

# Proposed Coumnagappul Wind Farm Project Design Webinar 05-10-2022.

## Questions Answered

**Q. Can you please enable questions to be to be seen by all participants, thank you**

**A. Live answered.** Unfortunately, as this webinar has already started, we are unable to change the settings without logging off. We will take this feedback onboard for future webinars and discuss the various options available with the company that runs these webinars for us. We will also make all the questions posed and answered here tonight available on the project website afterwards.

**Q. Please can you enable questions to be seen by all participants.**

**A. Live answered.** See answer to Question 1

**Q. Can you explain what studies have been done to assess the impact of this proposal on the environment, flora, fauna and birds. Especially the hen harrier birds that are native to the area. If there is an empower study carried out, how are the community supposed to be comfortable in their biased findings. Has there been an independent study done and if so, why was the community not involved?**

**A. Hi [REDACTED]** Yes, we will be discussing the aspects of you question live later in this presentation and if you have further questions after that we can discuss further on line here tonight. All project studies will be made available for public comment as part of the final Environmental Impact Assessment Report which will accompany the projects planning application. During the scoping stage of the project, we prepare and circulate a project scoping document with bodies like National Parks and Wildlife, Waterford City and County council as well as bodies like Bird watch Ireland. This ensures that our studies are tailored appropriate for the Study Area and the Habitat and species in the vicinity. Malachy Walsh and Partners (based in Tralee) are independently carrying out the Ornithology studies for this project. This work is further assessed by Fehily Timoney's Project management team. The results of all the studies will be available for the public viewing in the Environmental Impact Assessment Report at planning application stage.

**Q. Are all previous Q&As already on the website? or will these also be added this week?**

**A. I will check this [REDACTED].** If they are not there, I will also upload them over the course of the coming weeks.

**Q. the point is questions stimulate other questions, you stated at the beginning you wanted to get as much feedback and information from people, enable the viewing of everyone's questions so we can all actively engage. posting after is pointless. Thank you**

**A. I take your point Mr [REDACTED]** and we will take this on board for future webinars. I don't think we can change settings for tonight's webinar now that we have started but we will try to change them as we are chatting through.

**Q. A few years ago a similar proposal submitted by Ecopower was refused planning in Russelstown, sillaheen etc. Sillaheen is only a few kms from this proposed area, and this area would be considered**

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**more protected so why does Empower think this proposal will not also be refused or that the community will not strenuously object similar to our neighbours in Sillaheen**

**A.** We can't really comment on other developers and projects but EMPower takes all possible care to ensure that any development we propose minimises any environmental impact to sensitive areas and will avoid all protected habitats and areas. The elements that effect the viability of a project, such as visuals, housing, flora and fauna can often vary significantly over a relatively small geographic area. So, while it may be the case that there are areas in the locality that may not be suited to wind development, we believe that the Study Area for the proposed Coumnagappul project can contribute much needed renewable energy for the country, while minimising environmental impact.

**Q. future plans for expansion of the numbers of turbines???**

**A. Live answered** We believe 10 Wind Turbines at this Design Iteration 3 stage will be the final amount. This has been reduced from 11 proposed Wind Turbines at Design Iteration 2 stage. Therefore, at this point we do not believe there will be any further expansion under this planning application

**Q. Why was T9 deemed not suitable?**

**A. Live answered.** Throughout each of the design iteration stages of this project each proposed Turbine position is analysed under everything from Hydrology, Ornithology, Civil, Landscape and visual, Noise, habitat loss etc. T9 was in a location that brought the project into a new visual catchment area. Which means the project is visible from a wider area. We always strive to contain the visual element of our projects into the smallest visual catchment area as possible. Also, The T9 position was in an area that would require an extensive amount of earthworks in order to construct a hardstanding area for a turbine and also to construct an access road.

**Q. What is the make and model of a turbine that you intend using.**

**A.** Hi, we are currently modelling a Vestas V162 Turbine for this project

**Q. the proposed 185 m makes these the largest in the country and significantly taller than the average turbine.**

**A.** "Hi [REDACTED], at present I believe there are a number of wind projects with a tip height of 200m both in the feasibility and planning phases in Ireland. The Coumnagappul project proposal has a hub height of 104m with a blade tip height of 185m which, if I'm not mistaken, is indicative of the turbine size the Irish renewable industry is considering currently. Only last week there was another project consented in the midlands with a tip height of 185m and many of the previously consented 175m to 185m tip height projects are beginning their construction phase.

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**Q. I remember been told that they would be of standard size**

**A. Live answered** The Coumnagappul project is assessing a turbine with a 104m hub height, 185m tip height and a rotor diameter of 162m.

**Q. "Hi everyone.**

**There is a significant amount of information being shared. Thanks for taking the time to put together such a comprehensive summary of the project plans to date.**

**Could I ask if there was an increase in the residential exclusion zone between the two dates that were mentioned earlier re the tip heights?**

**When would the next review / study re residential exclusion zones be planned nationally?**

**If the project goes ahead would property owners be precluded from residential developments if there was an impact on the development zone?"**

Thanks for the question [REDACTED]. There is no residential exclusion zone from the point of view of the landowner or local resident. Any landowner can still apply for a planning permission within the zones mentioned by us tonight. The guidelines, or turbine set back distance aims to prevent wind energy developers placing turbines within 4 x tip height of existing houses, not the other way around.

There are draft guidelines being considered by Government currently. These state that any wind turbine needs to be set back 4 times the turbine tip height or 500m (whichever is greater) from existing Eircode's/residences. In order to future proof this project we have already complied with the 4 times tip height form the draft guidelines in our design.

**Q. are you planning on having an in-person consultation?**

**A. Live answered** the project design team has scheduled to facilitate the second in-person project information evening in the Sliabh gCua Community Centre, Touraneena on the 12/10/2022. between 4.00pm and 8.00pm. Please drop in anytime between 4pm and 8pm to discuss the proposed Coumnagappul wind farm project and its associated design process with members of the project design team

**Q. contacting people outside of the 2.9km with literature should also be made standard as you are neglecting to include the wider area residents live answered**

**examples please of exact communities that have benefited from your community fund,**

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EMpower as of yet do not have any projects that have progress to community benefit stage in Ireland. This is the stage that coincides with the first export of energy from the project. A project of ours in Kerry have just been approved by the planning authority in October 2022 in Co. Kerry.

Examples of Community Benefit Funds of projects that the team has worked on from previously roles include College scholarships, Rural link buses, playgrounds, education and community centres, Retrofitting of existing houses and recreational walking and cycling trials.

If interested there is a link below to some of the community initiatives currently underway on some of the wind farm project members of our team have worked on previously.  
<https://www.rte.ie/lifestyle/living/2022/0908/1321335-how-wind-powered-energy-is-helping-local-irish-communities/>

The community fund works best when it is distributed by a community group local to the community itself. The fund is governed by government legislation which standardises community funds regardless of how any developer thinks the funds should be distributed."

**Q. "Re the Community Benefit Fund....would the approx. payments of 330k / household payments be payable before the project realises a profit? or is it only realised after profits are realised as has been the case in other projects on a national basis?"**

**A. live answered.** The community fund initiates when the proposed project first exports electricity. Therefore, it is tied to the project and its success. EMpower have on other projects-initiated pre-construction funds for worthy projects a community group may wish to pursue. This is obviously of a significantly smaller amount when compared to the larger main project community fund but can help with smaller community projects. If you wish to discuss this, please contact a member of the project team.

**Q. If removal of street furniture and signage is required to transport the equipment/site hardware, how on earth is it possible to get such fully loaded HGVs up these local roads, that barely accommodate 1 car at a time?**

**A.** Removal of signage, or any road widenings will need to be agree with Waterford Co. Council roads department and transport infrastructure Ireland depending on certain pinch point. Agreement with private landowners may also be required in some cases to navigate around corners etc. As the vast majority of on shore wind turbines are in upland rural locations in Ireland the transport element of the project is a discipline which takes a lot of analysis. Much experience has been gained by the companies who undertake this auto tracking and road network analysis since wind turbines were first erected in Ireland. This coupled with the improvement of transport vehicles has allowed for less and less need for excessive road widening.

A full route assessment will be carried out on the chosen route prior to this project being submitted to the planning authority. As a developer we will have to demonstrated how we will get the turbine

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components to the project Study Area. Most planning consents will also condition in a clause to the grant of planning where the developer is required to place a bond with Waterford County Council to ensure roads will be maintained during the delivery period.

There are some very good examples on the internet of the current transport options and how tighter corners and bridges can be navigated. One such example can be found at the following link. <https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=+wind+turbines+balde+transoprt+youtube&view=detail&mid=D93261F80CAEE28135FAD93261F80CAEE28135FA&FORM=VIRE>

**Q. hi wat happens after the40 year life span. whose problem are they then**

**A.** "Hi [REDACTED], Thanks for the question. Any windfarm electricity generating facility is classed as a temporary structure in planning terms. Therefore, it will be a condition of planning consent that a decommissioning bond is put aside before any construction can begin on the proposed project. This bond would be held by a third party and is accessible by the county council, to be allocated for the decommissioning phase of the project and return the land and Habitat to the condition it was in prior to any development."

**Q. The community benefits are peanuts compared to the drop in property values people are going to suffer if this project was to go ahead. And the benefits are only payable to a few in the community which will cause major rifts with neighbours**

**A. Live answered** A community fund calculated in accordance with the Renewable Electricity Support Scheme (RESS) Terms and Conditions, €2 per Mega Watt hour of electricity produced by the project, would also be put in place. This would be made available to the local community for the duration of the RESS (15 years). The average capacity factor of wind energy projects in Ireland is 28.3% (SEAI, 2019). Assuming this efficiency, and an estimated project capacity of 66 Mega Watts, a community benefit fund would amount to an average of €327,239 per annum. The actual fund will vary around this average from year to year, depending on each year's wind conditions. Wind measurements at the Study Area suggest that the proposed Coumnagappul project could be capable of achieving an above average capacity factor, and therefore a larger community fund.

We do get asked about property values a lot during our community engagement events so We have prepared a longer answer, as below, to this question which may help.

There is no peer reviewed evidence that wind farms lower property prices or that they impact on property prices in Ireland.

For most of us, the purchase of our family home is the single largest financial investment we will make in our lives. It is completely justifiable that property owners, on hearing that a wind farm is to be developed in their community, would be anxious about the effect this might have on the resale value of their home.

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These concerns have driven a great deal of research in many different countries over the last 20 years that has examined house prices in communities close to wind farms. The first truly largescale studies on house prices were carried out in the United States by the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory.

Their first report, published in 2009, examined almost 7,500 house sales from 1996 to 2008 across nine different US states. The homes were all located within 10 miles of 24 different wind farms. It found no evidence of any statistically significant effect on house prices.<sup>77</sup>

A second study, published in 2013, looked at more than 51,000 house sales within 10 miles of 67 different wind farms in nine US states. Just over a thousand of these sales took place within one mile of a wind farm. Again, the study found no evidence that wind farms reduce property prices.<sup>78</sup>

In 2014 the Berkeley group, with other researchers, examined 122,198 house sales in the US state of Massachusetts between 1998 and 2012. They looked at homes sold within five miles of 41 existing or planned wind turbines and again found no evidence that the turbines affected property prices.

In Britain, a major piece of research was published by Renewable UK and the Centre for Economics and Business Research looked at more than a million house sales from 1995 to 2013 and compared the 82,000 which took place within five kilometres of a wind farm with the others. It found no indication the presence of a wind farm had any effect on house prices.<sup>79</sup>

However, while the majority of studies indicate there is no impact on property prices from wind farms there have been other conclusions.

In April 2014 the London School of Economics Spatial Economic Research Centre published a report based on 125,000 house sales in England and Wales between 2000 and 2012. The study found an average reduction in the value of the house of between 5 and 6 per cent within 2 km of very large wind farms.<sup>80</sup>

This study obviously disagrees substantially with the findings from Renewable UK and the Centre for Economic and Business Research and so this led to further research which was published in Scotland in 2016.<sup>81</sup>

This, again, found no evidence of a negative impact from wind turbines on house prices and suggests that “generally speaking the effect is either positive...or not distinguishable from zero”.

The authors try to explain why research carried out in Scotland found a very different result to that carried out in England even though the approach was very similar to that used in the LSE study.

The authors suggest a number of possibilities including:

- Attitudes towards wind farms may be different in Scotland than in other parts of the UK.
- In Scotland, a much higher proportion of turbines are likely to be located on moors and mountains and in more remote areas than in England and Wales.
- Some wind farms, especially in Scotland, enhance the local area by providing trackers for walkers, cyclists, horse riders and other members of the community, as well as substantial community benefit funds.

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There is other research to suggest the context in which a wind farm is developed is important. A study published in 2017 looked at the impact of a specific wind farm on Wolfe Island in Canada. This is a unique location for a wind farm as the island is on the Canadian side of the St Lawrence River, directly across from the community of Cape Vincent in the state of New York.

The research found that the wind farm had no effect on house prices on the Canadian side, including the island where the wind farm was built, but there was a substantial impact on the value of properties on the American side of the river even though these were further away from the wind farm.

The researchers suggest several explanations for this:

- Firstly, as with the Scottish model, the attitude people have to wind farms might be a factor pointing to evidence of greater support for wind energy among people living on the Canadian side of the border.
- Secondly, many of the properties on the American side were holiday homes which meant the view was possibly a larger factor in the price of the property than it was on the Canadian side.
- Thirdly, and possibly most importantly, since the wind farm was built on the Canadian side of the border the developer only engaged with people living on that side and only the township on the Canadian side received any community benefit investment. There was no effort to discuss the project or provide benefits to anyone on the American side of the border.

While it may be impossible to give a definitive answer to the question there are some conclusions that can be drawn from this brief analysis.

Firstly, the bulk of research over the years shows that there is no impact on property values from the development of wind energy projects.

Secondly, while there is some research to indicate that there is a negative effect experts suggest that the reasons for these may be related to public attitudes to wind energy, the specific location, the quality of community engagement tied to the property or the area and whether community benefit payments are made.

That suggests that effective community engagement can make a big difference and ensure there is little or no impact on property prices.

This would require the community and the developer engaging meaningfully to ensure that the project is planned and constructed in such a way that it minimises impact on the community. It is also helpful if there are clear gains for local people, not just in community funding, but in developing recreational facilities as in the Scottish study and visible in Ireland at Mount Lucas and the Galway Wind Park.

<sup>76</sup> Centre for Sustainable Energy, Common Concerns about Wind Power, June 2017

<sup>77</sup> Hoen B, Wiser R, Cappers P, Thayer M, Sethi G. The impact of wind power projects on residential property values in the United States: A multi-site hedonic analysis. Report No. LBNL2829E. Berkeley: Ernest Orlando Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory; Dec 2009. 164 p.

<sup>78</sup> Hoen B, Brown JP, Jackson T, Wiser R, Thayer M, Cappers P. A Spatial Hedonic Analysis of the Effects of Wind Energy Facilities on Surrounding Property Values in the United States. <https://emp.lbl.gov/sites/default/files/lbnl-6362e.pdf>

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<sup>79</sup> <https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.renewableuk.com/resource/resmgr/publications/reports/ruk-cebr-study.pdf>

<sup>80</sup> <http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/62880/>

<sup>81</sup> [https://www.climateexchange.org.uk/media/1359/cxc\\_wind\\_farms\\_impact\\_on\\_house\\_prices\\_final\\_17\\_oct\\_2016.pdf](https://www.climateexchange.org.uk/media/1359/cxc_wind_farms_impact_on_house_prices_final_17_oct_2016.pdf)

**Q. Could you share your contact email address to ask questions even after the webinar, please.**

**A. Answered Live** Sure, info@emp.group. Happy to speak when suits.

**Q. What is the make and Model of the turbines you are proposing?**

**A. Answered Live** "Hi [REDACTED] the current turbine type being assessed as part of our Environmental Impact Assessment and Report is the Vestas V162."

**Q. Sorry, but that is incorrect. your own people have contacted me to discuss the planned Coumnagapall extension plan, which is underway please correct this as it is very misleading**

**A. live answered** We are approached weekly by individual landowners to assess their folios for the potential of renewable energy. If we feel there is scope to investigate this potential further, we carry out a feasibility assessment. We also carry out projects coping across the entire island of Ireland and also approach Landowners whose lands might suit a renewable energy project. However, as we are at design iteration 3 stage for the Coumnagappul project we believe 10 Wind Turbines will be the final amount for this project. This has been reduced from 11 proposed Wind Turbines at Design Iteration 2 stage. Therefore, at this point we do not believe there will be any further expansion under this planning application. Any future project in this area, or any area for that matter, would be subject to a full 2 years of bird studies approx. 2 years of wind analysis plus the appointment of a separate planning consultant to prepare a separate Environmental Impact Assessment Report and planning application

**Q. why look for a 185meter high turbine when upon top of a hill**

Generally, you require a larger quantity of smaller wind turbines in order to generate the same amount of electricity as one turbine with a larger rotor diameter can generate. Wind turbines work best in clean wind, therefore in order to get above wind which experiences turbulence from trees, hills, mountains and general terrain a larger tip height is favoured. This also creates less stress on turbine parts and in turn less future maintenance if the project is constructed and allows for bigger rotors. Larger turbine components also are better at generating electricity at a price low enough to be competitive in any future auction and in turn provide the lowest possible price to the Irish consumers.

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### **Q. noise implications of these turbines and area affected by the levels**

**A.** A wind turbine generates two kinds of noise.

The first is an aerodynamic noise which is created when the turbine blades pass through the air.

The second noise is mechanical and is caused by the generator in the turbine's nacelle – this is the large box positioned at the top of the turbine behind the rotors.

Every effort is made by wind farm developers and by the manufacturers of turbines to minimise the amount of noise they generate. The soundproofing on nacelles has been improved, designers are constantly trying to find ways to improve the blade design to reduce noise.

As a result, the noise generated by turbines has been reduced substantially in recent years and often the wind itself is noisier than the turbines.

When planning a wind farm extensive studies are carried out by developers to identify how best to locate turbines to ensure any potential disruption for local residents is eliminated or minimised.

Currently, the guidelines for wind turbine noise levels in Ireland are set between 35 and 45 decibels depending on the time of day and the level of background noise.

To put this in context the fridge in your kitchen would typically generate a sound level of around 50 decibels while 40 decibels would be the noise in a quiet office.<sup>62</sup>

In June 2017, the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government published Revised Wind Farm Planning Guidelines which set new limits for noise for noise limits detectable at dwellings adjacent to wind energy developments.

The guidelines state that “in general, noise is unlikely to be a significant problem where the distance from the nearest turbine to any noise sensitive property is more than 500 metres”.

The limits are 5dB(A) above existing background noise within the range of 35 to 43dB(A) for both day and night, with 43dB(A) being the maximum noise limit permitted.

While these guidelines are currently in force a public consultation on draft updated guidelines took place in January 2020 and it is expected that the Government will publish an updated set of guidelines once this process has concluded.

Therefore, we will be conditioned as part of our planning application to a set noise level which is representative of the existing background noise in the locality. Additionally, the presence of areas like the Comeragh Mountain SACs will further impact the noise levels permitted for this project.

62 <http://chcheating.org/noise/common-environmental-noise-levels/>

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**Q. is there any way for us to get clearer maps from you? it was difficult to see on screen tonight.**

**A.** Hi [REDACTED] we will make all maps available through the project website. Also, all the maps you see here tonight, along with much more details, will be made available through our Online Community Consultation Room. Here you will be able to zoom in and out of maps in your own time. We will also have A1 larger copies of these maps at the upcoming in person community consultation event in the Sliabh gCua Community Centre, Touraneena on the 12/10/2022. between 4.00pm and 8.00pm. Please drop in anytime between 4pm and 8pm to discuss the proposed Coumnagappul wind farm project and its associated design process with members of the project design team. If there are any specific maps from tonight's webinar you would like to see closer up, please contact us at coumnagappul@emp.group and the project team will email the maps to you."

**Q. Why are ye exporting electricity when they say Ireland has a shortage**

**A. live answered** in general Ireland exports materials to sell off its excess production, which generates additional revenue from the countries to which it is sold. Ireland exports to create jobs. more exports equal more jobs created. Electricity is no different. If we have an excess of electricity in Ireland, we can utilise the interconnectors to sell this electricity to other countries at times of low demand in Ireland. However, generally if the energy is required in Irelands electricity system, then it is used here first.

**Q. "What about the turbines that were decommissioned because there was not enough energy generated? Does that mean that no CBF would be paid if after all of the works and impacts have been felt by the community?"**

**Also, what happens if there is a surplus of energy nationally and there is no market for the output of the proposed windfarm if the market is effectively saturated?"**

**A. Live answered** the community fund initiates when the proposed project first exports electricity. Therefore, it is tied to the project and its success. Given the amount of analysis carried out from the onsite temporary met mast we are satisfied that this project will be capable of generating very strong electricity output. As a developer it would not make financial sense for us to progress with a project proposal if we did not think it was possible to generate electricity. Ireland has interconnectors in place which allows it to trade electricity with Great Britain and other European countries in times of excess or depleted supplies. The process of managing how much electricity each generating station can output is governed by the system operator Eirgrid.

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**Q. is it still environmental and engineering consultancy Fehily Timoney Company Consultants based in Cork city, who are involved in the analysis and assessment**

**A. Live Answer** "Hi [REDACTED], Yes the principle Environmental and Engineering consultants working on the proposed project is Fehily Timoney Company Consultants based in Cork city

**Q. Have you had meetings formally or informally with Waterford County Council?**

**A. live answered.** Yes, as part of the project scoping phase an information document is sent to Waterford City and County Council. Along with this we hold pre-application meetings where all the project particulars are discussed and we take feedback from WCCC on additional surveys to undertake or their approach to and opinion on the planning environment in any given area.

**Q. we were told we would have photo montages back in spring, also a 3d viewing, nothing changed on the site . we understand exact positions are changing but there was no attempt to show visual impact of project on the area**

**A. live answered** A set of photomontages of how the project will look if built out were discussed and shared on the first project webinar in 2021. A recording of this webinar is available on the project website if you would like to revisit. As the turbine positions have changed our Landscape and Visual Consultant is currently updating the details to reflect Design Iteration 3. We will share this information for discussion once we received it via future newsletters and webinars. The best location to view all these illustrations will be on the project website however when the Online Community Information Room will be made live over the coming weeks.

**Q. The community should be able to talk to the bodies who carried out the surveys on animals, flora etc i.e., environmental impact studies before submission, so they can speak with the bodies themselves and interrogate their findings and assessments for objectivity. I presume this is possible??**

**A. live answered** We can set up a call with any member of our survey team if you wish. Please send details of the areas you are interested in and we will schedule in a call for a time that suits you. Also, on the project Online Interactive Room which we are currently setting up members of the onsite survey team will be submitting their thoughts on the project and the process involved in the survey effort.

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**Q. By 3rd party who exactly is that.**

**A. live answered** Empower do not carry out any in-house surveys for our projects. We employ outside experts to conduct the studies needed for a planning application. In this case Fehily Timoney are the main planning consultant. Organisations like Malachy Walsh and Partners are carrying out the Ornithology studies and Macroworks are carrying out the Landscape and Visual elements.

**Q. I would like to see the results of the flora and fauna reports up to date. especially as the Hen Harrier is reported to be breeding in the area considered for the development**

**A. live answered** EMPower make all our studies available for public viewing along with all the planning documents. Once the data from the individual surveys are transcribed into a document this will be uploaded for public viewing. The Hen Harrier is a qualifying species of the adjacent Comeragh Mountains SAC so yes, this species forms part of our studies and the results of which will be documented as such.

**Q. focusing a lot on things to the south of the site but the wider area of townlands to the north seems to be glossed over!!!**

**A. live answered It is true that** The Zone of Theoretical visibility shows that this project will mainly be visible from the South and West. However, our Landscape and Visual studies will take a 20 km radius around the proposed project location in all directions. Therefore, what the project will look like from all angles out to 20km around the Study Area is assessed

**Q. no shadow flicker are you making them invisible??**

**A.** Shadow flicker occurs when the shadows cast by the blades of a wind turbine fall over a residential home. For the people inside the house the natural light coming in a window facing the turbine can be blocked by the shadow of the blades.

Since the blades are turning rapidly this creates a flicker effect with the natural light being blocked and unblocked every couple of seconds. This mainly happens in circumstances where the sun is shining at a low angle – just after dawn and before sunset – and where the turbine is directly between the residential home and the sun.

Careful design of the wind farm can reduce the possibility of shadow flicker from occurring and strict limits are in place in the existing wind energy guidelines to minimise shadow flicker<sup>92</sup>. In the preferred approach for the new wind energy guidelines shadow flicker will be eliminated and wind turbines will need to cease operating if they are causing shadow flicker<sup>93</sup>. This will be a condition of the planning permission.

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Also, as an added protection measure the times when shadow flicker could potentially occur (depending on sun angle and housing positions) is programmed into turbines and they can be shut down during this time.

**Q. milk hill is a Bronze age site.**

**A. live answered** Archaeology and Cultural Heritage will make up a full chapter in the final Environmental Impact Assessment Report. All areas of the proposed projects Study Area will be assessed from a Cultural Heritage point of view. This will be discussed further later in tonight's webinar.

**Q. we were told the same thing last seminar**

**A. live answered** We endeavour to tailor our project Webinars to discuss the items that are coming in via out project emails, phone calls and conversations. We feel this is the best way to tailor the webinars to discuss what the Community want to talk about. If there is a specific topic you would like to discuss on future webinars, please let us know and we will prepare material for that.

**Q. So when will it happen this time, sorry for been such a pain but so far it has been quite frustrating getting relevant information from ye**

**A. live answered** We are sorry you feel this way as it is not the intention of our community Engagement Efforts. To date this project has had one public information evening, 3 project specific Newsletters and community Letters distributed in the local community and two separate design webinars. All the project details discussed in this material is available on the project website. We have also responded to every question, query or request for further one to one conversation which we have received through the project email, phone or website contact form. If you want to discuss any aspect of the project further, please let us know and we would be more than happy to facilitate a conversation. As the project particulars are firming up into what is close to a final design proposal, we would see the material being distributed increase over the coming months. We also have another public information evening scheduled for the 12/10/22 in Tooraneena.

**Q. Would the planning application outline the proposed hours if work for the construction phase? Or would that be decided afterwards without public consultation / awareness?**

**A.** The hours of work for the project would be a condition of the planning grant if the project is successful in the planning process and will also be part of the Construction Management Plan. Any deviation outside of the times stated will therefore not be allowed under the planning permission unless specific direction is obtained from Waterford County Council.

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### Questions Answered

**Q. when will you have a proper town meeting, in ballymacarbry for example?**

**A. live answered** the project design team has scheduled to facilitate the second in-person project information evening in the Sliabh gCua Community Centre, Touraneena on the 12/10/2022. between 4.00pm and 8.00pm. Please drop in anytime between 4pm and 8pm to discuss the proposed Coumnagappul wind farm project and its associated design process with members of the project design team

**Q. not some in fo day in toornena which is planned for next week and again is not inclusive as people will come and go instead of all finding information and questions together**

**A. live answered** the project design team has scheduled to facilitate the second in-person project information evening in the Sliabh gCua Community Centre, Touraneena on the 12/10/2022. between 4.00pm and 8.00pm. Please drop in anytime between 4pm and 8pm to discuss the proposed Coumnagappul wind farm project and its associated design process with members of the project design team. All material is posted to the project website for everyone to view in their own time once it has been distributed to the local community first.

**Q. Is the planning application going to be to WCCC or is the project too large and will have to be applied via An Bord Pleanála?**

**A. live answered** the current size of the project (Over 50 Mega Watts in output and/or containing elements of 110 Kilo Volt infrastructure) would deem it a Strategic Infrastructure Development Project (SID) so as a developer we have no choice but to apply to An Bord Pleanála and An Bord Pleanála will therefore be the planning authority to give consent. The Waterford City and County development plan and the Waterford County Councils judgement and opinion is a very large part of the final decision-making process for any SID application.

**Q. your happy because no one has seen the photomontage yet**

**A. Live answered** A set of photomontages of how the project will look if built out were discussed and shared on the first project webinar in 2021. A recording of this webinar is available on the project website if you would like to revisit. As the turbine positions have changed our Landscape and Visual Consultant is currently updating the details to reflect Design Iteration 3. We will share this information for discussion once we received it via future newsletters and webinars. The best location to view all these illustrations will be on the project website however when the Online Community Information Room will be made live over the coming weeks.

# Proposed Coumnagappul Wind Farm Project Design Webinar 05-10-2022.

## Questions Answered

**Q. again, info hours between 4 to 8 is not the same as a proper public meeting, never mind the fact you are again so late sending out the leaflets to inform people of this**

**A. live answered** We hold our in-person project information events in order to cater for anyone who works days or evenings or has children to collect from school or may not have alternative childcare or be responsible for putting younger children to bed. We have found that having a spread of time across the early evening and later evening works best for most people. Our events often run over the 8pm deadline also which we are happy to facilitate if someone arrives late.

We are on hand to discuss the project throughout this time and will be available to meet any interested public member or group whichever way suits best. As individuals, we have held project information evening in the past which have been centred around 30 minutes or 1-hour events and members of the public have commented that not enough time was allowed for members of the public to attend. This event was publicised in the Dungarvan observer over two weeks ahead of the event and also advertised on the project website and in the newsletter distributed to over 110 Eircode's in the local area over this time period also.

**Q. Why are you not answering the question about the obvious drop in property values??**

**A. live answered** See previous answer earlier in this document on the same topic.

**Q. will you attend a public meeting if we arrange it in the coming weeks**

**A. live answered** We will always try to facilitate any kind of community engagement which suits the community best. As mentioned previously we will be facilitating a public community information evening on the 12/10/22 in Tooraneena community centre between 4pm and 8pm for anyone to attend and converse on the project.

**Q. website and online mentioned again cutting out people who are not tech savvy!!! at least acknowledge these people**

**A. live answered** Project team members also converse on any correspondence received via the project postal address which is, EMPower, 2 Dublin Landings, North Wall Quay, North Dock, Dublin 1, or on the project phone line 01 588 0178. Also, our Project Newsletters distributed to 110 Eircode's in the case of this project is designed to get project information direct to people in the vicinity of the Projects Study Area

# Proposed Coumnagappul Wind Farm Project Design Webinar 05-10-2022.

## Questions Answered

**Q. still no mention of your earlier error regarding the extension plan for this project?**

**A. live answered** This project is proposed as a 10-wind turbine project with associated internal road network and turbine hardstanding areas, substation, Met mast and temporary compound. There are no extension plans as the Coumnagappul project is not yet constructed so there is no project to extend. The planning submission we are currently compiling will detail all elements of the Coumnagappul project. Any future plans or alterations would to the Coumnagappul project will be subject to a separate planning application and Environmental Impact Assessment process.

**Q. the words to me were those words exactly**

**A. live answered** Unsure of the context of this question

**Q. further east towards the Comeragh mountains??**

**A. live answered** Empower do not believe there is currently scoped to propose any wind turbines further east into the Comeragh Mountains.

**Q. they are across the road from the planned turbines and will be using that substation so they will be connected, please explain to the people. Yet the positioning of your substation I am sure would facilitate its development?**

**A** Any future project or extension to a constructed project by EMPower, or any developr, will be required to complete an individual planning application and Environment impact Assessment process. A separate gird connect consent will also be required from The Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU). The current Coumnagappul projects planning permission, if consented, could not be relied on for any future developments.

**Q. Will vibration from the turbines affect people near the turbines**

**A. live answered** This proposed project is complying with the very latest "draft" guidelines in regards set back distances from houses. This is set at 740m. There will be a full chapter of the Environment Impact Assessment Report which will describe the assessment undertaken of the potential noise and vibration impacts associated with the proposed project. Noise and vibration impact assessments will be undertaken for both the operational, construction and decommissioning phases of the Proposed project to the nearest noise sensitive location. To inform this assessment, background noise levels have been measured at some of the nearest noise sensitive locations to the proposed turbine positions for this project.

Typical methodology adopted for the noise impact of wind turbines can be summarised as follows:

- Review of appropriate guidance to identify appropriate noise and vibration criteria for both the construction and operational phases.

# Proposed Coumnagappul Wind Farm Project Design Webinar 05-10-2022.

## Questions Answered

- Characterise the receiving environment through baseline noise surveys at various noise sensitive locations surrounding the proposed development.
- Undertake predictive calculations to assess the potential impacts associated with the construction phase of the proposed development at various noise sensitive locations.
- Undertake predictive calculations to assess the potential impacts associated with the operational of the proposed development at various noise sensitive locations.
- Evaluate the potential noise and vibration impacts and effects. Specify mitigation measures to reduce, where necessary, the identified potential outward impacts relating to noise and vibration from the proposed development.
- and describe the significance of the residual noise and vibration effects associated with the proposed development.

All the above information and study will be available for the public to comment on and will be available from the project's website when complete.

### **Q. Will ground water and our wells be impacted by the turbines?**

**A.** Any project proposed that would impact on the groundwater or local wells would generally not be received well by a planning inspector and likely be refused in the planning process. A full hydrological study will be carried out as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment. This assessment will look at both surface and ground water. Water pathways will also be looked at in details to ensure any project we proposed will not impact on any downstream receptors.

### **Q. "Will the decommissioning fund be index linked? Costs are only going one way."**

**A. live answered**

**Q. can we get a list of interested parties, landowners etc and people within the zoned area. just so everyone knows what everyone gets and not be all the cloak and dagger that goes on at the moment including the guideline payments people have and will receive, payments made to landowners for use etc**

**A. live answered** It is not possible to share any individual landowners' agreements as part of this project. EMPower enter into a lease with landowners for the duration of the project. There is no set, national, figure for the amount a landowner is paid for having a wind turbine on his or her property.

The IFA have published figures in a document in September 2013 entitled Harnessing Ireland's Wind Resource for Renewable Energy Production. The document contains details of arrangements for landowners negotiated by the IFA with individual wind farm developers but there is no industry wide position.

# Proposed Coumnagappul Wind Farm Project

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### Questions Answered

Payments to landowners and other details will vary from project to project depending on the type of land, the space being used for the wind turbine and any changes that might be needed to get construction equipment on site. A rough estimate which the IFA, stated in their document mentioned above, is that landowners might receive between €10,000 and €30,000 per annum for each turbine but it must be stressed this is only an estimate and the figure would vary a great deal depending on each projects circumstances/land type and infrastructure being proposed on the land.

**Q. Is it known where access to area of windmills might be from present road infrastructure**

**A. live answered** Waterford port provides the most likely port of entry in order to deliver turbine components to this proposed project. From Waterford Port the most likely route would be along the N29 travelling northwest. Turbine components would then join the westbound N25 before turning right onto the N72 and continuing west to Ballymacmague. At this point transport vehicles would turn northwest onto the R672 before progressing to the project area via the L5119, Powers crossroads, Bryan's crossroads and north at Sweep Cross roads before entering the project area from the west.

**Q. why not a proper town meeting?**

**A. live answered** This question has been commented on earlier on in the document

**Q. Are vibration studies included for residents in the area?**

**A.** This question has been answered earlier in this document

**Q. what you are holding is not a public meeting**

**A. live answered** This question has been commented on earlier on in the document

**Q. Can you repeat answer to where access to site is from present road infrastructure, please**

**A.** Waterford port provides the most likely port of entry in order to deliver turbine components to this proposed project. From Waterford Port the most likely route would be along the N29 travelling northwest. Turbine components would then join the westbound N25 before turning right onto the N72 and continuing west to Ballymacmague. At this point transport vehicles would turn northwest onto the R672 before progressing to the project area via the L5119, Powers crossroads, Bryan's crossroads and north at Sweep Cross roads before entering the project area from the west.

# Proposed Coumnagappul Wind Farm Project Design Webinar 05-10-2022.

## Questions Answered

**Q. This has already been pointed out by someone else, but the Q&A you are holding on the 12th is not a public town hall meeting.**

**A. live answered** This question has been commented on earlier on in the document

**Q. by east to the comeragh mountains I refer to the probable expansion due to interest of landowners to that area**

**A. live answered** EMPOWER are not currently scoping any further east of the location of the proposed Coumnagappul project Study Area. As mentioned earlier we don't believe the Habitat or buildable area is sufficient for renewable energy consideration as you progress further east into the Comeraghs.

**Q. a view of the site from the seven sisters would be interesting to see as these are the highest points locally**

**A.** There will be approximately 30 individual photomontages prepared for the final design. These will represent the key viewpoints around the project Study area out to a 20km radius. These viewpoints are selected by an independent landscape and visual consultant and also in conjunction with WCCC regards scenic routes or scenic viewpoints in the area.

Areas such as the Knockmealdown summit, Glendalough, Ballymacarby, Nire Valley and Kilclooney mountain summit will be included.

**Q. the second wind mast near your mast is nothing to do with your project, can you confirm? live answered**

**A.** Empower has one Meteorological Mast erected in Coumnagappul. This is scheduled to be removed in 2022. There may well be other companies scoping for wind resources in the area, but this is separate to any met mast EMPOWER has erected.

**Q A town hall meeting is the whole community there at the same time for a Q&A meeting with your team, not drop bys over a 4 hour period. I think that a meeting with everyone present at the onetime to hear all of the questions and answers at once would be preferable to a drop-in meeting as the format next week suggests. That may be the point that others are making as well**

**A. live answered** We hold our in-person project information events in order to cater for anyone who works days or evenings or has children to collect from school or may not have alternative childcare or be responsible for putting younger children to bed. The general feedback from our in-person events is that having a spread of times across the late afternoon and evening works best for most people. Our events often run over the 8pm deadline also which we are happy to facilitate if someone arrives late.

# Proposed Coumnagappul Wind Farm Project Design Webinar 05-10-2022.

## Questions Answered

We are on hand to discuss the project throughout this time and will be available to meet any interested public member or group whichever way suits best. We are also happy to facilitate follow on meetings if that is desired by any individuals. As individuals we have held project information evening in the past which have been centred around 30 minutes or 1-hour events and members of the public have commented that not enough time was allowed for members of the public to attend.

**Q. have you another met mast in Coumnagappul?**

**A. live answered** No. there is only one Meteorological Met Mast erected by EMPower for the Coumnagappul Project.

**Q. are you not going ahead of yourselves with a second met mast?**

**A. live answered** Empower has one Meteorological Mast erected in Coumnagappul. This is scheduled to be removed in 2022. There will be a permanent Meteorological Mast applied for with the planning application, but this can only be erected if the project is granted consent.