



21st June 2021

Email: kieran.o'byrne@rwe.com

Dear Resident

Re: Information on the Proposed Fahy Beg Wind Farm

As we finish the first eight week consultation period I thought I should update you to let you know what has happened and what will be happening next. Firstly let me say that while we have come to the end of this first consultation, we will not stop engaging with residents and we are still available to talk to you and to answer any questions you might have at any time throughout the process on my mobile, by email and by post if you wish.

Over the last eight weeks we have met with more than 30 local residents (socially distanced), have had numerous emails and telephone calls. During this process we have had a number of questions posed and the questions people are asking are as follows:

- Where will the turbines be located? Where will the substation be located?
- Will I experience shadow flicker?
- Are the turbines noisy? What will the predicted noise levels be at our house?
- Will property prices be effected?
- What are the turbines made from and are the turbines recyclable?
- What is the lifespan of turbines? What happens the turbines at end of the life of the wind farm?
- What is the breakdown of turbine materials and what is their scrap value?
- Will all correspondence be submitted as part of the planning process?
- Have the environmental studies (on birds and bats) been completed yet?
- Will there be flooding risks or risks to groundwater from the turbines?
- Why was Fahy Beg chosen for a windfarm?
- What will be the impact on Ballymoloney Wood?
- Who will manage the Community Benefit Fund (CBF) if the wind farm gets planning permission and will there be real benefits to the community from the fund?
- Construction noise / traffic disruption during construction ?
- How much is RWE investing in Fahy Beg windfarm / how much will it cost to build?
- What is Community Shared Ownership / how does investing in windfarms work?
- Will there be an impact on broadband reception in the area?
- How many acres / hectares of forestry is to be felled to allow the project to proceed?

A summary of these answers is below. For answers in greater detail please see the website www.rwe.com/fahybeg . The frequently asked questions are answered at the bottom of the webpage. We have also included a section called “More Information” and “Useful Documents” which I hope you will find informative.

RWE Renewables Ireland Limited

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The next step in the process is for the team to go through the ecological survey data that will be compiled as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR). This will inform the draft turbine locations, substation location and cable routes. When these locations are in draft, we will once again revert to you looking for your thoughts on the next stage of the project hopefully next month, in July.

The website (www.rwe.com/fahybeg) will be updated regularly with answers to people's questions as we go through the process.

The proposed Fahy Beg project is critical to help 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 climate change and decarbonisation targets.

I would be delighted to hear from you as we progress through this engagement process. If you have any questions about the project at any stage, please feel free to contact me on my mobile **087 151 9219** or by email at fahybeg@rwe.com. You can write to me at RWE Renewables Ireland Limited, Desart House, Lower New Street, Co. Kilkenny R95 H488.

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

Kind regards

Kieran

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

Questions Raised in the first consultation period with summary answers.

Where will the turbines (substation, cable routes, etc) be located?

The ongoing ecological surveys will inform the proposed locations of the turbines. When these surveys are finalised and the locations known, we will once again reach out to the community and engage on this next step of the ongoing consultation –we hope this will be in July of this year.

Will I experience shadow flicker?

No, as shadow flicker is no longer allowed under the new Draft Revised Wind Energy Development Guidelines December 2019.

Under the new Draft Revised Wind Energy Development Guidelines December 2019 (section 7.16) “no existing dwelling or other affected property (e.g. existing work places or schools) should experience shadow flicker.” “The relevant planning authority or An Bord Pleanála should require that the applicant shall provide evidence as part of the planning application that shadow flicker control mechanisms will be in place for the operational duration of the wind energy development project.”

“The planning authority or An Bord Pleanála should impose condition(s) to ensure that no existing dwelling or other affected property will experience shadow flicker as a result of the wind energy development subject of the planning application and the wind energy development shall be installed and operated in accordance with the shadow flicker study submitted to accompany the planning application, including any mitigation measures required.”

Are the turbines noisy? What will the predicted noise levels be at our house?

We have had noise monitoring stations at various locations around the proposed site measuring background noise. The background noise data will inform the proposed location of the turbines.

According to the Draft Revised Wind Energy Development Guidelines December 2019 (Section 5.7.4) “the proposed noise restriction limits consistent with World Health Organisation Guidelines, proposing a relative rated noise limit of 5dB(A) above existing background noise within the range of 35 to 43dB(A), with 43dB(A) being the maximum noise limit permitted, day or night. The noise limits will apply to outdoor locations at any residential or noise sensitive properties.”

Will property prices be effected?

There have been studies undertaken around the world where wind farms are located which show little or some negative effect on property prices. (see website for these studies www.rwe.com/fahybeg). There has not been any peer reviewed study done in Ireland so far about the effect of a wind farm on property prices.

What are the turbines made from and are the turbines recyclable?

90% of the turbine is made of metal (steel, aluminium, copper and alloys) all of which are very recyclable and valuable at end of life. Electronics and electrics are recyclable and the fluids and lubricants used are disposed of according to relevant disposal guidance for each fluid.

The blades themselves are made primarily from fibre glass (5.8% of the remainder of the turbine) and these can be repurposed or recycled in a number of ways. The blades can be reused / repurposed in sections, such as in civil engineering projects as part of powerline structures or towers,

or roofs for emergency or affordable housing. Blade sections can be used to make bicycle sheds and playgrounds.

The fibreglass itself can be recycled too by being crushed and ground up and could be used again to make fibreglass materials. Crushed fibreglass can be used as “feedstock” that is mixed with other components to form a new material such as composite manhole covers, which are made from the reclaimed fibreglass mixed with gravel and filler, added to concrete instead of sand, or used in the production of waterproof panels as a wood substitute as flooring material, warehouse pallets, picnic tables, fencing, even sea walls and parking bollards.

What is the lifespan of turbines and what happens the turbines at end of the life of the wind farm?

Turbines have a life span of 30 to 35 years. At the end of life, the turbines have value as they are primarily made from metals and they will be recycled as scrap metal. As part of planning conditions, Clare Co. Co. will also hold a bond from RWE to ensure the finances are in place to have them decommissioned / removed.

What is the breakdown of turbine materials and what is their scrap value*?

Turbine manufacturer Vestas gives a breakdown of the components of a Vestas V136 on their [website](#). The turbine weighs 566 tonnes and the amount of materials in each based on the percentages above is as follows:

- steel and iron about 504 tonnes, ([UK value average today](#) about £100 per tonne = £50,400)
- aluminium and alloys about 7.3 tonnes ([UK value average today](#) for cast aluminium £900 per tonne = £6,500)
- copper and alloys would be 3.3 tonnes ([UK value average today](#) for No 2 copper wire £5,800 per tonne = £19,000)
- electronics / electrics would be about 3.3 tonnes ([UK value average today](#)) about £300 per tonne = £990)

Estimated scrap value of each turbine from the websites quoted above is approximately £76,800 sterling.

(*Scrap value taken from two UK scrap websites. Prices are from June 2021)

Will all correspondence be submitted as part of the planning process

As part of the community engagement process we will be summarising the results of communications with the local community and the team. Questions asked, meetings held, correspondence received and replied to will be part of the submission.

Have the environmental studies (on birds and bats) been completed yet?

The ecological studies including studies on birds and bats has not yet been completed and should be completed in the coming months. 24 months of birds surveys is required before we can complete the EIAR. This will inform the placement of the turbines, substation, etc.

Will there be flooding risks or risks to groundwater from the turbines?

As part of the EIAR, flood risks will be assessed and taken into consideration and will be used in the next stage of the process.

Why was Fahy Beg chosen for a wind farm?

The area was chosen for a number of reasons. The land is in an area designated in the Clare Co. Development Plan Wind Energy Strategy as “open to consideration”. The study area does not contain areas designated as European Protected Natura 2000 sites – it is not a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) or a Special Protection Area (SPA) and does not contain any nationally designated Natural Heritage Areas (NHA). It has available lands to accommodate a wind farm while keeping an appropriate distance from houses in line with Government guidelines and has good wind speeds.

What will be the impact on Ballymoloney Wood?

The environmental studies and the EIAR will outline what potential effects the proposed wind farm may have on Ballmoloney Wood which should be minimal and we will inform residents in the next consultation phase as to what, if any, are the effects.

Who will manage the Community Benefit Fund (CBF) if the wind farm gets planning permission and will there be real benefits to the community from the fund?

The handbook for Community Benefit funds – “Renewable Energy Scheme Good Practice Principals for Community Benefit Funds” <https://www.gov.ie/en/consultation/995be-public-consultation-on-good-practice-principles-for-community-benefit-funds-under-the-renewable-electricity-support-scheme/> gives guidance for developers and communities about how the CBF should be organised and run. RWE will advocate the use of a third party to administer the fund and the Government has appointed the SEAI as the Funds Support, Oversight and Compliance body and as such has a key role in supporting the successful delivery of Funds.

“Under Section 3.3 of the Guidelines; How the Fund is to be Divided: (Categories a-d) The RESS-1 T&C as published are very specific in how each Fund is divided (section 7.2.6). These are replicated as follows:

- a) in respect of Onshore Wind RESS-1 Projects, a minimum of €1,000 shall be paid to each household located within a distance of a 1 kilometre radius from the RESS 1 Project;
- b) a minimum of 40% of the funds shall be paid to not-for-profit community enterprises whose primary focus or aim is the promotion of initiatives towards the delivery of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goals 4, 7, 11 and 13, including education, energy efficiency, sustainable energy and climate action initiatives;
- c) a maximum of 10% of the funds may be spent on administration. This is to ensure successful outcomes and good governance of the Community Benefit Fund. The Generator may supplement this spend on administration from its own funds should it be deemed necessary to do so; and
- d) the balance of the funds shall be spent on initiatives successful in the annual application process, as proposed by clubs and societies and similar not-for-profit entities, and in respect of Onshore Wind RESS 1 Projects, on “near neighbour payments” for households located outside a distance of 1 kilometre from the RESS 1 Project but within a distance of 2 kilometres from such RESS 1 Project.”

These guidelines are out for consultation at the moment and could change as we go from RESS1 and RESS 2 and any renewable energy support schemes going forward.

Construction noise / traffic disruption during construction.

It takes approximately 18 months to construct a wind farm and during this time RWE will ensure that construction operations will take place as per the planning conditions, RWE will provide more details on the potential traffic movements during the construction period.

How much is RWE investing in Fahy Beg wind farm?

Investment in the proposed wind farm and local communities is expected to be in the region of €30 million over the lifetime of the windfarm.

What is Community Shared Ownership? How does Investing in wind farms work?

We understand the Government are at present exploring how community investment in windfarms might work as part of the next Renewable Energy Support Scheme auction. Until the investment process is clarified we do not know how investment will be organised or who will be responsible. We await clarification from Government on how investment in windfarms might work under the RESS scheme. RWE is very keen to be involved in a community investment scheme once the regulations are developed by Government

Will there be an impact on broadband reception in the area?

Under the planning regulations the addition of structures in any area should not interfere with broadband reception in the area. RWE is also investigating whether broadband could be improved in the area and is undergoing studies to see if the service could be improved using the proposed new structures on site.

How many acres / hectares of forestry is to be felled to allow the project to proceed?

We estimate that we will need approximately 8ha of commercial forestry felled, mostly commercially grown Sitka spruce and some broadleaves. This will be in line with the Scottish Natural Heritage guidelines in relation to turbine locations in conjunction with bat habitat and foraging areas. The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine in their submission, has stated that “as this development is within forest lands, particular attention should be paid to deforestation, turbulence felling and the requirement to afforest alternative lands”, which we will take into consideration under the planning requirements.