

# Cloncreen Wind Farm Project Newsletter

Spring 2019



# Cloncreen Project Newsletter

## Message from Cloncreen Wind Farm Communications Team

Dear Homeowner,

The purpose of this newsletter is to provide you with an update on the progress of the proposed Cloncreen Wind Farm. The proposed development received planning in May 2017 from An Bord Pleanála. Since that time, the project team have been carrying out several activities to progress the project to the next stages and these are outlined in this newsletter.

Cloncreen Wind Farm is expecting to participate in the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment's new support scheme for renewable electricity. The Renewable Electricity Support Scheme (RESS) will replace the existing Renewable Energy Feed-in Tariff (REFiT) scheme and is intended to incentivise the introduction of sufficient renewable electricity generation to meet national and EU-wide renewable energy and decarbonisation targets out to 2030.

There are a number of pre-qualification stages a project must reach before it can become eligible to participate in the new scheme. Having received planning consent, Cloncreen Wind Farm must now get a grid connection offer to ensure eligibility to participate in the upcoming RESS auction. Based on auction timelines indicated by the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment, construction activity is not expected to commence on site until late 2019 or early 2020.

Further newsletters will be circulated as the project progresses. In the meantime, if you have any queries in relation to the proposed project please contact our Community Liaison Officer Stephen on 087-3486624 or via email on [cloncreenwindfarm@bnm.ie](mailto:cloncreenwindfarm@bnm.ie)

Yours faithfully,

*Cloncreen Wind Farm Communications Team*



# Cloncreen Project Newsletter

## Project Overview

In 2016, Bord na Móna sought permission for the construction of 21 turbines on the Cloncreen bog, in eastern Offaly. The site of the proposed development is in the townlands of Cloncreen, Clongarret, Esker More, Rathvilla or Rathclonbrackan, Ballinrath, Ballynakill, Ballykilleen, Ballina and Ballinagar Co. Offaly. The site measures 3km north-south by 4km east-west covering a total of 960 hectares. The maximum proposed permanent footprint of the proposed development measures 40.1 hectares, which represents approximately 4 percent of the site. The proposed wind farm site is approximately 4.5 km south-west of Edenderry at its nearest point. The villages of Clonbulloge and Rhode are located approximately 2.0 km south-east and 7 km north-west of the site, respectively.

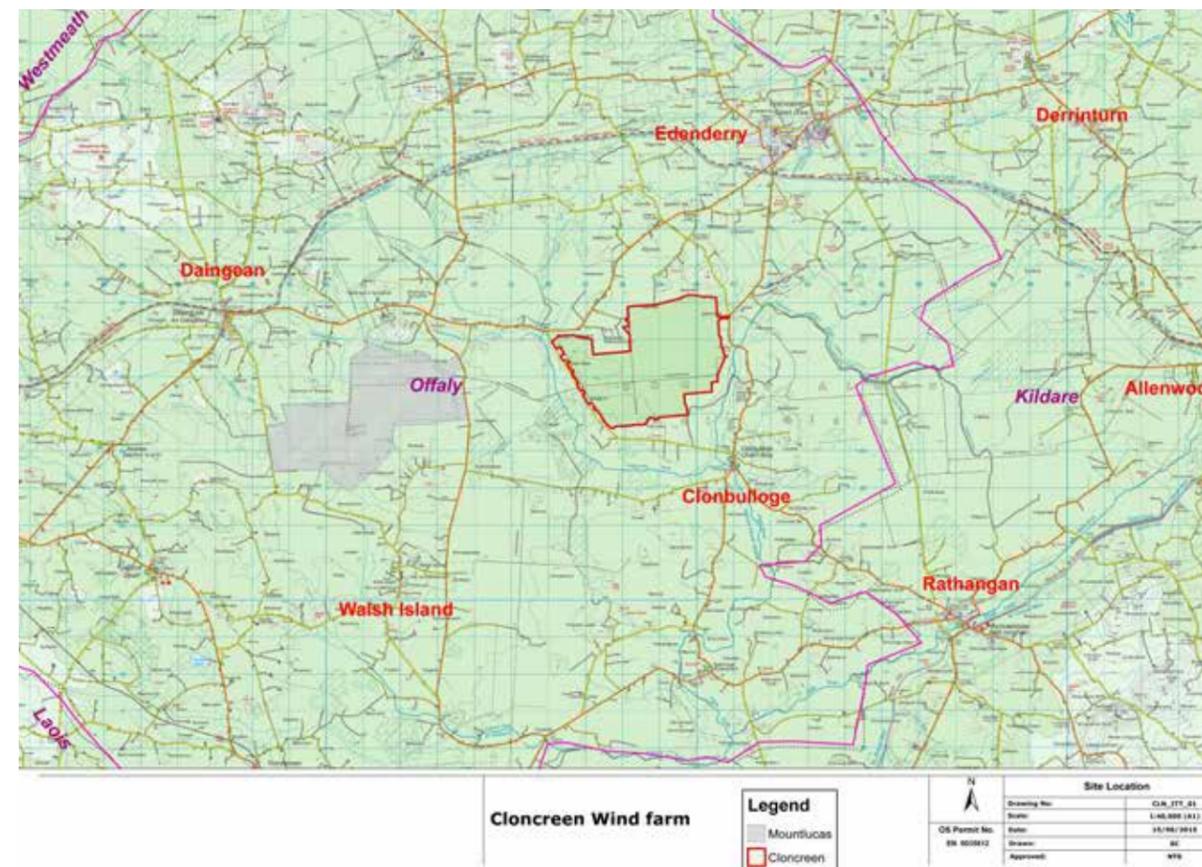


Figure 1: Site Location

Planning permission was consented by An Bord Pleanála through the Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) under Ref. PL 19.PA0047 for Cloncreen Wind Farm, Co. Offaly in May 2017. Planning permission was granted for 21 turbines with a maximum blade tip height of 170 metres and associated infrastructure.

### Draft National Climate and Energy Plan

Following the launch of Project Ireland 2040 the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment published Ireland's Draft National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP) 2021-2030 in December 2018. The production of a draft National Energy and Climate Plan is a requirement under EU Law.



The objective of the National Energy and Climate Plan is to set out contributions, targets and objectives in emissions and energy to 2030 and the planned policies and measures to achieve these. This first draft of the NECP takes into account energy and climate policies developed to date, the levels of demographic and economic growth identified in the Project 2040 process and includes all of the climate and energy measures set out in the National Development Plan 2018-2027.

### Cloncreen Wind Farm Amenity Plan

Bord na Móna would like to seek the local communities' suggestions/ideas for proposed amenity that could co-exist on Cloncreen bog alongside the wind farm. Over the coming months, the company will speak with residents and community groups to gather suggestions and ideas. As part of the wind farm planning application, Bord na Móna has already outlined some amenity activity that could take place, such as utilising the road networks for walkway/cycleway usage like at Mountlucas Wind Farm. Parking spaces at the eastern entrance are included in the planning consent to facilitate this.

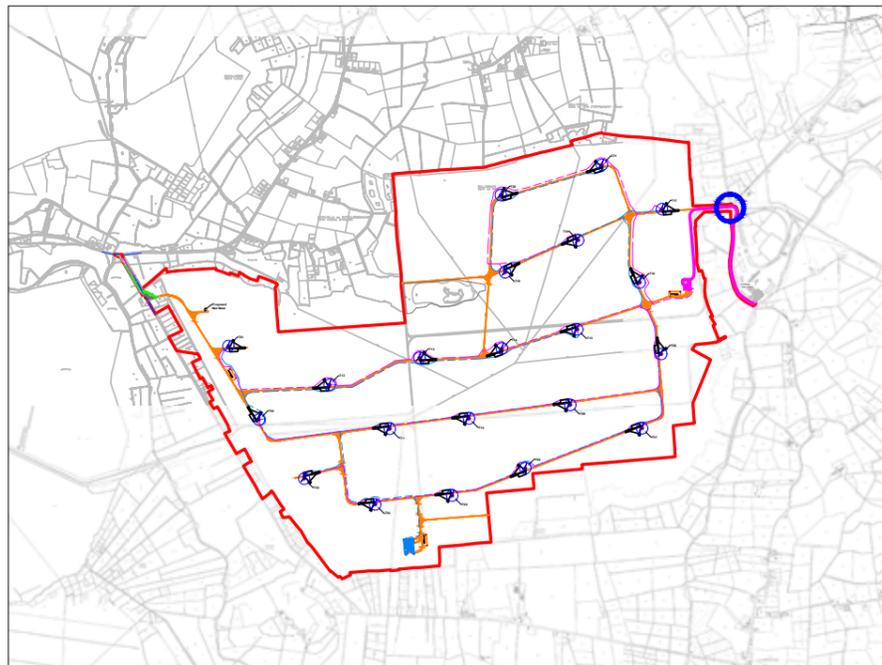


Figure 3: Site Layout

### Recent Project Activity

#### Cloncreen bog site works

In October 2018, Bord na Móna commenced site investigation work on Cloncreen bog. The purpose of this work was to assess the ground conditions at the locations of the turbines, roadways and associated infrastructure. Between October and December, the site investigation works were carried out by a specialist company supervised by Bord na Móna. We would like to thank the community for their patience and co-operation during this period and in particular, during the movement of equipment to and from the site.

#### Extension of Blade Length

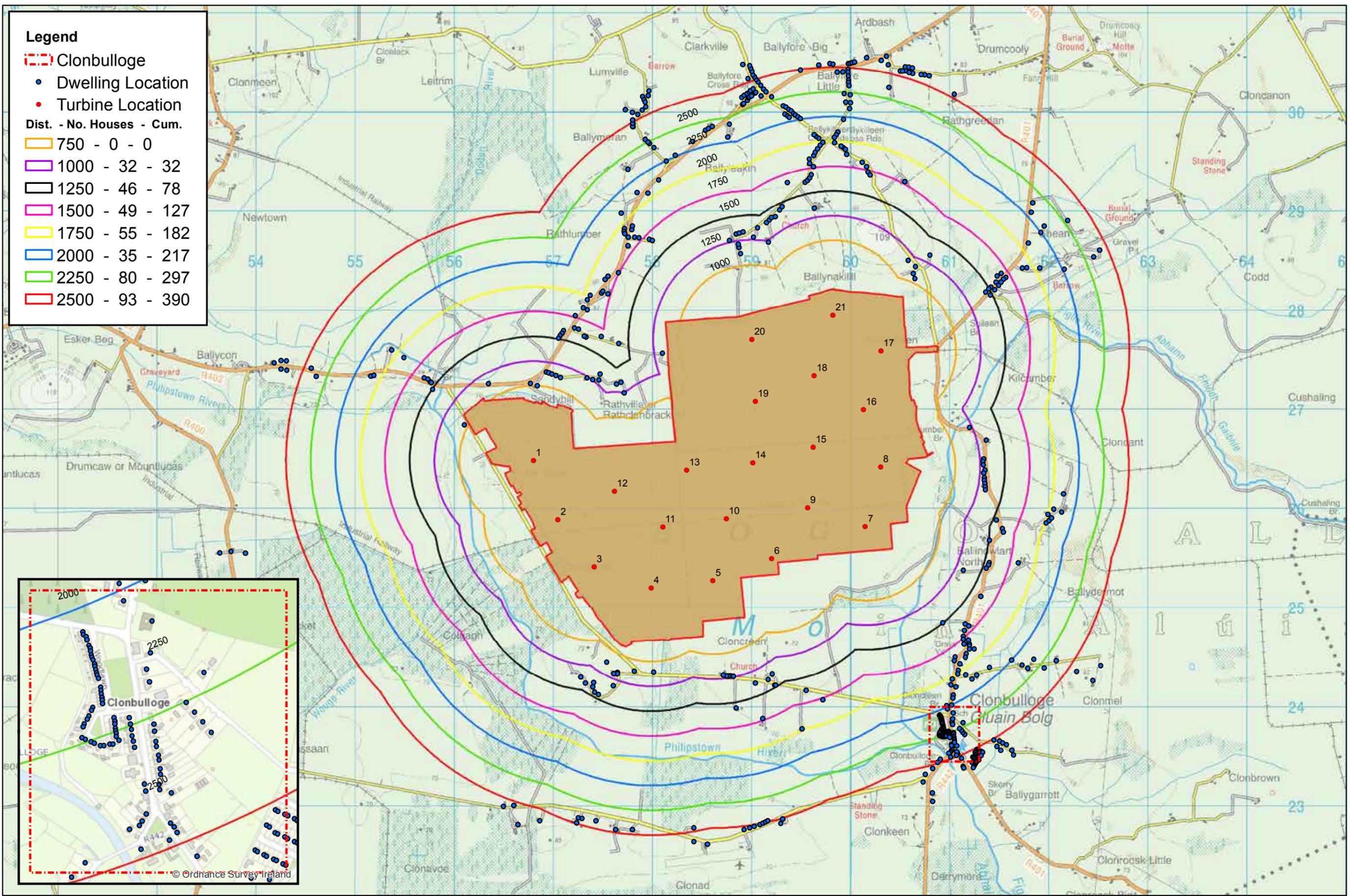
The main difference between the new RESS and previous support schemes is that the RESS is to be allocated through a series of competitive auctions. This means that all renewable energy projects will be bidding for a limited amount of support, and support will only be given to the projects that offer the best value for money to the consumer. To ensure the best chance of success at the RESS auction, Bord Na Móna must ensure that the most efficient and optimal turbines are used on the site. Bord na Móna have determined that incorporating turbines with up to 70m blade length while adhering to the 170m tip height would maximise the electricity generated at the site. Not only does this ensure the best chance of success at the RESS auction, it will also ensure that Ireland continues to increase its renewable electricity generation and reduce generation from non-sustainable resources.

On 21st December 2018, Bord na Móna Powergen submitted a Section 146B request to An Bord Pleanála in relation to Cloncreen Wind Farm. This Section 146B alteration is seeking to lengthen the blade lengths of the turbines from 65.5 metres up to 70 metres while remaining within the previously permitted tip height of 170 meters. The wind farm layout and infrastructure as consented will not be altered and is not affected by this proposal.

An Bord Pleanála have indicated that the case (reference PL19.303313) will be decided by 07/05/2019.

**Legend**

-  Clonbulloge
-  Dwelling Location
-  Turbine Location
- Dist. - No. Houses - Cum.
-  750 - 0 - 0
-  1000 - 32 - 32
-  1250 - 46 - 78
-  1500 - 49 - 127
-  1750 - 55 - 182
-  2000 - 35 - 217
-  2250 - 80 - 297
-  2500 - 93 - 390



### Next Stages

#### Procurement Process

Bord na Móna has commenced competitive tender process for the turbine supply, Civil Balance of Plant (CBoP) and Electrical Balance of Plant (EBoP) contracts. In line with the Utilities Directive, all competitions were advertised on the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) via the eTenders procurement website. The first stage of this process is the prequalification stage for each competition. Following shortlisting of responses, a number of parties will be invited to submit tenders.

#### Renewable Electricity Support Scheme (RESS) - Community Investment

One characteristic of the new Renewable Electricity Support Scheme (RESS - as mentioned in the opening message) is investment opportunities for communities and individuals. It is proposed that projects will have to facilitate the registration of interest in investing by individuals prior to participating in RESS auctions. If the project is successful in the RESS auction, the communities and individuals may then have the opportunity to invest in the project.

According to the High-Level Design paper: *"It is proposed that priority investment opportunities will be given to those living closest to the proposed development (within 5km). Projects looking to enter RESS auctions will have to establish project websites where citizens can express an interest in investing. The proposal is for a single offering opportunity where an investment opportunity is advertised and open to all residents within a 10km radius but those living within 5km have first refusal. If the offering is not fully subscribed by those within the 5km zone then it can be offered to the residents within the 10km zone. There will be no minimum level of community investment required, and no penalties for projects that fail to attract community investment, provided the offerings have been made in a fair and transparent manner".*

Bord na Móna is currently planning its Community Investment Offering for Cloncreen Wind Farm and will provide more information to the local community in the coming months.

### Mountlucas Wind Farm updates

#### Outdoor Physical Fitness Amenity

In 2018, Mount Lucas Community Development Group in association with Mountlucas Wind Farm completed the installation of an Outdoor Physical Fitness Amenity on the wind farm that both local people and visitors can use. 12 Stations with a total of 20 different exercise machines were installed including stations for use by wheelchair users, along the existing public walkway. Examples of machines installed include: lower back bench, sit up bench, 10 exercise station, rowing machine, sky walker station, Elliptical cross trainer and leg press. The machines are suitable for Youth and Adults or taller than 1.4m only. Users must follow the instructions. The installation of the equipment was completed by Murphy's Playground Services Ltd Co Galway following a competitive procurement process.



#### New record set for walkway-cycleway visits

Mountlucas walkway-cycleway continues to set a record year on year. In 2018, almost 35,000 visits were made to the amenity facility aspect of the wind farm. This brings the total visits to the amenity facility to over 100,000 since it opened in 2016. The weekly parkrun continues to be a great success. The parkrun event is a free, weekly, 5km timed run. This event takes place at 9:30am every Saturday morning at Mountlucas Wind Farm. It is open to everyone, it is free and safe and easy to take part in. People of all abilities are encouraged to take part - from those taking their first steps in running to seasoned athletes. More info at [www.parkrun.ie/mountlucas](http://www.parkrun.ie/mountlucas)

#### Community Gain Scheme Awards

On the 15th June 2018, Mountlucas Wind Farm held an awards ceremony for the recipients of the 2018 Community Gain Scheme Awards. Over €84,000 was awarded to 28 community projects as part of the 2018 fund.



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### Meet the Buyer Event

In line with the Government Code of Practice for Wind Energy Development in Ireland, prior to starting construction, Bord na Móna will organise a “Meet the Buyer” event to introduce the main contractors of the project to the community. This will offer the contractor the opportunity to interact with local the local community, including local suppliers and trades to facilitate greater local economic benefits. When organised, details of the event will be shared with the local communities.

### Independent Advice and Information

We encourage you to contact and seek advice and information from independent public bodies with an expertise in relation to renewable energy and in particular wind energy projects. The following contacts may be of benefit to you:

Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland	LoCall 1850 376 666	Info@seai.ie
Environmental Protection Agency	053-916 0600	info@epa.ie
Offaly County Council	057-9346800	webmaster@offalycoco.ie
Geological Survey of Ireland	LoCall 1890 449900	duty.geologist@gsi.ie
Inland Fisheries Ireland	01-8842600	info@fisheriesireland.ie
National Parks and Wildlife Services	1890 383 000	nature.conservation@ahg.gov.ie
Fáilte Ireland	1800 242473	CustomerSupport@failteireland.ie
Irish Aviation Authority	01-671 8655	info@iaa.ie
Energy Institute UCD	01-716 1858	energy@ucd.ie

## Cloncreen Project Newsletter

### Contact Us

The proposed Cloncreen Wind Farm will benefit from participation by all interested parties during each stage of the development. If you wish to make a comment, would like to visit Mountlucas Wind Farm or require further information about the Cloncreen Wind Farm please use the contact details below.



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