

RWE

Fahy Beg
Proposed
Wind Farm

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The Need for Wind Farms in Ireland

In 2019 the Irish government published the Climate Action Plan to build a net zero carbon energy system. Increasing renewable energy generation by wind farms is an integral part of this plan.

Onshore Wind

Onshore wind is fundamental to the decarbonisation of the electricity market in Ireland. It is the lowest cost electricity source and will help us achieve our renewable energy and climate action goals. Onshore wind will also continue to provide investment nationally and locally, particularly to rural communities.



Why Wind Farms?

- By 2050 our homes, cars, workplaces, shops and schools will be powered by electricity generated in Ireland from a renewable energy source.
- By 2030 Ireland has targeted that 70% of electricity generated in Ireland is to come from renewables.
- A wind farm generates clean, renewable, carbon neutral electricity and is Ireland's cheapest electricity resource.
- Ireland has the second highest wind resource in Europe and wind energy is the largest contributing resource of renewable energy in the country (SEAI).
- In 2019, 86% of renewable electricity came from wind and wind farms accounted for 33% of all electricity generated, avoiding 3.9 million tonnes of CO₂ emissions.
- Every megawatt (MW) generated is the equivalent of powering approximately 625 homes for a year (SEAI).
- Ireland has over 250 operational wind farms, which represents an investment of over €7 billion, regularly powering 65% of Ireland's electricity needs.
- The wind industry supports 4,400 jobs and annually pays more than €30 million in commercial rates to local authorities.
- In 2019, approximately €501 million in fossil fuel imports were avoided by the use of renewable energy, of which €248 million was saved through onshore wind generation.

What Is Happening Now?

The RWE Development Team has identified the initial study area for the proposed Fahy Beg Wind Farm of up to 8 turbines with associated internal

roads, an electrical substation, underground cabling and ancillary works. Environmental Impact Studies have commenced within the study area.



Public Consultation

Together with the local community, RWE is entering into a pre-planning consultation period to answer questions and gather feedback on the proposed project. RWE are conscious of all Government restrictions relating to COVID-19 and the Team is following all necessary guidelines.

We are committed to community consultation and we will endeavour to engage with you considering all restrictions. This may mean initially sending you the information by post or email rather than having face to face meetings, or you

can call us on (087 151 9219) with any queries. We can also facilitate zoom or skype calls.

We will be delighted to accept email correspondence to our dedicated project email address (fahybeg@rwe.com) or by post to our office in Kilkenny at Fahy Beg Wind Farm, Desart House, Lower New Street Co. Kilkenny, R95 H488. We also have a project website which will be updated as the project progresses. Please find it at www.rwe.com/fahybeg

Next Steps

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

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

Project Road Map



What Benefits are there for the Local Community?



Community Benefit Fund RESS Scheme

In 2020 the Government launched the Renewable Electricity Support Scheme (RESS). A key requirement is that community benefit is at the core of all renewable energy developments.

RESS outlines that for every megawatt hour (MWh) of electricity generated, each wind farm project will contribute €2 to a Community Benefit Fund every year, for 15 years.

Fahy Beg has a proposed installed capacity of 28MW to 48MW which could mean €168,000 to €288,000 per annum is paid into the fund every year, for 15 years. The amount of funding will be dependent on the final capacity and the amount of electricity generated by the wind farm when operational.



Community Benefit Fund post 15 Years - RWE extra Community Benefit

In addition to this, RWE has committed to maintaining a Community Benefit Fund for the full lifetime of the wind farm in line with best practice and guidelines.

Administration of the Fund

Each fund needs to be administered transparently

and any administration costs will be paid out of the Community Benefit Fund.

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

Community Shared Ownership

A further potential income stream could come via RWE offering the local community the opportunity to participate in a community shared ownership scheme whereby they could invest in the wind farm in return for a share of future revenue.

Jobs and Supply Chain Opportunities

Up to 70 jobs will be created during the 1.5 – 2 years of construction and then operation of the proposed Fahy Beg Wind Farm. The majority of construction work and materials will be sourced locally where possible, promoting employment in the area.

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

Business Rates

A significant wider benefit of the proposed Fahy Beg Wind Farm is the annual business rates contribution paid to Clare County Council (based on the installed capacity of the project) to be paid for the full operational life of the wind farm.

These business rates will significantly benefit the wider local economy and could represent an annual contribution of between €600,000 and €1,000,000 per annum to the County.





Steps taken to decide on where to place a wind farm

1

A review of the County Development Plan is undertaken to identify those areas which have been zoned strategically for wind development by the County Council / local planning authority.

2

Available lands in the area large enough to accommodate a wind farm, while maintaining an appropriate distance from houses are identified, in line with national guidance and best practice.

3

Any Natura 2000 Sites or national environmentally designated sites in the area are identified and avoided

4

After these initial investigations, a potential area for development is identified and the next step is to identify 'constraints'. A constraint is a limiting factor on selection of a site such as nearby houses, cultural heritage, environmental or technical / physical factors (mountains / rivers / lakes/ geology, etc.).

5

These are then mapped and the remaining parcels of land that could potentially accommodate a wind farm are identified.

Guidelines

Wind farm design is governed by Governmental and Environmental guidelines including the Wind Energy Development Guidelines (2006), the Draft Revised Wind Energy Development Guidelines (2019), the Planning and Development Act and Regulations and the EPA Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and Appropriate Assessment (AA) Guidelines. These take account of many factors and criteria and RWE will follow the latest guidelines.

As prescribed under EU and National Legislation, proposed wind farm developments with more than

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

Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR)

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

The Report includes many detailed chapters including Background to the Proposed Development, Site Selection and what the Alternatives were and a Description of the Project.

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

Your Views Matter To Us

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

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



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



Email us at
fahybeg@rwe.com



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



RWE Renewables in Ireland

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

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

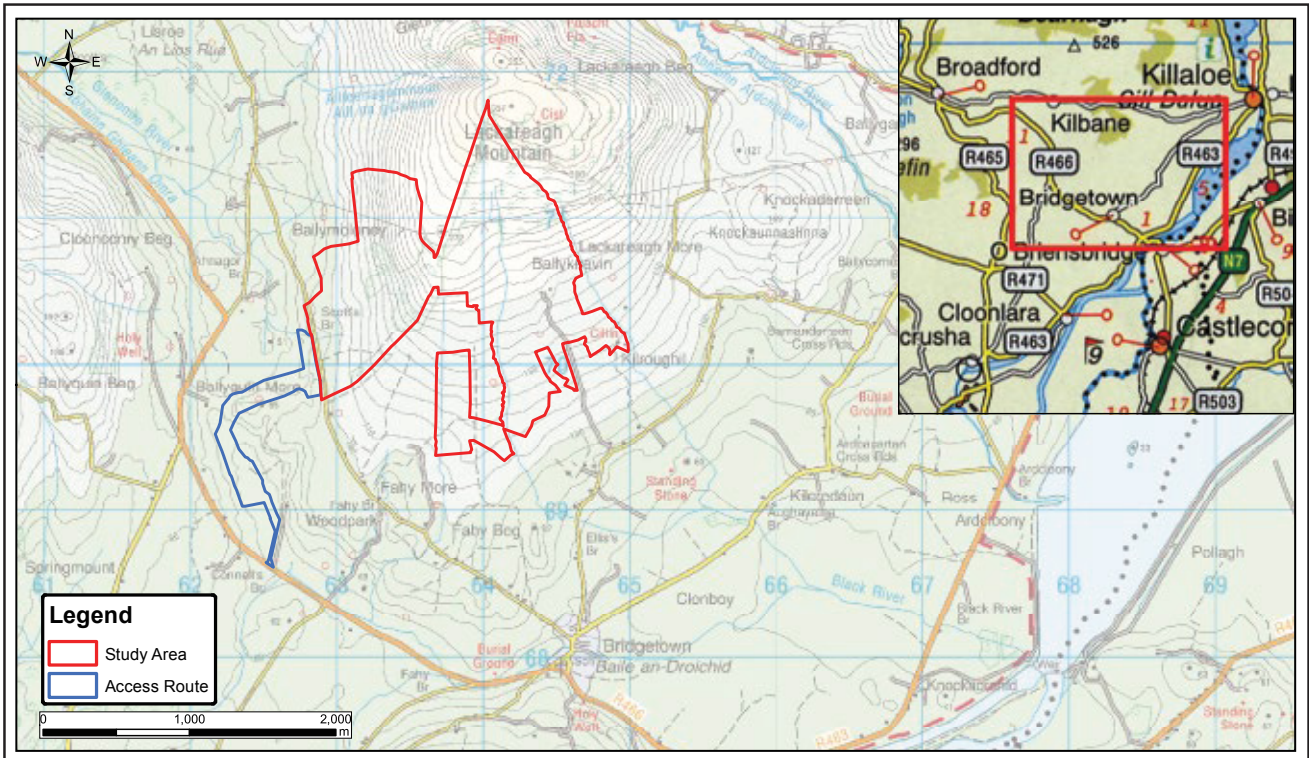
RWE's objective is to be a long-term energy partner for Ireland during the country's energy transition to zero carbon emissions. In line with this, RWE is aiming to further expand its portfolio in Ireland and is actively seeking new opportunities to expand the use of renewable energies with technologies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



Fahy Beg Proposed Wind Farm

RWE is currently investigating developing projects in many areas around the country, including Fahy Beg, in Co. Clare. The proposed Fahy Beg wind farm is critical to helping Ireland meet its EU renewable energy target by 2030. The proposed development could generate renewable energy for use in the national grid helping to displace thousands of tonnes of carbon dioxide over its lifetime. It will lead to cheaper electricity, energy security and help Ireland meet its challenging climate change and decarbonisation targets.





MAP OF STUDY AREA

Why is Fahy Beg Suitable?

The proposed Fahy Beg Wind Farm sits in an area of appropriate wind speeds with suitable available land on which to develop. The land is in an area designated in the Clare County Development Plan, Wind Energy Strategy 2017-2023 as “Open to Consideration” for wind farm development.

The proposed Fahy Beg Wind Farm does not contain areas designated as European Protected

Natura 2000 sites, meaning that it is not a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) or a Special Protection Area (SPA) and also does not contain any nationally designated Natural Heritage Areas (NHA).

The proposed wind farm occupies a sufficient area of land to accommodate a wind farm while keeping an appropriate distance from dwellings in line with government guidelines.

Facts about the Proposed Fahy Beg Wind Farm

- The proposed wind farm is located approximately 6km South West of Killaloe and 1.5km North of Bridgetown.
- The study area comprises lands at Fahy Beg, Fahy More North, Ballymoloney and Ballyknavin townlands, measuring approximately 320 hectares.
- The study area elevation ranges between 130m to 340m above sea level.
- The majority of the proposed wind farm study area is agricultural and forestry land. These land uses could continue with a wind farm development at the site.
- Based on the results of initial investigations it is considered that the proposed wind farm could accommodate up to 8 turbines.
- Each wind turbine could be up to 180 metres tall (from the turbine base to the top of the turbine blade, when blades are in an upright position).
- Based on current available turbine technology, the capacity of each proposed turbine could be in the range of 3.5 to 6MW, resulting in a total estimated capacity for the site of between 28 and 48MW.
- Investment in the proposed Fahy Beg Wind Farm and local communities is expected to be in the region of €30 million over its lifetime.

What makes up a wind farm?

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

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

Wind Turbines

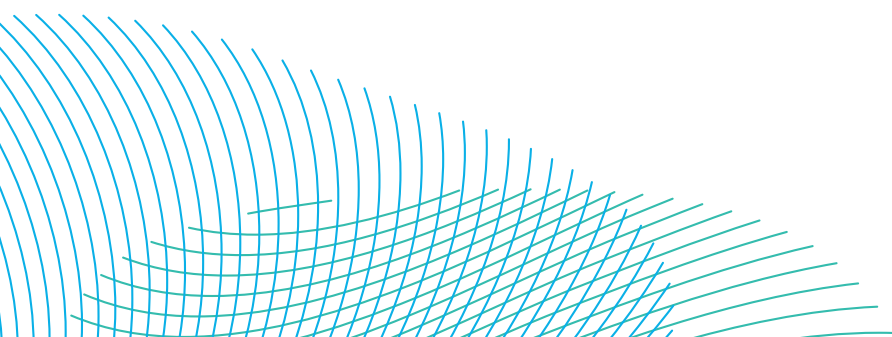
The wind turbines harness the wind energy and convert it to electricity before transporting it to the national grid for distribution. Generally the larger the turbine, the more energy it can produce. In Ireland, wind farms are increasingly designed with smaller numbers of more powerful turbines to maximise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



Access Roads

A network of access roads are needed to deliver the components to site and facilitate access by the operations team to the turbines for routine maintenance.

We endeavour to use existing tracks and we design roads along field boundaries to reduce potential impact. Landowners have use of these tracks once they are built.



Underground Cables

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



Substation

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



Potential for Benefiting Biodiversity

As part of the construction of a wind farm it is often possible to include improvements to biodiversity within the boundary such as the development of ponds or wetland areas, wildflower meadows, plant native trees, shrubs, butterfly and bird friendly zones and pesticide-free “wild” areas on the site.



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