



*Considering opportunity, promoting  
engagement, striving for sustainability*

# **INFORMATION BOOKLET**

Drehid Wind Energy Development

September 2018



elementpower

## INTRODUCTION

Over the past number of months, we have been meeting with people to gather feedback on how this project could be tailored for the local area. Our goal has been to develop a design that would reflect what people in the local area have been telling us would work best and also to establish how you think this proposal might bring the most benefit to the local area. In this booklet we will outline the main areas of concern that people have raised and we will endeavour to explain the changes that we have made in order to address these issues. We will also outline the feedback that we received in terms of community benefit and the opportunities for this proposal to be of benefit to people in the local area.

**Your views have influenced what is now being considered. If permitted and built, this project will always reflect the views of the people who discussed this project with us. There are fewer turbines, they are located further away from homes and there will be no Shadow Flicker at any homes in the area.**

Since beginning this consultation process, there have been a number of exciting developments in terms of community benefit. One of these is that details of the new Renewable Energy Support Scheme (RESS) have been launched. This includes a commitment from the government to ensure significantly increased funding for local communities where

projects are developed under this scheme. For the community around Drehid, the RESS scheme would allow for a fund in the region of €250,000/year. To put this in perspective, within 5 years of operation, this wind farm would have the potential bring €1,250,000 to the local community.

A question that people have often asked us during our consultation is:

**'How would this wind farm be of benefit to me?'**

From talking to you, we have gotten a very strong impression that people in the local area want direct benefit for their households as they feel that community benefit funds very often only benefit certain sectors of society. People have said that they want local households to receive real and tangible benefits from the project through direct return. Given the value of this fund, some people have also suggested that it should be used to develop industry and employment opportunities in the local area.

We have taken this feedback on board and we are developing a proposal for how this might be achieved. There will also be a requirement for any project which comes under the RESS scheme to offer an investment opportunity to those in the local area. We would invite anyone who may be interested in the concept of investing in a wind farm and getting a return from it to contact us.

**We want this project to make a real positive difference to people's lives. People have said that as a starting point, they would like to have significantly lower electricity bills in the future. We are committed to making this happen should the project be developed.**

### **Why is this project being considered?**

A number of people have queried why we are asking you to consider a wind energy proposal here again. There are three main reasons for this:

1. We previously received feedback from the planning authorities and county council that would indicate that this area may have the potential to accommodate a wind energy development.
2. It is clear that action must be taken on Climate Change/Our Fossil Fuel dependency and where an opportunity exists to develop renewable energy, it should be explored.
3. We are asking people to consider this proposal so that we can take your feedback on board and make changes to our design that reflect what you are telling us.

We believe that it is this project warrants consideration. Importantly we are working with the community to allow you the opportunity to influence any proposal that will be brought forward for consideration by the planning authorities.

## DESIGN REVIEW

### Feedback on Shadow Flicker

Many people spoke to us about Shadow Flicker saying that they felt it would be intrusive in their homes and something that was one of their main concerns. It was felt in order for this project to work well in the local area, the issue of Shadow Flicker would have to be dealt with.

### Revised Proposal in terms of Shadow Flicker

We can confirm that there will be **zero Shadow Flicker** at homes in the area. This will be achieved by installing software and equipment on the turbines which will identify weather conditions that would cause Shadow Flicker (including wind direction, speed, sun light and sun position). When these weather conditions are identified, the turbines will automatically shut down. As is required in our Environmental Impact Assessment Report we will fully assess the potential for Shadow Flicker at all homes in the area but importantly, we will commit in this report and in our planning application to zero Shadow Flicker at homes in the local area.

### Feedback on proximity & set back distances

Many people have expressed a desire to have the distance between turbines and houses increased. It was felt that the minimum set back required by the current guidelines was closer than what people would be comfortable with and that, should the project be granted planning permission, the proposal would be more acceptable if this distance was greater.

### Revised proposal in terms of proximity

The minimum distance between houses in the wider community and turbines has been increased from 500m to 640m. In order to achieve this, the number of turbines proposed has been reduced from 14 to 12. As there are certain separation distances required between wind turbines in order to allow for efficient operation, pushing the turbines closer together to increase the distances from houses was not a viable option. It was therefore necessary to reduce the overall number of turbines and to make changes to the proposed layout moving the turbines further away from houses.

### Feedback on Noise

Some people have raised concerns that noise may be an issue from the wind farm.

### Revised Proposal in terms of Noise

As this revised proposal has increased the set back distances to houses as detailed above, noise that may be heard at homes in the area of the wind passing over the blade of the turbines will also be reduced. If you have any concerns in terms of wind farms in this regard we would always advise visiting a wind farm and talking to the people in that area.

## Community Benefit

In keeping with the positive goals of addressing climate change by developing renewable energy, proposals such as this wind farm seek to bring opportunities for real environmental, economic and social benefits for the local area.

### Feedback on local needs

The main messages that we received from talking to people over the past number of months included:

- People felt that local clubs and voluntary organisations in the area are well funded and that there would be limited benefit from putting more funding into these organisations.
- People felt that the proposal should bring direct benefit to the households and individuals in the local area through direct return and employment opportunities
- People felt that the community fund should provide some support to green initiatives for local households

### AS A STARTING POINT:

#### Local Electricity - Lower Local Bills

In terms of taking a step towards addressing the feedback above, we have looked at ways in which this project could lead to reduced electricity bills in the local area.

Feedback that we have received from you:

- There should be direct return from the wind farm to people in the local area.
- If electricity is being generated locally that there should be a discount on electricity bills locally. Taking this on board we have worked to establish of how we might achieve this whilst also promoting better energy usage.
- €1,114 equates to an average electricity bill. The average household usage of electricity in Ireland is 4,200kWh per year resulting in an approximate bill of €1,114 per year. Some houses will have higher bills and some will be lower.

Should this project be granted planning permission, a portion of the wind farm Community Benefit Fund will be used to pay €1,114 directly to all houses within 1km of the wind farm to contribute to local electricity bills.

### Increased direct benefit or support for the development of local employment

From talking to people there have been two main lines of thought. Some people were of the opinion that local households should receive the majority of the community fund available. Others thought that, given the significant sums of money that could potentially be available under the RESS scheme, it should be used to attract and develop local industry.

On our project website we will have a facility for you to vote on which option you would prefer or if you would like to see a mix of both. You can visit [www.drehidwindfarm.ie](http://www.drehidwindfarm.ie) to have your say on this issue and to learn more about this proposal.

#### A greener living scheme

Interest has been expressed in a scheme that would assist people locally to reduce their carbon footprint. We would propose that the community fund would introduce further initiatives through a Greener Living Scheme which would help people reduce their carbon footprint and their household bills. In this way many houses would have the potential to greatly reduce their electricity bills below the value of €1,114 resulting in them having a net surplus. Others may decide that they would like grant assistance from the fund to buy electric cars.

#### Commuting - a local issue

A number of people raised commuting as a local issue. Commuting generally costs a lot of time, money and carbon. There are two ways in which the community fund could be used to help people in this regard.

1. The development of a 'Hot Desk Office' in a local town or village. This office would be equipped with high speed broadband and office facilities for people who may be able to work remotely from their workplace. It could also create local employment and support local business start-ups.
2. Grant assistance for people who would like to consider buying an electric car. Electric vehicles can reduce your fuel bill by up to 74% whilst also reducing your carbon footprint!

#### Other aspirations expressed by the local community include:

- The development of an Educational Fund for those in the local area
- The development of a local amenity walkway
- Support for people interested in buying electric vehicles and the development of local charging points
- Support towards local childcare facilities and local schools

#### The new Renewable Energy Support Scheme (RESS)

In July this year, the government announced details of the new renewable energy support scheme (RESS) which is aimed at encouraging the development of a sustainable renewable energy mix in Ireland. There are two very significant community opportunities for projects which will be developed under this scheme.

1. A very significant increase in community funds. For this proposal it would mean that there would be in the region of €250,000/year available for the local community should the project be permitted and ultimately developed through RESS
2. A community investment opportunity for those living within 10km of the project with priority given to people living within 5km.



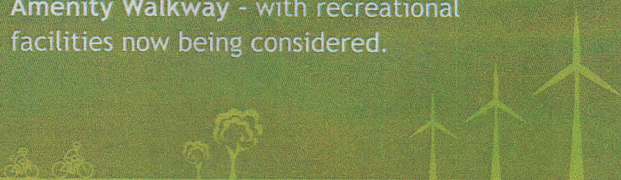
## AT A GLANCE

### Design Changes

- » **Fewer turbines** - 12 turbines now being considered.
- » **No Shadow Flicker** - A commitment to Zero Shadow Flicker at all homes in the area.
- » **Further away** - Turbines have been moved further away from homes
  - ✓ The distance to homes in the wider area has increased from 500m to 640m.
  - ✓ There are now 86 houses within 1km.
  - ✓ 60 of these would be 800m or more from a turbine (previously there were 180 houses within 1km).
- » **Amenity Walkway** - with recreational facilities now being considered.

### Local Benefit Changes:

- » **Direct return** - The value of an average yearly electricity bill (€1,114) will be available annually for all houses who are within 1km of the proposal.
- » **Greener Living Initiative** - An annual fund to be set aside to assist those who would like to lower their carbon footprint and bring their energy bills down.
- » **Increased Community Fund** - This proposal under the new Renewable Energy Support Scheme would attract over €250,000/year in funding for the local area.
- » **Investment Opportunity** - We would like to talk to people who may be interested in investing in this wind farm and getting a return from it. Under the new Renewable Energy Support Scheme, a community investment opportunity would be available for anyone within 10km of the proposal with priority being given to those within 5km.



REVISED DESIGN LAYOUT



**Legend**

- Turbine locations for consideration
- Draft Substation Location
- Proposed Compounds
- Proposed Access Track
- Proposed Cable Route
- 1km Buffer

Source: 3rd Edition, 2016, Aercon Consultants, 6555, 155th Avenue, Oakville, Ontario, Canada

  
**WIND FARM LOCATION  
 IS NOW FURTHER FROM  
 PEOPLE'S HOMES**

**zero**  
 A commitment to  
 Zero Shadow Flicker  
 at all homes in the area

  
**32,400**  
 capacity to provide clean  
 renewable power for  
 over 32,400 Irish homes

  
**€1,250,000**  
 Total value of fund the  
 wind farm could bring  
 within 5 years of operation

## Where can I find out more about Wind Energy?



### 1 Visit a wind farm!

If you want to really experience wind energy for yourself, without any doubts about the quality and accuracy of the information you are getting - visit a wind farm and talk to the people living in that area. Locally, the Mount Lucas Wind Farm consists of 27 turbines of a similar scale.

### 2 Visit the following websites:

<a href="http://www.iwea.ie">www.iwea.ie</a> Irish Wind Energy Association (IWEA) and <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eqKZkcxeKR8">www.youtube.com/watch?v=eqKZkcxeKR8</a>	<a href="http://www.climatecouncil.ie">www.climatecouncil.ie</a> Ireland's Climate Change Advisory Council
<a href="http://www.windenergy.ie">www.windenergy.ie</a> - Wind Energy Facts	<a href="http://www.kildarecoco.ie">www.kildarecoco.ie</a> - Kildare County Council
<a href="http://www.seai.ie">www.seai.ie</a> Sustainable Energy Authority Ireland (SEAI)	<a href="http://www.epa.ie">www.epa.ie</a> - Environmental Protection Agency
<a href="http://www.un.org/climatechange">www.un.org/climatechange</a> UN Climate Change Website	<a href="http://www.gsi.ie">www.gsi.ie</a> - Geological Survey Ireland
	<a href="http://www.fisheriesireland.ie">www.fisheriesireland.ie</a> - Inland Fisheries Ireland
	<a href="http://www.npws.ie">www.npws.ie</a> - National Parks and Wildlife Service

### 3 Talk to our Project Communication Officer

George O'Connor is the local Community Liaison Officer for this project. George has many years' experience in both wind energy and working with communities. Whilst he is very knowledgeable about renewable energy projects, he also has a very good understanding and appreciation for the fact that people and communities will have many different thoughts on what would be appropriate for an area. Pat O'Sullivan and Jim O'Reilly will be working alongside George and as such we will be in a position to discuss this proposal with you over the coming weeks and months.

We would encourage anyone who has an interest in this proposal to contact us as below:



By phone:

George O'Connor - 086 0126 843



By email:

[enquiries@drehidwindfarm.ie](mailto:enquiries@drehidwindfarm.ie)



*"Climate change is a fundamental problem that we must solve and not merely pass on to the generations to come. We can't let our children and grandchildren look back on this critical period in time and say that we failed them." Mary Robinson*

#### Privacy Policy

On May 25th 2018 the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) came into effect. GDPR is a new European wide data protection regulation that will strengthen data protection for all individuals within Europe. Element Power is committed to ensuring your information is kept secure at all times. We have updated our privacy policy and you can view it at [www.drehidwindfarm.ie/privacy-statement](http://www.drehidwindfarm.ie/privacy-statement). If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact our Data Protection Officer at [data.compliance@elpower.com](mailto:data.compliance@elpower.com) For further information on GDPR and how it affects you please visit [www.gdprandyou.ie](http://www.gdprandyou.ie)

#### Contact us:

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