



## **APPENDIX 2-2**

**BALLIVOR WIND FARM  
COMMUNITY REPORT**

**Bord na Móna**

---

**Ballivor Wind Farm  
Community Engagement  
Report**

---

**Dated: March 2023**

## Contents

---

### Contents

- Contents ..... 1
- Part 1 Introduction.....2**
- 1.1 Introduction.....2
- Part 2 Consultation with the Local Community.....3**
- 2.1 Notification of Local Representatives .....3
- 2.2 Notification of Local Community .....3
- 2.3 Community Information Sessions - Round One .....4
- 2.3.1 Print Advertisement of Community Information Sessions .....4
- 2.3.2 Broadcast Advertisement of Community Information Sessions.....4
- 2.3.3 Attendance and Feedback.....4
- 2.4 Community Information Sessions - Round Two .....6
- 2.4.1 Print Advertisement of Community Information Sessions .....6
- 2.4.2 Broadcast Advertisement of Community Information Sessions.....6
- 2.4.3 Attendance and Feedback.....6
- 2.5 Publication of Final Layout .....7
- 2.6 Direct Correspondence and Meetings .....7
- 2.7 Dedicated Contact Details.....7
- 2.8 Project Website .....7
- 2.9 Dedicated Community Liaison Officer.....7
- 2.10 Engagement with Community Groups .....8
- Part 3 Community Input into Proposed Development .....9**
- 3.1 Location of Turbines .....9
- 3.2 Recreational Facilities.....9
- 3.2.1 Amenity Trackways.....9
- 3.2.2 Amenity Carparks .....10
- 3.2.3 Secondary Access Points .....10
- Part 4 Enduring Economic Benefit.....11**
- 4.1 Enduring Economic Benefit.....11
- 4.1.1 Short Term Economic Benefits .....11
- 4.1.2 Long Term Economic Benefits .....11
- Part 5 Conclusion .....12**

## Part 1 Introduction

---

### 1.1 Introduction

This Report has been prepared to record the consultation carried out with the local community in respect of the proposed Ballivor Wind Farm development. Bord na Móna Powergen Ltd. has carried out an extensive consultation process in relation to the proposed development with local stakeholders, members of the public, residents, and community groups. The objective of the consultations was to ensure that the views and concerns of all were considered as part of the project design and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process.

This Report is informed by a number of wind energy industry best practices and guidelines namely: -

1. The Wind Energy Development Guidelines<sup>1</sup> (2006) state that:

*“While it is not a mandatory requirement, it is strongly recommended that developers of a wind energy project should engage in active consultation and dialogue with the local community at an early stage in the planning process, ideally prior to submitting a planning application”.*

2. Preferred Draft Approach to Wind Energy Development in Ireland<sup>2</sup> (June 2017) which stated the following with respect to planning applications for wind farms:

*“Planning applications must contain a Community Report prepared by the applicant which will specify how the final proposal reflects community consultation. The Community Report must also outline steps taken to ensure that the proposed development will be of enduring economic benefit to the communities concerned”.*

3. The Draft Revised Wind Energy Guidelines<sup>3</sup> (Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government, 2019) has retained this position stating the following:

*“In order to promote the observance of best practice, planning authorities should require applicants to prepare and submit a Community Report with their planning application and a condition on any subsequent planning permission should require developers to carry out the development in accordance with the approved Community Report”.*

This report outlines the consultation and community engagement initiatives undertaken by Bord na Móna Powergen Ltd. prior to the submission of the planning application. It also outlines the main issues identified during this process, how the final proposal reflects community consultation and the steps taken to ensure that the proposed development will be of enduring economic benefit to the communities concerned.

---

<sup>1</sup> The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Wind Energy Planning Guidelines 2006, p. 19

<sup>2</sup> The Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment and Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government, Information Note Review of the Wind Energy Development Guidelines 2006 “Preferred Draft Approach”, 2017 p.8

<sup>3</sup> The Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government, Draft Revised Wind Energy Development Guidelines 2019, p. 42

# Bord na Móna

## Part 2 Consultation with the Local Community

---

### 2.1 Notification of Local Representatives

In advance of engagement with the local community, by way of electronic communication in February 2020, Bord na Móna Powergen Ltd. informed Meath County Councillors for the Municipal Districts of Trim and Kells and Westmeath County Councillors for the Municipal District of Mullingar/Kinnegad of the company's intention to develop a wind farm on Ballivor, Bracklin, Carranstown, Lislogher and Lislogher West bogs to be known as Ballivor Wind Farm. As part of this communication, the Councillors for the above-mentioned Municipal Districts were invited to attend an initial briefing session on the 9th March 2020 in Harry's Hotel in Kinnegad. The purpose of this briefing session was to provide them with information on the proposed development in advance of the first round of Community Information Sessions. Three Councillors attended this briefing session.

Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, Bord na Móna Powergen Ltd was not in a position to hold a briefing session for the Municipal District Councillors in advance of the second round of Community Information Sessions. As a result, in August 2020, by way of electronic communication, Bord na Móna Powergen Ltd. provided Meath County Councillors for the Municipal Districts of Trim and Kells and Westmeath County Councillors for the Municipal District of Mullingar/Kinnegad with more information on the proposed development, namely the proposed turbine layout.

In September 2021, by way of electronic communication, Councillors for the above-mentioned Municipal Districts were issued a copy of the final layout for the proposed development.

In addition to informing the Councillors of the above-mentioned Municipal Districts about the proposed development, all TDs representing the Dáil Éireann Constituencies of Meath West & Longford/Westmeath were also sent an electronic communication in February 2020, August 2020 and September 2021 regarding the proposed development.

### 2.2 Notification of Local Community

To inform local Residents about the proposed development, the project's Community Liaison Officer distributed a project introductory letter regarding the proposed wind farm to households within a minimum of 1.5km of the proposed development site boundary. The Community Liaison Officer visited Approx. 600 homes between 14th February and 6th March 2020.

The letter distributed to each household included details of the planned Community Information Sessions. (See Appendix A). It was also accompanied with an A2 size map outlining the study area for the proposed development.

# Bord na Móna

## 2.3 Community Information Sessions - Round One

Bord na Móna Powergen Ltd. organised a series of Community Information Sessions to be held in the villages closest to the proposed development namely, Ballivor, Delvin and Raharney. The first round of Community Information Sessions was held between 10th and 12th March 2020 from 5 - 9pm each day, in the following venues:

- 10th March 2020: Ballivor Community Centre, Mullingar Rd, Ballivor.
- 11th March 2020: Raharney GAA clubhouse, Raharney; and
- 12th March 2020: St. Patrick’s Hall, Main St., Delvin.

### 2.3.1 Print Advertisement of Community Information Sessions

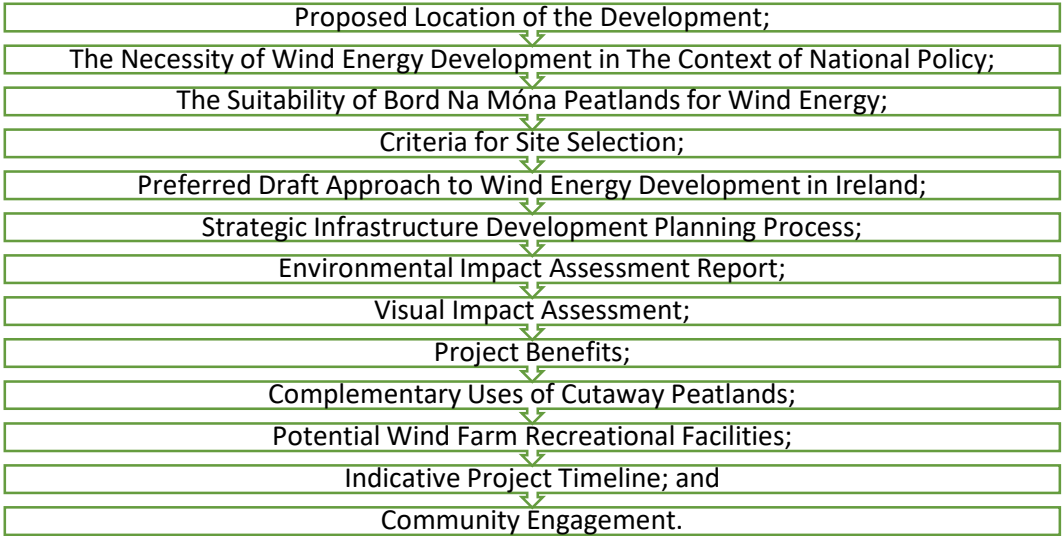
For two weeks prior to the Community Information Sessions events, details of the Sessions were advertised in four local papers, namely the Westmeath Examiner, Westmeath Topic, Meath Topic and Meath Chronicle commencing week beginning the 25<sup>th</sup> of February. An information note was also circulated to the Parish Priests of, Ballivor, Delvin and Raharney for inclusion in the weekly mass newsletter.

### 2.3.2 Broadcast Advertisement of Community Information Sessions

Details of the Community Information Sessions were broadcast on local radio (Midlands 103) three times daily on the 5th, 6th 7th, 9th & 10th of March 2020 to inform the local community of the dates, times, and venues of the sessions.

### 2.3.3 Attendance and Feedback

Over the three days approximately 165 people attended the Sessions. Attendees were provided with an A2 map of the location of the proposed development and an information booklet (Appendix B). As the project was at a very early stage, Bord na Móna Powergen Ltd. did not have information on the proposed turbine locations but did indicate the project could potentially be of similar scale to other proposed Bord na Móna wind farms such as the proposed Derrinlough Wind Farm in west Offaly. At the sessions, there were a series of information panels on display that contained details on the following:



# Bord na Móna

Members of the public were invited to submit comments, concerns, and opinions regarding the proposed development through a feedback form at the Sessions. Attendees were also given the opportunity to put their name forward for a visit to Mountlucas Wind Farm in Co. Offaly. In total 21 people expressed interest in visiting Mountlucas Wind Farm.

The main queries raised during this stage of the consultation, as recorded by Bord na Móna Powergen Ltd. staff at the sessions were:

• Number of Turbines	• Proximity to Houses	• Shadow Flicker
• Height of turbines	• Noise	• Roads/Local Infrastructure
• Domestic/Export use	• Community Benefits &Amenity	• Visual Impact

Due to Covid-19 restrictions implemented by the Government in March 2020 the project's Community Liaison Officer (CLO) was restricted from visiting residents immediately after the Community Information Sessions to provide them with a copy of the project booklet. When Covid 19 restrictions eased in June 2020, the Community Liaison Officer called to homes within a minimum of 1.5km of the proposed development (circa 600 homes) between 10th June - 3rd July to provide them with the information that was available at the first round of Community Information Sessions- held the previous March. Due to Covid-19 restrictions the Community Liaison Officers were prohibited from knocking on residents' doors. The project information pack was distributed through their letterboxes instead. The project information pack contained the following:

- Project Information Brochure containing contact details for the Project's CLO for any follow up queries or concerns.
- A feedback sheet to submit any comments/suggestions or identify other people/groups who should be included on the circulation list for project updates.
- An Opt-Out form to receive no further related information on the proposed development.
- A consent form to join the project's postal system should the company not be able to call directly to homes due to Covid 19 restrictions.
- A form to express interest in taking part in a tour of Mountlucas Wind Farm.
- A freepost envelope.

# Bord na Móna

## 2.4 Community Information Sessions - Round Two

A second round of Community Information Sessions were held in September 2020 when the project design had progressed to draft turbine layout stage. Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic and in line with Government Health Guidelines the second round of Community Information Sessions were held by appointment only on the 22nd & 23rd of September 2020 as follows:

- 22nd September 2020: Ballivor Community Centre, Mullingar Rd, Ballivor.
- 23rd September 2020: St. Patrick's Hall, Main St., Delvin.

In advance of these Sessions, between 24th August and 15th September 2020, the project's Community Liaison Officer visited homes within a minimum of 1.5km of the proposed development (circa 600 homes) to inform them of the Clinics and to provide them with a project pack containing updated information on the proposed development; namely the draft layout. The information distributed to each household consisted of:

- Project Information Booklet (Appendix C).
- Draft Wind Turbine Layout A2 Map.
- Community Engagement Clinic Information.
- Feedback Questionnaire (with Freepost Envelope).

### 2.4.1 Print Advertisement of Community Information Sessions

The second round of Community Information Sessions were advertised in four local papers, namely the Westmeath Examiner, Westmeath Topic, Meath Chronicle and Meath Topic commencing week beginning the 7th of September for two weeks to inform residents of the Community Information Sessions and details on how to request an appointment.

### 2.4.2 Broadcast Advertisement of Community Information Sessions

Details of the Community Information Sessions were broadcast on local radio (Midlands 103) three times daily on the 17th, 18th, 19th and 21st of September 2020 to inform the local community of the planned Community Information Sessions and details on how to request an appointment.

### 2.4.3 Attendance and Feedback

Over the two days 10 people attended these sessions. Attendees were allocated approximately 45 minutes to discuss the project with the Project Team and were provided with an A2 double-sided map of the proposed development. The map contained the locations of the proposed turbines and distance bands to sensitive receptors out to 2km from a turbine to enable members of the community identify the proximity of the nearest turbine to their residential property (Appendix D).

The main queries raised during this stage of the consultation, as recorded by Bord na Móna Powergen Ltd. staff at the sessions were:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Proximity of Turbines</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Number of turbines</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Height of turbines</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Visual impact</li></ul>



# Bord na Móna

- Roads/Local Infrastructure

- Community Benefit and Amenity

## 2.5 Publication of Final Layout

In September 2021, the project's Community Liaison Officer delivered a revised layout for the proposed development on an A2 double-sided map to homes within 2km of a proposed turbine. The map depicted the proposed final turbine layout, substation location, internal road infrastructure and amenity pathways. The map also included distance bands out to 2km from a proposed turbine to enable members of the community identify the proximity of the nearest turbine to their residential property (Appendix E).

## 2.6 Direct Correspondence and Meetings

As outlined in the preceding sections, Bord na Móna Powergen Ltd. engaged with the local community on an ongoing basis throughout the pre-planning stage through Community Information Sessions, written communication with households and meetings with local representatives.

In addition to this, at the request of individuals, Bord na Móna Powergen Ltd. also facilitated eight meetings with individual residents to discuss the proposed project and ideas/issues/concerns they had in relation to the proposed development.

## 2.7 Dedicated Contact Details

Since the project was first announced in February 2020, Bord na Móna Powergen Ltd. has provided dedicated contact details for the proposed development, including a dedicated phone number, email address and postal address. To date, these channels have facilitated 202 enquiries about the proposed development.

## 2.8 Project Website

A dedicated project website [www.ballivorwindfarm.ie](http://www.ballivorwindfarm.ie) was launched in March 2020. This website has been updated throughout the project lifecycle with information about the proposed development, such as information distributed at Community Information Sessions, news, events, dedicated contact details for the project team, and downloadable material relating to the proposed location, project information booklets, layout maps, and communications with the public.

## 2.9 Dedicated Community Liaison Officer

In February 2020, Bord na Móna Powergen Ltd. appointed a dedicated Community Liaison Officer (CLO) for the proposed development to ensure a continued 'on the ground' engagement presence with the local community. As the company's main point of contact for the local community and vice versa, their role is to represent, communicate, consult and inform residents through regular updates via formal and informal meetings such as house calls, one to one meetings and clinics. The frequency of these updates was somewhat impeded by the Covid-19 restrictions implemented across the country from March 2020 onwards. However, the CLO endeavoured to provide updates when available and in line with Government Guidance on Covid 19 and house visits. As outlined above the Community Liaison Officer has visited circa 600 homes in the locality of the proposed development on a number of occasions to ensure they are kept informed about the project.

# Bord na Móna

## 2.10 Engagement with Community Groups

The Code of Practice for Wind Energy Development in Ireland<sup>4</sup> (2016) requests that all community groups local to the proposed development should be provided with the same information material as provided to local residents.

As Bord na Móna Powergen Ltd. did not have a database of community groups in the vicinity of the proposed project we liaised with Meath Public Participation Network (PPN) and Westmeath Public Participation Network to determine the most suitable way to contact community groups with information on the project. Due to Data Protection, both PPNs could not share contact information with us, but agreed to circulate copies of the information material to all relevant community groups, on our behalf.

Both Meath and Westmeath PPN's identified relevant community groups in the areas adjacent to the proposed development and the following information was distributed to these groups during the pre-planning phase:

- **February 2020:** A Letter with details of the upcoming first round of Community Information Sessions and a map of the proposed development study area.
- **September 2020:** Letter notifying and inviting community groups to book an appointment for the second round of Community Information Sessions, a project information booklet, a feedback questionnaire, and a map of the draft wind turbine layout.

Contact details were also provided if any of the groups wanted additional information on the project or requested a meeting with the project team to discuss the proposed development.

---

<sup>4</sup> Department of Communications, Climate Action and the Environment, Code of Practice for Wind Energy Development in Ireland - Guidelines for Community Engagement, 2016.

## Part 3 Community Input into Proposed Development

---

### 3.1 Location of Turbines

Following the first series of Community Information Sessions held in March 2020, Lisclogher West was removed for consideration for the inclusion of turbines and any associated infrastructure. This was in part due to feedback received from the Public at this stage of consultation that this area of the bog group was of local ecological interest for future habitat development.

Additionally, due to feedback received from the public consultation sessions, along with further desk-based and environmental surveys, noise and shadow flicker modelling and discussions with the proposed adjacent wind farm design farm, the initial 29 turbine layout was scaled back to a 26-turbine layout across the 3 no. bogs – Bracklin Bog, Ballivor Bog and Lisclogher Bog.

### 3.2 Recreational Facilities

#### 3.2.1 Amenity Trackways

During the various consultation events conducted, the local community expressed a desire for the wind farm to include a provision for amenity facilities as part of the development. As a result, a part of the proposed development design, approximately 23km of amenity pathways will be provided including three carparks.

Amenity access will be provided using the existing entrances off the R156 and local roads in the townlands of Bracklin, Coolronan, Craddanstown and Clondalee More.

An additional 4km approx. of dedicated amenity links are also proposed to provide a greater variety of walking loops within the site (on Lisclogher and Ballivor Bog) and to provide additional access points/links into and out of the site. These additional access points/links are as follows:

- Link to the south-eastern boundary of Ballivor bog in the townland of Clondalee More providing connectivity to the local area with onward connectivity along the local road network to the Royal Canal.
- Link through Bracklin bog in the townland of Craddanstown connecting into a local road to the west of the boundary providing connectivity to the local area and onward connectivity to Raharney (to the southwest) along the L1504.
- Link from Lisclogher bog to the western boundary in the townland of Bracklin providing connectivity the local area and onward connectivity to Delvin along the local road network.

These amenity pathways and additional connections are shown on the Ballivor Amenity Map which is contained in Appendix 4.4.

# Bord na Móna

## 3.2.2 Primary Access Points - Amenity Carparks

Three new public carparks will also be provided for recreational use during the operational stage. During the consultation process, several neighbouring landowners raised the matter of public access near their properties. These concerns were considered when selecting the access points and carpark locations. Ultimately, carparks are setback from the public road and away from private properties. The carparks will be located along the proposed existing southern access off the R156 into Ballivor Bog, beside the southern access to Carranstown bog and off the local road which runs northwest-south east between Lisclogher and Bracklin Bogs. The location and configuration of the proposed carparks are shown in Appendix 4.4. The main carpark will be located in Ballivor bog and will accommodate approximately 50 vehicles; the Bracklin and Carranstown carparks will be subsidiary and will provide parking for approximately 15 vehicles. Bicycle racks will also be provided at these locations for local cyclists.

## 3.2.3 Secondary Access Points

Secondary access points have been proposed to connect into existing public Right of Ways to serve predominantly local residents and users. Public carparking facilities are not proposed for these locations and are pedestrian/cyclist access only. These access points are outlined in section 3.2.1 and correspond to the pedestrian/cyclists links to the settlements in the wider area.

## Part 4 Enduring Economic Benefit

---

### 4.1 Enduring Economic Benefit

Bord na Móna Powergen Ltd. recognises that the Preferred Draft Approach to Wind Energy Development in Ireland (June 2017) and the Code of Practice for Wind Energy Development in Ireland (December 2016) stipulates that wind farm developers should identify enduring economic benefit to the communities concerned from the proposed development and should also highlight short term economic benefits to the communities concerned.

#### 4.1.1 Short Term Economic Benefits

During the construction phase, it is estimated that at peak construction between 100-120 jobs will be created. This in turn will have a knock-on effect on the local economy through the supply of services to the workforce. While at a regional level additional employment will be created in the region through the supply of services and materials (such as stone and concrete) to the wind farm.

Additionally, the payment of a development contribution to the relevant local authorities in respect of public infrastructure and facilities will potentially provide benefits to the local community through schemes such as the refurbishment, upgrading or replacement of roads, car parks and car parking places; sewers and wastewater facilities, drains or water mains; provision of open spaces/parks, community facilities, amenities and landscaping works etc.

#### 4.1.2 Long Term Economic Benefits

The proposed project will provide many long-term economic benefits to the communities surrounding the proposed development including:

##### Employment

Once operational, the wind farm will support 2-3 long term, high quality technical jobs in operation and maintenance.

##### Rates

Annual rates paid by the wind farm to the relevant local County Councils will potentially support the provision of local services.

##### Community Benefit Fund

In addition, a range of other benefits associated with the development will be provided to residents (Near Neighbours) and local community groups through an annual Community Benefit Fund.

The Funds shall be distributed as follows:

# Bord na Móna

- Households within a prescribed distance of a wind turbine will be offered an annual contribution which can be put towards their electricity usage; the completion of energy measures on the property; purchase of electric vehicle and/or education support. This is in line with existing near neighbour schemes that are active at Bord na Móna's Mountlucas Wind Farm and Bruckana Wind Farm.
- Local Community Groups and not-for-profit organisations around the proposed development that promote the sustainable development of the area. A key criterion is that the projects and initiatives will benefit the communities surrounding the wind farm.

The value of the fund for the Community Benefit Fund will be directly proportional to the installed capacity and/or energy produced by the wind farm, which based on current proposals, could be in the region of €14 million over the lifetime of the project.

## Part 5 Conclusion

---

Bord na Móna Powergen Ltd. has pro-actively engaged and consulted with the local community from an early stage during the pre-application phase. 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 shaped the final project proposal.

The consultation process has been an extremely positive and valuable learning experience for everyone involved. It has provided the company with a detailed and inclusive pathway to understanding of key issues and concerns of the community which have influenced, shaped, and ultimately enhanced the final project proposal.

The development of the proposed Ballivor Wind Farm will provide an enduring economic benefit to the communities surrounding the proposed development for both residents and community groups, employment during the construction and operation of the development and through the annual rates payable to the local authority.