



Statkraft

Ballinla Wind Farm

Project Booklet

Q4 2023





Ballinla Wind Farm



Statkraft

■ Introduction

Statkraft is committed to delivering affordable renewable energy on to the Irish grid system and working with communities to explore how these projects might work best in their local areas. As a generation, we have a unique opportunity to make a real difference in securing our own energy independence. Statkraft is working to harness Ireland’s natural resources to produce clean energy that can deliver for the present, while safeguarding our future.

Communities around Rhode have long been a pioneer of energy. For decades you have played a key role in powering homes and business in this region and across the country and continue to do so by supporting renewable energy projects.

The Ballinla Wind Farm project offers many opportunities for you and your community. Should this project come to fruition, your local community can look forward to benefits including job creation, funding to support the community, and reduced energy costs for homes and businesses through the Government-led RESS scheme.

■ The need for this project

Projects like Ballinla Wind Farm enable communities to utilise their own natural resources and provide clean affordable energy solutions that reduce carbon emissions and our dependence on expensive fossil fuels.

Electricity prices have put huge pressure on households and businesses, especially as the cost of living continues to rise. Recently, some providers have begun to reduce the price of electricity thanks to the increase in renewable energy on the Irish grid. However, to keep these prices stable, there must be a continued supply of clean energy. Irish wind farms protect consumers every day by reducing our dependency on imported fossil fuels.

The impacts of climate change on our world are indisputable. We are all being challenged to consider the role we play in climate action. Renewable energy sources not only reduce our reliance on imported, polluting fossil fuels but they also ensure security of supply through climate-driven disruptions.

WIND ENERGY CUTS THE PRICE OF WHOLESALE ELECTRICITY

The Average Price of Electricity in Ireland in August 2023:

€ 106.46
Per Megawatt Hour

In August 2023 the Average Price of Electricity on the days with:



MOST WIND ENERGY

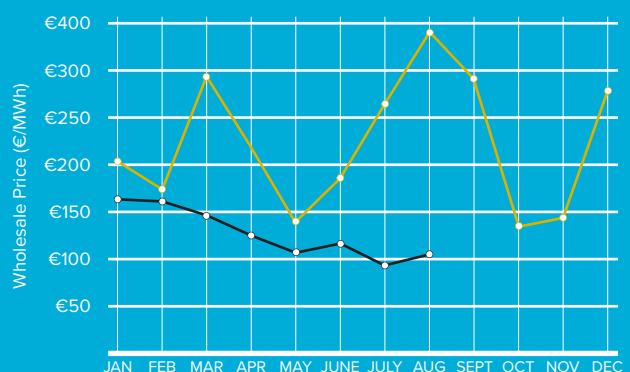
€ 88.34
Per Megawatt Hour



LEAST WIND ENERGY

€ 123.07
Per Megawatt Hour

MONTHLY PRICE COMPARISON — 2022 — 2023



2023

Source: Wind Energy Ireland



■ Differing opinions

We understand that people have differing opinions on the development of renewable energy projects. However, given the critical need for Ireland to have its own secure, sustainable energy supply, and what this project has the potential to deliver locally, we believe it is vital that everyone is given the opportunity to reach their own conclusion based on the merits of this proposal.

The transition to a low-carbon economy will inevitably bring visual changes to Ireland's landscape. People's feelings about wind turbines range from those who see them as a beacon of hope for the future, to those who simply do not like the way they look. Individuals who do not like the visual aspect will invariably raise this as a concern. On the other hand, those who like turbines often appreciate what they can deliver from a sustainability and energy security perspective.

Our intention is to provide accurate information on what is being considered and to seek feedback on the following: how the design could be worked best to deliver a truly sustainable project that is both suitable and appropriate for the local area, and how the associated Community Benefit Fund could have a positive and meaningful impact on the daily lives of local people.

■ This proposal

We believe this proposal has the capacity to deliver climate action while bringing very real benefits to the local area and its people.

This proposal is to develop a 10-turbine wind farm near Rhode, Co. Offaly. Under this proposal, the turbines, with a tip height of 185 metres, would be developed in two clusters. The location under consideration was initially identified following a review of areas that could allow for the development of this type. All wind energy proposals with an output of over 50MW are deemed by planning to be strategic projects given what they potentially have to offer. Therefore, submission directly to An Bord Pleanála as a Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) application is a planning requirement for this proposal. Offaly County Council will be expected to review and actively input on any submission.

It is important to Statkraft that our projects are considered in terms of the climate challenges being addressed. It is also vital that they are appropriate for the area, suitably located and delivered as part of a just transition. In addition, these projects bring real benefits to local people and support the economic, social, and environmental sustainability of local areas.

Local appropriateness is a fundamental consideration, so community feedback on the design proposal is very welcome.

■ This Proposal At A Glance

- 10 turbine project
- Distance to nearest turbine – over 700m
- Over 55 MW of renewable energy to the Irish electricity grid
- Zero shadow flicker policy
- Height of turbine up to a maximum of 185m
- Total Community Benefit Fund of circa €4 million, depending on the final design
- Over €825,00 a year in annual rates payments to Offaly County Council. These rates go towards public services including street lighting, libraries, footpath and road upkeep.
- Associated works will include access tracks, met mast, turbine foundations and hard standing areas, drainage works, temporary site compound, grid systems services, substation, underground electrical and communications cables between turbines, and an underground cable to connect the proposed project to a local substation.
- All cables underground





■ How this project has evolved over time

At the initial stages of consideration, designers drafted a project outline that would maximise the wind energy potential of the site. Staying in line with the guidelines, the following initial assumptions were made: the initial distances to houses was taken at 500m (subsequently increased), shadow flicker curtailment was taken at the maximum allowable levels and the turbine height was taken at 120m. Once this concept layout had been established, the design team took into consideration increased distances from homes in the area. It was found that increasing the setback distance from 500m to a minimum of 740m reduced the number of turbines from 12 to 10.

Placing local appropriateness as a fundamental consideration, further optimisation of this design was carried out in terms of factors including commonly received community feedback during which distance to houses, number of turbines, shadow flicker and noise were considered. It was found that it was possible to increase the distances to houses, reduce turbine numbers further and improve general performance levels of the proposed wind farm by increasing the tip height by 65m.

The design changes are set out in the table on the following page:

Ballinla Project Evolution	Concept Design	Current Design Proposal
Distance to Houses	500m	Minimum 740m
Number of Turbines	12	10
Shadow Flicker	In line with guidelines	Eliminated - no shadow flicker
Turbine Height	120	185
Potential Capacity	c. 42MW	c. 55MW

■ Design stages and next steps

This proposal is still at design stage and as such details of the proposal may change. Our community engagement team will be working in the area to ensure that information is available and that you have an opportunity to discuss the various aspects of this proposal.

Overview of the Design Stages		
Design Stage	% Design	Description
Initial Scoping	0 - 40%	Based on high level information
Preliminary Layout	40% - 80%	Fluid and frequently open to change
Design Layout	80% - 100%	Sufficiently fixed to allow meaningful discussion
Planning Layout	100%	Fixed for presentation to the appropriate planning authority

We would like to hear how you think that this proposal could work best in the area, how you think it could bring the most benefit to the local area and to discuss any queries or concerns that you might have regarding the proposal.

We would also like to discuss with you the reasons behind why this project is being brought forward for consideration and the issues that we need to consider in terms of the move from a fossil fuel-based electricity system towards renewable electricity.

Our community liaison team will be calling to people in the local area, and we would invite you to meet with us. If you would like to contact us to arrange a visit, please do not hesitate to do so on the contact details located at the back of this booklet.

Site Map





■ Community Benefit Fund

A dedicated Community Benefit Fund is a great way to invest in sustainable, local initiatives that benefit the entire community. The funds are directly linked to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (below) and focus on areas such as sustainable communities, climate action, decent work and economic growth, and quality education.

The Ballinla Wind Farm, as proposed, could bring with it funding in the region of an estimated **€275,000 each year, or over €4 million** over a 15-year period. Below are some examples of what has been considered in other areas where we have worked and might give a good indication of what can be achieved and advanced locally.

- Direct benefit schemes, such as near neighbour payments
- Energy efficiency schemes for households
- Funding for local heritage initiatives
- Job creation and investment into local economy
- Tourism
- Funding for recreation projects such as sports clubs and local amenities
- Support for local education schemes

■ Local people know the local area best

In all communities, it is the local people who know the area best. It is you, the people who live here that know the strengths, weaknesses, desires and aspirations of the area. As an area with a community that has proven its ability to identify opportunities and to develop successful initiatives, we believe that the Community Benefit Fund associated with this project could deliver very significant benefits for the local area.

The fundamental principle of any community benefit package that we roll out is that we seek to work with local people to deliver increased environmental, economic, and social sustainability to local communities.

We would be very interested in hearing what ideas you have on how this wind farm could deliver the most benefit to you and your local area.

■ What are the Sustainable Development Goals?

The Sustainable Development Goals or Global Goals are a collection of 17 interlinked global goals designed to be a “blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all”. The SDGs were set up in 2015 by the United Nations General Assembly and are intended to be achieved by 2030.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



■ Renewable Energy Support Scheme (RESS)

Guidance on how the community benefit funds associated with RESS projects are to be administered is centred around community decision-making. Therefore, decisions on what will be funded will rest with the local community in the form of a specially formed committee. This means that the community has a direct say in how the project benefits their local area. The local communities in this area have a great history in community involvement and that involvement will be key to the success of the fund. The guidance on how the fund will be divided includes allocations for: nearby houses; not-for-profit community enterprises aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals; administration fees, and initiatives proposed by clubs and societies and other not-for-profit enterprises. The Community Benefit Fund is a great opportunity for local communities to play a central role in the transition to a zero-carbon, more sustainable, future. They will be instrumental in supporting sustainable initiatives in their locality and ensuring that their area benefits directly from the transformation of our energy system.

■ Project sustainability

Our ambition is to contribute to a more sustainable future for all. At the same time, the way we develop our projects in local communities must be sustainable and responsible – and we are guided by the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The sustainability of the project is also strengthened by delivering climate action and by ensuring a responsible supply chain. Supply chain management covers health and safety, environment and climate, human rights, labour rights, and business ethics. Sustainability is also supported through essential and meaningful stakeholder engagement. Statkraft is an active business supporter of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan. For every wind farm we build, there is the potential to build environmentally sustainable measures into the project design. Wind farms can make a positive contribution to the habitat types and diversity of an area through several measures including: planting wildflower meadows; providing sections of species-rich grass; improving hedgerows; tree planting, and providing bird nesting. A Biodiversity Management Plan will be provided as part of the planning submission. We see that biodiversity will be integral to the project and our goal is to help maximise the potential for the area. Wildflower meadows, bird boxes and insect hotels are among the measures included in our management plan.

Please contact us if you have any ideas for further enhancing the biodiversity of the area.

■ Our sustainable energy future

There are many challenges that we face in terms of energy security, climate change and global instability. But we can be optimistic about the future. Ireland is on the right path to decarbonisation and has ambitious targets when it comes to climate action. Renewable energy is a vital part of a cleaner, more sustainable future. Support for appropriate, well-thought-out projects like this one will make a positive contribution to the country, and the world, for generations to come.

■ Our obligations and responsibilities

As a developer of renewable energy, and as a society in general, we have a responsibility to do what is right, and to do so in the right way. We would hope that our first steps in the development of this proposal will be recognised as open, transparent, and respectful. Addressing climate change and energy security warrant nothing less. Should this proposal come to fruition, it is our responsibility to operate the wind farm in a responsible way. This is something we take very seriously. During consultation, our objective is not to seek support for the proposal but to provide information to allow you to develop your own considered opinion, based on accurate information, on what this proposal has to offer. As this process develops, we will continue to work with you to ensure that this wind farm delivers effective climate action while also delivering for the local area.

If you have thoughts or ideas on this proposal, please reach out to us and let us know.

■ Typical configuration





For more information, visit the following websites

www.windenergyireland.com Wind Energy Ireland (WEI)	www.epa.ie Environmental Protection Agency
www.seai.ie Sustainable Energy Authority Ireland (SEAI)	www.gsi.ie Geological Survey Ireland
www.un.org/climatechange UN Climate Change Website	www.npws.ie National Parks and Wildlife Service
www.climatecouncil.ie Ireland's Climate Change Advisory Council	www.offaly.ie Offaly County Council

Talk to our Community Liaison Team

The Community Liaison Team have many years' experience in both wind energy and working with communities. While they are very knowledgeable about renewable energy projects, they also appreciate the fact that individuals and communities have different thoughts on what works in their individual areas. The team are available to provide information on this proposal or indeed the wider issues of climate action. We would encourage anyone who has an interest in this proposal to get in touch with us using the contact details below.

■ Dedicated Website

There is a dedicated project website in place where all information and updates relevant to the project will be posted. Please do have a look at the information provided.

If you have any further questions, you can contact our dedicated Community Liaison Officer on the contact details provided below.



www.ballinlawindfarm.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

Here at Statkraft we take your privacy seriously and we treat your information with respect. To facilitate environmental safety management systems and to ensure appropriate assessment and development; consultation and domiciliary data within the study area is collected. For more information about how Statkraft processes personal data, please consult our general privacy policy at <https://www.statkraft.ie/privacy-statement/> - or you can also direct any specific questions you have to privacy@statkraft.com

■ Contact Us

Community Liaison Officer

John Lowry

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www.ballinlawindfarm.ie

