Ørsted

Owenreagh/ Craignagapple Wind Farm

Leaflet 2

Introduction

Ørsted is a developer, long-term owner and operator of renewable energy assets. Our vision is a world that runs entirely on green energy. Headquartered in Denmark, Ørsted employs 6,500 people in 14 countries around the world with over 4.7GW of operating wind, solar and storage assets.

Ørsted's onshore Ireland and Northern Ireland portfolio consists of over 332MW of operating wind capacity, including Owenreagh I & II and the consented Craignagapple Wind Farm.

The purpose of this second leaflet is to share the preliminary layout for the proposed wind farm development at Owenreagh/Craignagapple and to outline the process involved in selecting final turbine locations.

We invite you to give us your feedback on the proposed wind farm, which will be taken into account in the next iteration of the wind farm design. You can do this by contacting the project team. You will find the contact details for our project team at the back of this leaflet. You can also meet us at our first community consultation events which will be held on 24th November in Strabane and 25th November in Glenmornan. More details on this event can be found in the invitation that was delivered last week or on our website. We hope to see you there!

Meet the team

Olivia Roche

Ørsted's Project Manager for the proposed wind farm development. Olivia has been involved in the renewable energy sector since 2014.

Michael Nicholas

Community Liaison Officer for the proposed wind farm development. Michael is an experienced Communications Manager & lives locally to the project.

Caitlin Daly

Assistant Community Liaison Officer for the proposed wind farm development. Caitlin recently completed a Master's Degree in planning from Ulster University and lives locally.

Benefits to the local community

Wind Farms offer a number of benefits to the local community including community benefit funds, job and contracting opportunities, and habitat conservation and management.

Community benefit fund

Ørsted will be putting in place a community benefit fund (CBF) valued at **£5,000/MW** per year from the first year of operation of the new wind farm. Depending on the installed capacity this will amount to **£250k-£360k per year** for initiatives that benefit the local community.

The funds are usually managed by an independent organisation, who set up a local committee which decides on how and to whom the funds are distributed. Therefore, people living close to the wind farm will be actively involved in the management of the fund.
Some examples of use of our CBFs include support for community broadband initiatives for rural areas (Gneeves Wind Farm CBF in County Kerry supported upgrading existing masts and receivers in the local area); support for local sports clubs (Owenreagh Wind Farm CBF has provided funding to help Owen Roes GAC purchase and repair the former St Joseph's School in Glenmornan); and support for tourism/leisure initiatives (Sorne/Flughland Wind Farms CBF supported the creation of a walking trail in the Inishowen peninsula in County Donegal).

Job and contracting/supply chain opportunities

The construction and operation of the wind farm will create jobs and offer local companies the opportunity to bid for contracts. More information on this process will be provided at the second community consultation event which will be held early in 2022.

Habitat conservation and management

As part of the planning application, Ørsted will be submitting a Conservation Habitat Management Plan outlining our plans to protect and restore important habitats in and surrounding the wind farm and our measures to enhance biodiversity. This is likely to include creating suitable breeding habitats for local bird species and improving peat and blanket bog in and around the wind farm.

Climate change

In February 2020, the Northern Ireland Assembly declared a "Climate Emergency" and called for immediate actions to cut carbon emissions. One of the key ways to achieve this is by increasing the proportion of renewable energy in the electricity sector. Wind turbines harness the power of the wind to generate renewable electricity. Wind power is clean, cost effective and does the same job as fossil fuels but generates less waste. In addition, the cost of energy from wind farms is now extremely competitive and ranks amongst the cheapest forms of electricity.

Northern Ireland has one of Europe's strongest wind resources creating significant potential for the deployment of wind power to increase the proportion of energy produced from renewable sources. For the year up to November 2020, 49.4% of total electricity consumption in Northern Ireland was generated from renewable sources located in Northern Ireland, the highest rolling twelve-month period to date. Wind energy contributed almost 85%[1] of all renewable electricity during this period.

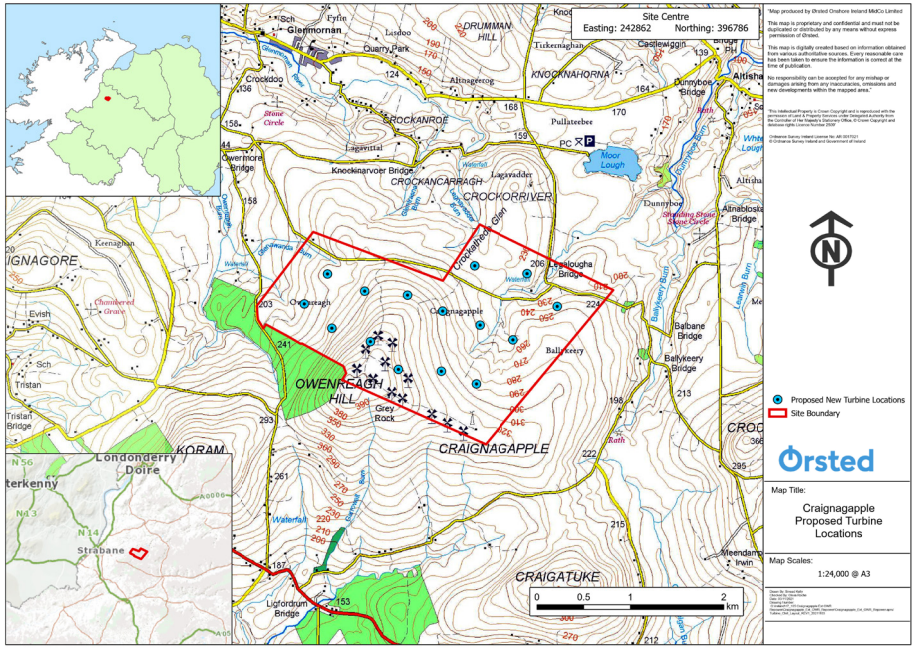
The Department for the Economy is currently consulting on a new Energy Strategy and the Economy Minister has said the next target for Northern Ireland should be at least 70% renewable generation by 2030.

Owenreagh I & II Wind Farms have made an important contribution to Northern Ireland's Renewable Energy targets and low carbon objectives to date, and we are seeking to secure and build on this contribution. The development will contribute over 50 MW to the Northern Ireland Energy Strategy renewable electricity 2030 target.

[1] https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/articles/electricity-consumption-and-renewable-generation-statistics

Development layout

The proposed development consists of 15 new turbines, with the exisiting 15 turbines at Owenreagh I & II being removed. We are currently considering the parameters of the new wind turbines. We are reviewing the suitability of turbines ranging from 150m to 160m tip height. The final turbine dimensions will be informed by the environmental surveys at the site and ongoing pre-planning application consultations with the Department for Infrastructure, the local community and statutory consultees.



Planning process

In May 2021, the Department for Infrastructure ("DfI Planning") confirmed that they will be responsible for determining the planning application. We are at the pre-application stage and are undertaking consultations with DfI Planning and their statutory consultees on a range of planning and environmental issues. We are also carrying out pre-application community consultations, including two planned community consultation events to update local communities on the project and seek feedback on the project design as it evolves. We are aiming to submit the planning application in Summer 2022. Upon receipt of the planning application, DfI Planning will start the formal planning application determination process.

Private Water Supplies

A private water supply risk assessment is being carried out as part of this development.

If your home is supplied by a private water source, we would be grateful if you could contact our project team to let us know. The contact details are at the back of this leaflet.

Our hydrology team will then get in touch and ask you to fill out a questionnaire and where possible to provide maps.

Environmental impact assessment

The planning application for the wind farm requires an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) to be undertaken. The EIA will record the baseline environmental conditions for the site and predict how they will be affected by the construction, operation, and decommissioning of the wind farm. EIA is an iterative process and will identify areas of environmental sensitivity which will inform the wind farm design dictating where turbines, and associated infrastructure, may be located in order to minimise any environmental effects.

Topics covered by the EIA will include (but are not limited to):

a. Noise
There are stringent guidelines on wind turbines and noise emissions to ensure the protection of local residents. Noise considerations and consultation with the Environmental Health Department will be important throughout the design process. Turbines will either be located sufficiently away from noise sensitive receptors, such as residential properties, or reduced turbine noise modes will be employed, to comply with the noise limits.

b. Landscape and visual assessment
The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) will identify the effects of the wind farm on the surrounding landscape, as well as views from certain important, and agreed, viewpoints. The LVIA will also identify visual effects from receptors such as nearby residential properties.
LVIA will be considered throughout the EIA process, with a landscape and visual analysis of each design layout being undertaken which will inform design changes.
The LVIA will be supported and accompanied by a series of visualisations known as photomontages; these photomontages will present the wind farm against the existing landscape, allowing the reader and decision makers to fully understand how the wind farm will look within the landscape.

c. Shadow flicker
The EIA will include a shadow flicker assessment. Shadow flicker can be caused by operational turbines (blades) casting an intermittent shadow over sensitive receptors, such as a window on a residential property. It only occurs during certain times of the day and during certain weather conditions. Current guidance states shadow flicker effects should not exceed a maximum of 30 minutes a day or 30 hours per year. It is the intention that the wind farm will comply with this guidance.

d. Ecology
Ecological data is currently being collected through a variety of surveys, including:

- Habitat surveys
- Bat surveys
- Bird surveys
- Mammal surveys
- Aquatic habitat surveys

Data collected from these surveys will be considered as the ecological baseline and therefore the basis of the ecological impact assessment contained within the EIA. Amongst others, the ecological assessment will be based on, and in line with, guidance published by the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM), the Northern Ireland Environment Agency and NatureScot.

e. Peat
Geological and peat assessment will be undertaken across the site. Peat probing, as well as dipwell monitoring, will be undertaken to inform the geological/peat and active peat baselines respectively. The purpose of the peat probing and active peat assessment is to avoid locating turbines on areas of deep or active peat. Turbines may be moved from their current proposed locations once the full suite of baseline surveys and monitoring has been carried out.
In addition, a peat slide risk assessment will be carried out to ensure there is no risk of a peat slide event during construction or operation of the wind farm.

f. Archaeology and cultural heritage
The wind farm design will avoid any physical impact on the archaeological features in and around the site. The EIA will also consider indirect effects on local archaeological and cultural heritage features; these indirect effects relate largely to changes in surrounding landscape as a result of the wind farm, and whether or not these changes affect their cultural significance.
This assessment will be undertaken using baseline photography and photomontages, similar to the LVIA.

Each environmental subject area will, unless otherwise agreed with consultees, undertake a cumulative assessment to understand the effects of the wind farm in combination with other wind farms nearby.

Project programme

We are here

Summer 2022
Planning application to be submitted to the Department for Infrastructure

Spring 2022
Planning application amalgamation and review

Early 2022
Further community consultation public events to take place

Winter 2021
Final wind farm design to be completed (incorporating survey findings and feedback)

November 2021
First community consultation public events to take place to share initial design with local community

July 2021
Detailed environmental and engineering studies began

May 2021
DfI deemed the project to be regionally significant

April 2021
Environmental assessment and planning team appointed

May 2020
Additional ecological studies commenced

March 2020
Required two-year ecological studies completed

March 2018
General ecological studies began in the wider study area

Contact us

Telephone: **07733 210379** to speak with our Community Liaison Officer, Michael Nicholas
or
Email: **info@craignagapplewindfarm.com**

Post: Craignagapple Wind Farm, Floor 5, City Quarter, Lapps Quay, Cork, Ireland.

For the latest information see:

craignagapplewindfarm.com

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