?

We are calling to inform you that a temporary 80 meter met mast will be installed on the site in Spring 2022 to collect wind speed, direction, temperature, humidity and air pressure, which will be used to analyse and predict the energy that the wind farm can produce on the site. The proposed development is being designed to the latest best industry standards

What are the benefits to the Community?

A wind farm can deliver substantial benefits to the community

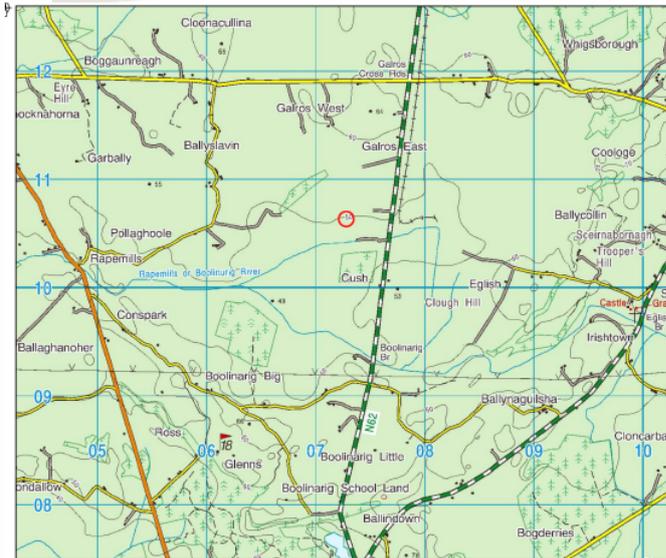
- A 'Near Neighbour' policy scheme where households living close to wind farm would see reductions in their electricity bills or other direct payments or supports
- Up to 11 turbines and 40 MW of solar is being considered for this renewable park. Between 100 to 120 jobs can be created during the construction phase. This would also provide permanent jobs, in operations, maintenance and support
- Assisting with Ireland's commitment of 80% electricity from renewable energy by 2030
- Annual expected output of approximately 180,000 MWh**, that would provide over 42,800* households with green energy every year.
- Community Benefit Fund (€2 per MWh) in accordance with Wind Energy Ireland (WEI) best practice, totalling approximately €360,000 per annum for up to 15 years.
- Local authority rates (to Offaly County Council) of approximately €1.1m per year

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

**based on best estimates for energy production using SEAI Wind Atlas and typical wind turbine of the proposed size and scale



Cush Renewable Energy Park



Temporary Met Mast: 

Projected Project Timeline

Q2 2019 – Q1 2023
Initial Project Screening & Baseline Surveys

Feb 2022 – Ongoing
Community Consultation & Stakeholder
Engagement

Feb 2022 – Q1 2023
Detailed Survey, Final Turbine Layout and
Design

Q1 2023
Planning Application Completion & Submission

Further Project Milestones
Planning decisions will determine further
project
milestones.

What is the next step?

We will return in the coming weeks with a proposed map, website, email address and freephone number for the Cush Renewable Energy Project.

In the meantime, should you have any queries, please contact me on:

Deirdre Keegan – Community Liaison Officer
087 1163978 or deirdre@galetechenergy.com

Galetech Energy Developments

Galetech Energy Developments is part of the Galetech Energy Group headquartered in Stradone, Co. Cavan, is an Irish wind farm developer and multi-disciplinary renewable energy consultancy and products provider to the wind and solar industries. The group employs 103 people, providing full-service energy consulting in all areas of wind energy development, consultancy, construction and operation. Galetech Energy is currently developing over 450MW of wind projects in Ireland; the group is also providing consultancy services to clients in Ireland, UK, France, Sweden, Poland, Bulgaria, Kazakhstan, Kenya and South Africa

www.galetechgroup.com

Appendix 3 – Project update flyer



Cush Wind Farm is a proposed wind energy development in the townland of Cush, Co. Offlay.

We recently did door to door calls to all residents within 2 kilometers introducing this proposed project.

Feedback from the local residents along with further internal investigations and time constraints has guided us to not pursuing the solar part of our project at this time.

It is for this reason, we have decided to change the name of the Renewable Energy Park to **Cush Wind Farm**.

A draft map of the proposed development is currently being designed to the latest best industry standards and we will be appealing to local residents to have their say to maximise the project benefits to the neighbouring community. An example of the benefit of the community voicing their views at our recent consultation has resulted in Cush Wind Farm sponsoring Lusmagh & Drumcullen Camogie Clubs Relay 'Around the Parishes' fundraiser and subsequently proudly sponsoring the senior ladies Camogie team.



We value the communities we work in and feedback, conversations and communication is vital to our projects.

We will be in contact in the coming months with further door to door and clinics but for now if you have any queries on this change, please contact our dedicated Community Liaison Officer:

Deirdre Keegan on 087 1163978
www.cushwindfarm.ie

Appendix 4 – Metmast information



Cush Wind Farm is a proposed wind energy development within the townland of Cush, Co. Offaly

A temporary 80 meter met mast has been installed on the site to collect wind speed, direction, temperature, humidity and air pressure, which will be used to predict the energy that the wind farm can produce on the site.

An application has recently been submitted to extend the metmast to 100meters & to retain the mast on the site for the coming years.

The proposed development is being designed to the latest best industry standards and we will be appealing to local residents in Q4 of 2022 to have their say so as to maximise the project benefits to the neighbouring community.

In the interim, if you have any queries on this metmast application or indeed any queries at this point of the design stage, please contact our dedicated Community Liaison Officer:

Deirdre Keegan on 087 1163978

www.cushwindfarm.ie



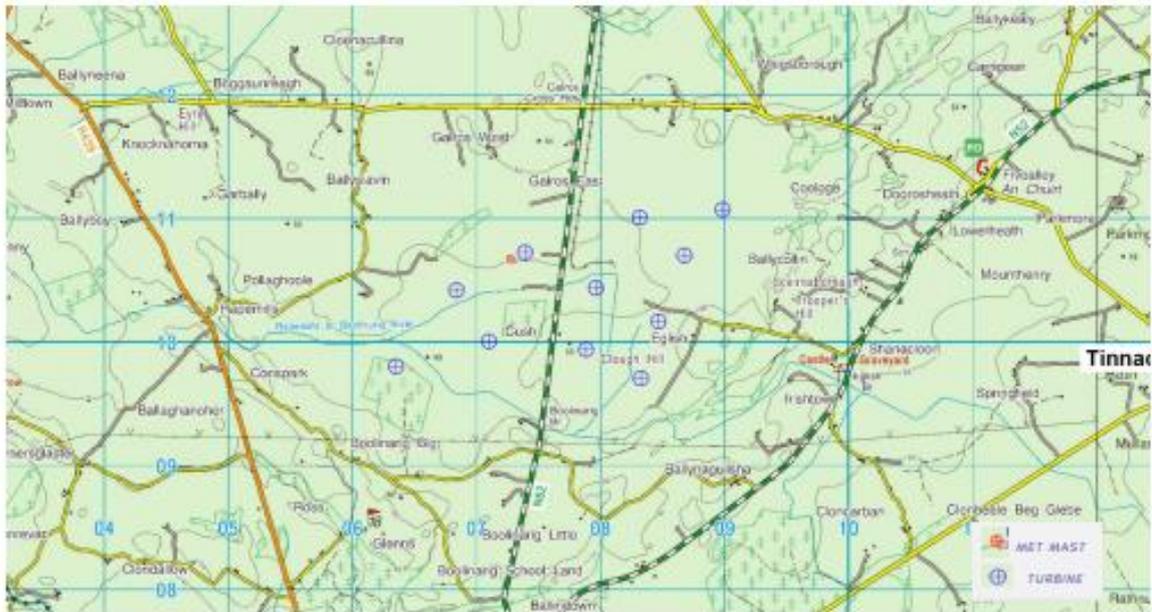


Cush Wind Farm is a proposed wind energy development of up to 11 wind turbines with a typical output of 6 - 8 Megawatts per turbine of renewable energy - enough to provide approximately 46,483* Irish households with green energy every year. The proposed development is within the townland of Cush, Co. Offaly

A temporary 80 meter met mast has been installed on the site recently to collect wind speed, direction, temperature, humidity and air pressure, which will be used to predict the energy that the wind farm can produce on the site. The proposed development is being designed to the latest best industry standards and we are appealing to local residents to have their say at this early stage of the development so as to maximise the project benefits to the neighbouring community

Freephone: 1800 140 247
clo@cushwindfarm.ie
www.cushwindfarm.ie

*based on CRU 2020 annual report of 5,034 Kwh electricity consumption per household per annum based on average dwelling



Proposed Project:

Assessment work on the proposed Cosh Wind Farm site has shown that it is capable of accommodating up to 88 MW of installed generation capacity. The project will essentially comprise of up to 11 wind turbines (6-8 Megawatts per turbine). Apart from the wind turbines themselves, the other principal components of the Cosh Wind Farm are the foundations to support the turbine towers, access roads, crane hard standings, underground cables between the turbines, on-site electricity control building, and electrical connection to the appropriate node on the National Grid. The exact type of turbine that will be used has not yet been finalised, however in order not to underestimate any potential impacts, the largest physical dimensions of the largest turbine dimensions suitable to the site have been used to assess the impact of the project. The height of the wind turbine has a blade tip height of approx. 200 meters. It is intended to submit a planning application for the proposed project in Q2 2023.

Environmental Impact Assessment:

We are currently carrying out a comprehensive Environmental Impact Assessment as part of the planning process. We are consulting with all the relevant statutory and environmental bodies. We have an ecologist, bat surveyor, visual impact consultant, community liaison officer, noise engineer and other consultants working on site. The final design will be based on these results. This information will be compiled into a report as soon as the raw data has been gathered in its entirety & will be available on www.cushwindfarm.ie.



Wind Energy - Climate Action

Government Policy has set a target for 80% of the electricity we consume by 2030 to be generated from renewable sources. Wind energy will be the main component of Ireland's renewable electricity by this time in order to play its part in achieving the European climate and energy ambitions.



National Level

The proposed Cush Wind Farm will play a worthy part in assisting Ireland's commitment to increasing its renewable energy sources in the post 2020 period with the production of renewable electricity.

Our government's new pledge in September 2021 to generate 80% of electricity from renewable sources by 2030 is an increase from its previous target of 70% and will form part of the new Climate Action Plan that is being overseen by the present Minister for Communications, Climate Action, and the Environment.

Our proposed Cush Wind Farm will contribute in reducing our total National greenhouse gas emissions. In doing so, it will reduce our dependence on external energy sources and help to improve our energy security of supply.

Regional Level

This new proposed development will help to meet the rising demand for electricity especially renewable electricity, resulting from renewed economic growth in County Offaly. The construction phase will create additional employment in the region through the supply of services and materials to the proposed wind farm.

Local Level

It will ensure the continuity of enterprise and employment in the area. It is expected that up to 110 workers would be employed on the project at peak. It will also support long term high quality technical jobs in operation and maintenance as well as ancillary functions. Once in operation, the business rates that will be paid by Cush Wind Farm to Offaly County Council will support the provision of local services.

A range of other benefits associated with the development will be provided to the community. There will be a community fund set up in accordance with the Wind Energy Ireland (WEI) best practice and it will be available to the community



Projected Project Timeline

Q2 2019 – Q1 2023
Initial Project Screening & Baseline Surveys

Feb 2022 – Ongoing
Community Consultation & Stakeholder
Engagement

Feb 2022 – Q1 2023
Detailed Survey, Final Turbine Layout and Design

Q2 2023
Planning Application Completion & Submission

Further Project Milestones
Planning decisions will determine further project
milestones.

Community Engagement

The Cush Wind Farm community liaison team are committed to keeping the locality we are in engaging with safe. Engagement will remain in alignment with all current government protocols. Our staff are available to discuss the project in more detail via freephone, website with email, door to door and clinic visits.

Contact

Deirdre Keegan,
Community Liaison Officer (CLO)
Freephone: 1800 140 247
E. clo@cushwindfarm.ie
W. www.cushwindfarm.ie

Project Developer - Galetech Energy Developments

Galetech Energy Developments is part of the Galetech Energy Group headquartered in Stradone, Co. Cavan, is an Irish wind farm developer and multi-disciplinary renewable energy consultancy and products provider to the wind and solar industries. The group employs 110 people, providing full-service energy consulting in all areas of wind energy development, consultancy, construction and operation. Galetech Energy is currently developing over 450MW of wind projects in Ireland; the group is also providing consultancy services to clients in Ireland, UK, France, Sweden, Poland, Bulgaria, Kazakhstan, Kenya and South Africa

www.galetechgroup.com





What height are the turbines?

A frequently asked question while carrying out door to door information sessions on Cush Wind Farm was in relation to the height of the turbines.

While the final turbine has not been decided yet, the height of the turbine will be no more than 200 meters

How far is it from my home?

While the distance, understandably, will be different for each household, The 2019 Draft Wind Energy Development Guidelines propose a “visual amenity setback of 4 times the turbine height between a wind turbine and the nearest residential property, subject to a mandatory minimum distance of 500 metres”.

We will comply with all guidelines as set out by the wind industry standards.

What about the telescope?

Stakeholders who are involved with the local telescope in Birr have been communicated with & informed of the plan for Cush wind farm.





When will Cush Wind Farm be operational?

Cush wind farm has completed feasibility, desktop and local ecology surveys in the area over the past number of years. In order to comply with all regulatory guidelines an Environmental Impact Assessment is scheduled for completion Q2 of 2023. This is when the planning application will be lodged.

The planning and permitting of projects has historically taken anything between 4-8 years.

Construction of this project is forecasted for 2027, however, this will depend on the planning process.

Each lifecycle of a wind farm varies.

All information regarding this timeline will be communicated on www.cushwindfarm.ie/updates

If you wish to speak to me regarding any of the frequently asked questions or if you have any further questions on this project, please do not hesitate to contact me:

Freephone: 1800 140 247
clo@cushwindfarm.ie
www.cushwindfarm.ie



Frequently Asked Questions

We are aware that local residents will have queries regarding the proposed wind farm development.

Upon completing door to door consultation in October and November 2022, we have compiled a list of questions that were frequently asked which are directly related to the [Cush Wind Farm](#).

Some of these most frequently asked questions are answered [here](#).

Some further queries are answered in the videos below

If you require further information about the proposed wind farm development, please contact the project's Community Liaison officer on the phone number or email address below.

Community Funds



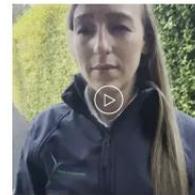
Noise



Visual Impact



Other Local Projects



Appendix 7– Sponsorship



June 2022

Cush Wind farm sponsors Lusmagh & Drumcullen Camogie Clubs Relay 'Around the Parishes' fundraiser.

Community involvement is at the core of all our projects. After consultation with local residents, committees and groups in Cush, Co. Offaly, we were approached to sponsor Lusmagh & Drumcullen Camogie Clubs Relay 'Around the Parishes' fundraiser to raise funds for the Camogie Club. Further feedback from the residents of Cush resulted in sponsoring the senior ladies Camogie team.

With Project Manager James Carville stating "It's an honour to be able to get involved with the local GAA club. GAA provides an amazing outlet for young people all over Ireland & the senior team here local to Cush is a fantastic example of this" "Building long term relationships within the communities we work in is our top priority"

To find out more about our community sponsorship programmes & our community grants please call our Community Liaison, Deirdre Keegan, on 087 1163978. You can also view our Cush updates on www.cushwindfarm.ie



RELAY AROUND THE PARISHES LUSMAGH & DRUMCULLEN SENIOR CAMOGIE TEAM FUNDRAISER SAT 25th JUNE

1. Meelick Weir Walkway	15. Eglish Church	26. Cloghammore Castle
2. Victoria Lock	16. Eamonn Baffies Grave	27. Drumcullen Abbey
3. Shaughnessys Bridge	17. Eglish School House	28. Drumcullen Norman House
4. Meelick Martello Tower	18. Clonbriale House	29. Mass Rock
5. River Shannon	19. Rathmoolet Court House	30. Knockbarren Eco Trail
6. Beara to Breifne Way	20. Rath Church	31. The Pass Health Lodge
7. Edward Dolan Head Stone	21. Drumcullen High Cross	32. Ballincard House
8. Shannon Castle	22. Drumcullen GAA pitch	33. The Dower's House
9. Callows Bird Hide	23. Killawen Bog Boardwalk	34. Whigborough House
10. Bunreavan Mill	24. The Ramblers Rest Pub	35. Killyon Nunnery
11. Golfing in the Glens	25. The Old Forge in Killyon	36. Thomastown Estate
12. Ballindown Ringfort		
13. Ballindown Ringfort		
14. Eglish Protestant Church		

Cush Wind Farm
Supporting Irish households with renewable energy



Appendix 8 – Radio & Newspaper adverts

Midlands radio 3

11/01/23	Midlands 103		
09:46:20	0 30	14:29:11	0 30
(A)		(A)	
12/01/23	Midlands 103		
11:19:18	0 30	12:20:07	0 30
(A)		(A)	
13/01/23	Midlands 103		
11:41:48	0 30	16:16:52	0 30
(A)		(A)	
14/01/23	Midlands 103		
09:52:26	0 30	10:17:09	0 30
(A)		(A)	
15/01/23	Midlands 103		
11:16:50	0 30	13:47:22	0 30
(A)		(A)	
16/01/23	Midlands 103		
12:25:55	0 30	16:22:24	0 30
(A)		(A)	
17/01/23	Midlands 103		
09:44:03	0 30	12:48:50	0 30
(A)		(A)	
18/01/23	Midlands 103		
09:58:05	0 30	13:58:24	0 30
(A)		(A)	
19/01/23	Midlands 103		
11:30:52	0 30	15:20:15	0 30
(A)		(A)	
20/01/23	Midlands 103		
11:23:25	0 30	12:48:49	0 30
(A)		(A)	
21/01/23	Midlands 103		
09:32:27	0 30	14:46:52	0 30
(A)		(A)	
22/01/23	Midlands 103		
11:30:37	0 30	12:59:12	0 30
(A)		(A)	
23/01/23	Midlands 103		

	Product	Energy
23/01/23	Midlands 103	
10:31:54	0 30	15:33:03 0 30
(A)		(A)
24/01/23	Midlands 103	
09:58:10	0 30	15:57:25 0 30
(A)		(A)
17:49:17	0 30	
(A)		
Total spots	42	

(S) Scheduled Time (A) Aired Time 0 Non Filler Spot 1 Filler Spot
Scheduled Times reported prior to broadcast may be subject to change.

Offlay Tribune



Further community engagement for the proposed Cush Wind Farm Face to face clinic sessions by appointment available.

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

Birr Golf Club
Wednesday 25th January 2023 – 2pm and 8 pm

County Arms Hotel
Thursday 26th January 2023 – 12 noon - 8pm

Book your appointment by ringing our freephone number 1800 140 247

📞 Freephone **1800 140 247**

✉️ clo@cushwindfarm.ie 🌐 www.cushwindfarm.ie

The Cush wind farm team will adhere with all protocols imposed as per most recent Government regulations

Offaly independent



Further community engagement for the proposed Cush Wind Farm

Face to face clinic sessions by appointment available.

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

Birr Golf Club
- Wednesday 25th January 2023
- 2pm and 8 pm

County Arms Hotel
- Thursday 26th January 2023
- 12 noon - 8pm

Book your appointment by ringing our freephone number 1800 140 247

Contact us:
Tel: Freephone 1800 140 247
Email: clo@cushwindfarm.ie
Web: www.cushwindfarm.ie

The Cush wind farm team will adhere with all protocols imposed as per most recent Government regulations.

Website advert for Offaly Tribume
Digital Advert:

300x250 



Further community engagement for the proposed Cush Wind Farm
Face to face clinic sessions by appointment available.
The Venue, Dates and Times for consultation clinics are as follows:

Birr Golf Club
Wednesday 25th January 2023 - 2pm and 8pm

County Arms Hotel
Thursday 26th January 2023 - 12 noon - 8pm

[GET MORE DETAILS](#)

320x50 



[Birr Golf Club](#) [County Arms Hotel](#) [GET MORE DETAILS](#)

970x250 



Further community engagement for the proposed Cush Wind Farm
Face to face clinic sessions by appointment available.

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

Birr Golf Club
Wednesday 25th January 2023 - 2pm and 8pm

County Arms Hotel
Thursday 26th January 2023 - 12 noon - 8pm

[GET MORE DETAILS](#)



Tel: Freephone 1800 140 247
Email: clo@cushwindfarm.ie
Web: www.cushwindfarm.ie

Cush Wind Farm,
Clondargan,
Stradone,
Co. Cavan
H12NV06

06.01.2023

Dear Homeowner,

Community Consultation Clinics for The Proposed Cush Wind Farm

Galetech Energy Developments Ltd., Co.Cavan, are progressing their development plans for a proposed wind farm in the townland of Cush, Co.Offaly.

The Cush wind farm project is a proposed wind energy development of up to 11 wind turbines with a typical output of approximately 6 -8 Megawatts per turbine of renewable energy – enough to provide approximately 46,483 Irish Households with green energy every year.

We are grateful for your engagement with us to date through the engagement on door to door in February 2022 & in October 2022.

We are now happy to provide further consultation opportunities by providing a clinic starting on 25th January. This clinic will be held via appointment basis while observing all social distancing arrangements.

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

Birr Golf Club - Wednesday 25th January 2023 - 2pm and 8 pm

County Arms Hotel – Thursday 26th January 2023 - 12 noon – 8pm

It is important to book your appointment by ringing our **freephone number: 1800 140 247** and **state your preferred date 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 also continue to engage via:

- The freephone number 1800 140 247, which you can dial free of charge to request a call back from the project team.
- We also commit to post regular updates on our project website at www.cushwindfarm.ie

As part of our pre planning and planning process, we will continue to engage and consult fully with all the community. We appeal to the local community again to have their say at this stage of the development to maximise the project benefits to the neighbouring community.

The Cush Wind Farm draft layout currently includes sections of Coillte property in its proposal in addition to other third party lands. If you have any Coillte related queries about the proposal, please contact jsinfo@coillte.ie

This project will create up to 110 jobs during the construction phase and will also provide a substantial community benefit fund each year to help support local community projects and proximity payments to households within a 2km radius. The total fund will be approximately €466,000 per year for 15 years (Approximately €42,000 per turbine)*. The substantial community fund will be administered in accordance with Wind Energy Ireland (WEI) best practice and grants will be made available after one year of wind farm operation.

To register your interest or if you have any queries regarding these funds, please contact us on clo@cushwindfarm.ie or 087 1163978.

Cush wind farm will 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 80% of electricity from renewable sources by 2030 forming part of the new climate action plan.

We're at a design stage and want to engage with the local community of the proposed site and beyond.

We look forward to hearing from you and meeting you at the clinic,

Yours faithfully,



Deirdre Keegan,
Community Liaison Officer,
Cush Wind Farm Community Team
E: clo@cushwindfarm.ie
Freephone: 1800 140 247
M: 087 1163978

*The community fund is calculated in accordance with the Renewable Electricity Support Scheme (RESS) terms and conditions at €2 per MWh of electricity produced by the project. This is to be made available to the local community for the duration of the RESS (15 years). The figures are approximate and based on a 11 turbine layout

Appendix 10 Clinic PowerPoint

<https://app.box.com/s/xofhobfam54fo2aagpc1hntqnab2axc6>

Appendix 11 – Planning Submission Leaflet



Community Information For Proposed Cush Wind Farm

Following on from previous mail drops, emails, clinics & door to door consultation, the Cush Wind Farm project team is continuing communication on a proposed wind energy development of 8 turbines with a typical output of 57.7 megawatts of renewable energy.

We have completed our assessments and will shortly submit our application for planning consent to An Bord Pleanála as a Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) in accordance with Section 37E of the Planning and Development Act 2000.

The planning application will be advertised in local and national newspapers and will be available on the dedicated website.



- ⊕ Turbine
- ⊕ Met mast

Cush Wind Farm Final Layout

The Cush Wind Farm final layout includes sections of Coillte property in its proposal in addition to other third party lands. If you have any Coillte related queries about the proposal, please contact sinfo@coillte.ie



www.cushwindfarmplanning.ie

Web Copies of this are also available to view by the public via:

SID application website – www.pleanala.ie

Cush Website – www.cushwindfarm.ie

Should you require any further information, please contact us on:

Freephone 1800 140 247

or

Email: clo@cushwindfarm.ie

Deirdre Keegan

*Deirdre Keegan – Community Liaison
Cush Wind Farm Project Team*



Working with Education

The Galetech Community team are happy to facilitate school visits and talks on renewable energy and its benefits.

To organise this, please contact

Deirdre on 087 1163978



Community Benefit Funds

We want local people to see and feel the benefit of renewable energy through our wind farm benefit funds, which support community groups, voluntary organisations and environmental projects and education near our operational wind farm sites.

The CUSH community benefit fund will be designed to meet the needs of the local area. The fund will be made available 1 year after the wind farm becomes operational.

www.cushwindfarm.ie

