



**Ballinagree**  
Wind farm



**Brookfield**

NEWSLETTER 4

WINTER 2020



# Ballinagree Wind Farm

## Project

Image: View looking south east across the proposed project's Study Area.



# INTRODUCTION

The proposed Ballinagree Wind Farm project is now at the second of its three separate design iterations. This Newsletter, the fourth to date for this project, presents updated information on;

- Community Engagement
- Design Iteration 2
- The evolving Design Process
- A map showing Design Iteration 2
- Updated project timeline with changes highlighted

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Since the beginning of the Covid-19 restrictions, we have needed to tailor our community engagements to ensure compliance with Government guidelines. The necessary engagement restrictions have resulted in an increased level of virtual community consultation as well as an increase in the number of one to one outdoor meetings between members of the project team and local residents.

If there are any particular matters that you would like to discuss further, please get in touch via any of the contact details on the back page of this newsletter. Perhaps you may wish to arrange a follow-on information session with one of the project specialists working in the areas of Landscape and Visual's, Ecology, Noise or Archaeology for instance. This can be arranged at a time to suit you. We will arrange any such meetings in line with current Government's Covid-19 guidelines.

Please visit the project website:

**[www.ballinagreewindfarm.ie](http://www.ballinagreewindfarm.ie)** for the most up to date project information and to access the link to the project's Virtual Community Consultation Event where much more information is available.



Image: The Ballinagree Wind Farm Project Community Consultation Room. A snap-shot of the Ballinagree Wind Farm Project Community Virtual Consultation Event.

The project team have held follow on calls and meetings with all those individuals who have responded with contact details to the September 2020 communication letter. This letter was delivered to all households within the proposed project's 3 km consultation zone. Further follow on engagements here will hopefully aid communication and community participation with the project's design team for any interested community members.



Image: View looking north west across the proposed project's Study Area towards Musheramore.

# DESIGN ITERATION 2



The project layout has evolved since Design Iteration 1 which was shared in Newsletter 3 distributed in June 2020. As the project studies progress, further information becomes available in areas such as Ecology, Noise, Archaeology, wind resource, Landscape and Visuals. This information allows for further enhancement of proposed wind turbine placement as we strive towards the best design possible. The Design Iteration 2 project layout is enclosed in this Newsletter. The third and final Design Iteration is currently scheduled for delivery in Spring 2021. Design Iteration 3 will form the basis of the project's final design ahead of a, currently scheduled, Summer 2021 project planning submission.

## NUMBER OF WIND TURBINES

The Study Area is being assessed for a 21 wind turbine layout at Design Iteration 2. Initially, the Project Team had estimated that the Study Area could accommodate up to 24 wind turbines. Subsequently, Design Iteration 1 showed 19 wind turbines. Detailed analysis of the Ecology and Landscape and Visual elements in the west and south of the Study Area since Design Iteration 1 has allowed for the potential incorporation of two additional turbine positions at Design Iteration 2. Further analysis of the wind resource at the site has also allowed for the refinement of the wind turbine layout for this Design Iteration 2 stage of assessment.

## ECOLOGY

Detailed assessment of the habitats within the Study Area has enabled the Project Team to further define habitat types and characteristics and to ensure that Design Iteration 2 is sensitive to these localised habitats. Efforts will continue here with the project's ecologists in order to further refine the design layout and sensitive habitat identification and to ensure that the most sensitive of these habitats are given the correct attention.

## NOISE

The noise monitoring campaign for this stage of the proposed project's design has been concluded. We would like to thank all community members who have worked with the project's Design Team in order to compile these background noise levels. All 19 noise monitors which were placed at pre-defined locations surrounding the project's Study Area have been collected. The data now being compiled by the project's noise specialists will allow future project iterations to be designed with the most robust noise information possible. As previously communicated, the Ballinagree Project Team have committed to using the noise impact assessment procedure detailed in the new draft 2019 Wind Energy Guidelines as well as the Institute of Acoustics 'A Good Practice Guide to the Application of ETSU-R-97 for the Assessment and Rating of Wind Turbine Noise' (2013). By utilizing this methodology and integrating it into the design process the best possible project layout from a noise perspective will be produced for the project's Design Iteration 3.



Image: Typical noise monitor unit as used during the recent project background noise monitoring campaign.

## LANDSCAPE AND VISUALS

This element plays a large part in the design of the proposed Ballinagree Wind Farm project. Designing a project layout that does not encroach onto the higher slopes of the Musheramore mountains was an overriding consideration since the beginning of the design process. This was important feedback taken on board from our 2019 community engagement as well as initial assessments from the project's Landscape and Visual consultant. Conversations with local residents resulted in potential development being removed from the upper slopes of Musheramore.

## ARCHAEOLOGY

There are significant Archaeological features in the South East of the project's Study Area. Careful assessment of potential turbine locations by the project archaeologist has taken place to ensure sensitivity to features and to maintain each monument's lines of visual alignment. There is the possibility of unrecorded monuments still to be unearthed in this area also so again, careful site investigation continues by the project archaeologist and design team.

## GRID CONNECTION

The Project Team continue to assess the potential future grid connection point for the project. It is still anticipated that the potential project would connect to the national electrical grid at either of the following two existing substations:

- The 220kV Clashavoon Substation, which is located approximately 5 km north-east of Macroom near Rusheen; or
- The 220kV Ballyvouskill Substation, which is located approximately 7 km south-west of Millstreet.

The Project Team are currently in the process of assessing these different route options in order to connect the proposed project to the Clashavoon or Ballyvouskil substations via an underground cable.



Image: Stone circle located in the south east corner of the project's Study Area.

Recent project studies indicate that the most likely underground export cable route would travel to either Clashavoon or Ballyvouskil from the west side of the project's Study Area. The eventual grid connection point will be determined by Eirgrid.

## TURBINE DELIVERY ROUTE

Engineering surveys are currently underway to determine the best potential route for turbine components to travel to the Study Area. At this pre-planning stage, a port of entry for the wind turbine component parts has yet to be defined. However, assuming Foynes as a potential port of entry, it is likely that the engineering surveys will show an approach to the project's Study Area from the Millstreet direction as being the most feasible option. This route, the L1123, was previously used to transport Wind Turbine components to some of the existing Wind Farm developments in the wider area.

## GROUND INVESTIGATION

Investigation of the engineering properties within the Study Area is required in order to better understand the types of soils and rock present and how any proposed project development will interact with this geology. These ground investigation works are scheduled to begin shortly. The anticipated geology, historical use of the Study Area lands and the current project proposals have been used to tailor a specific ground investigation program for this proposed project. The Ground investigation proposals for this project generally comprise:

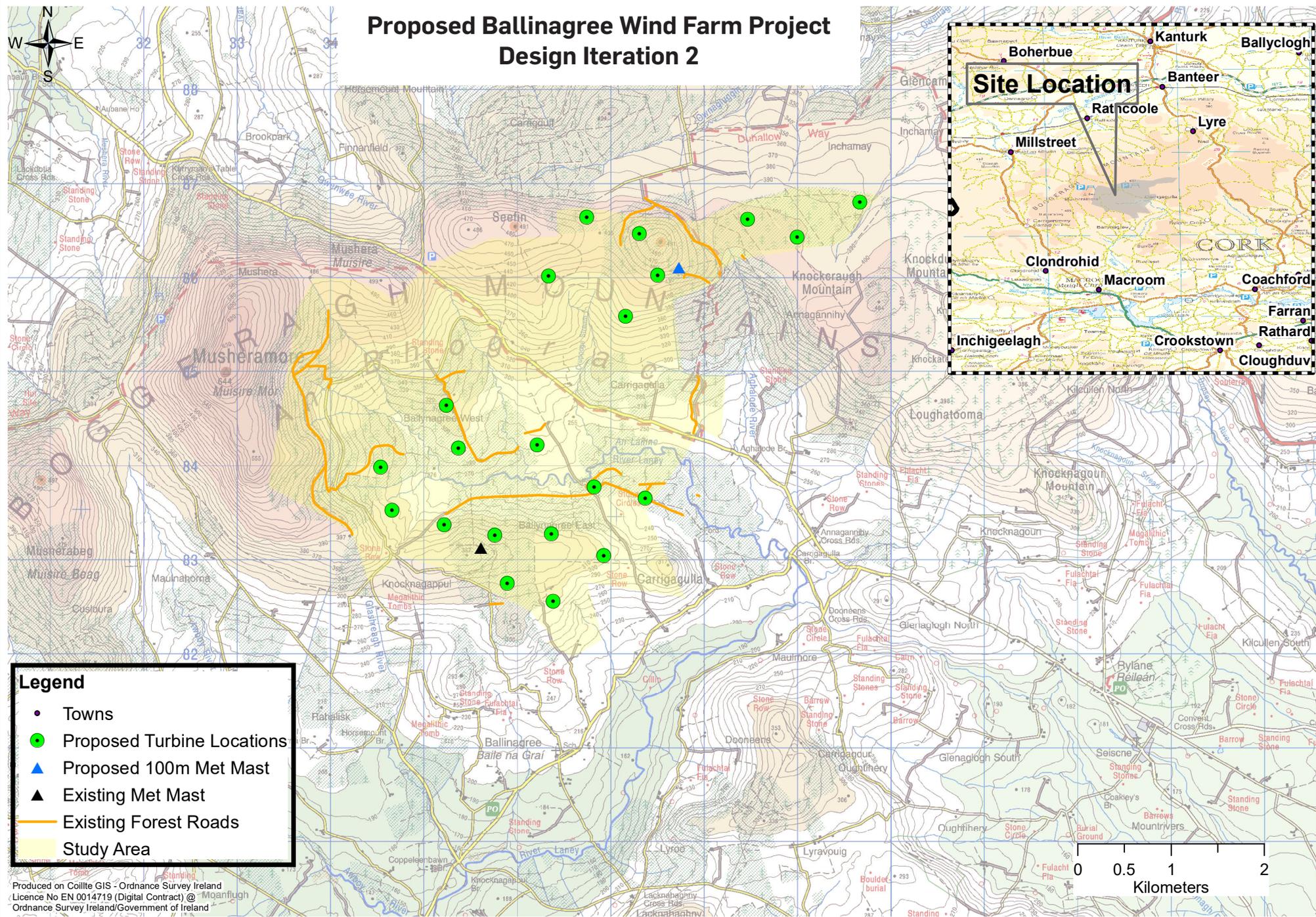
- Desk study
- Intrusive investigation
- Follow on Studies
- Validation

The information obtained from the studies will then be assessed to ensure the initial objectives of the ground investigation are satisfied. The findings obtained will also be used to tailor the overall project's design for Design Iteration 3 and ahead of any proposed planning submission.



Image: Typical Auger drilling to obtain geotechnical ground samples

# Proposed Ballinagree Wind Farm Project Design Iteration 2



- Legend**
- Towns
  - Proposed Turbine Locations
  - ▲ Proposed 100m Met Mast
  - ▲ Existing Met Mast
  - Existing Forest Roads
  - Study Area

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0 0.5 1 2  
 Kilometers



## PROJECT TIMELINE

- Summer 2017** ○ General ecological studies began in the wider Study Area.
- Winter 2017** ○ Initial landowner discussions began in the area.
- Summer 2019** ○ Engagement begins with the local community.
- Autumn 2019** ○ Local landowner discussions to finalise Study Area concluded.
- Autumn 2019** ○ First meteorological wind measuring mast scoping studies progress.
- Winter 2019** ○ First meteorological wind measuring mast erection.
- Winter 2019** ○ Environmental Impact Assessment Project team appointed.
- Winter 2019** ○ Detailed environmental and engineering studies begin.
- Summer 2020** ○ Design Iteration 1.
- Summer 2020** ○ Grid route and turbine delivery route assessment progressed.
- Winter 2020** ○ Design Iteration 2  
This reflects a six-month delay from the date presented at Newsletter 3
- Spring 2021** ○ Design Iteration 3  
This reflects a six-month delay from the date presented at Newsletter 3
- Spring 2021** ○ Second meteorological wind measuring mast erection  
This reflects a six-month delay from the date presented at Newsletter 3
- Spring 2021** ○ Planning application amalgamation and reviews  
This reflects a six-month delay from the date presented at Newsletter 3
- Summer 2021** ○ Planning application to be submitted to the Consenting Authority  
This reflects a six-month delay from the date presented at Newsletter 3

## CONTACT

As always we encourage and welcome your input and comments on what you have read in this Newsletter. Please get in touch either by phone, e-mail or post as follows:

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