

2024

Consultation Report

Yellow River Wind Farm



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Executive Summary

In line with industry best practice, Yellow River Wind Farm will put in place a substantial Community Benefit Fund (CBF) to support local projects and community enterprises to deliver projects which will bring social, environmental or economic benefits to the area.

During the construction phase of Yellow River Wind Farm, SSE Renewables delivered several community consultation events within the local area with the support of Offaly Local Development Company.

A Community Liaison Officer was appointed as a bridge between the community and SSE Renewables and a Construction Fund was allocated to invest in and support worthy local causes while the wind farm is being constructed. This report summaries the community consultation process, promotional activities and data analysis

which identified key issues and existing plans to understand community needs. It also highlighted areas where the local population feel there are gaps in services and provisions, as well as highlighting areas of priority interest and opportunity.

Feedback obtained from desktop research, multiple consultations and planning sessions with residents of varying age cohorts and local and regional stakeholders will be detailed in this CBF Consultation Report and in the subsequent Funding strategy.

Introduction

Background

Yellow River is a 29-turbine wind farm currently under construction, with an installed capacity of 101 megawatts (MW) located outside Rhode, County Offaly. The project received planning permission in 2014 and in October 2022 SSE Renewables commenced the construction process of the wind farm, with the expected completion date in 2024.

When completed, the wind farm will produce enough clean green energy to power the equivalent of around 66,000 homes annually.

SSE Renewables have now installed the final turbine and are nearing the end of our construction phase. The reinstatement and landscaping at the site is proceeding and it is expected that the project will be fully operational in early 2025.



^Total annual homes powered quoted based on projected capacity, typical wind load factor of 32%, and typical annual consumption (4,200kWh). Quoted CO2 emissions abated based on projected annual MWh output and latest average CO2 Emissions (0.291t/MWh) in the All-Island Single Electricity Market, and published by the CRU in its Fuel Mix Disclosure and CO2 Emissions for 2018, September 2019.



About Yellow River Windfarm

The project received planning permission in 2014 and in October 2022 SSE Renewables commenced the construction process of the wind farm. When completed, the wind farm will produce enough clean green energy to power the equivalent of around 66,000 homes annually.

The 29th and final turbine has now been installed, and SSE are nearing the end of the construction phase with the Yellow River Wind Farm closer to becoming operational. This will allow us to deliver local, renewable energy onto the Irish grid and offset almost 70,000 metric tonnes of carbon annually.

Once fully operational the wind farm will be contributing to Ireland's 2030 renewable electricity energy targets of 80%. The reinstatement and landscaping have begun at the site, and it is expected that the project to be fully operational in early 2025. 150 jobs were created during the construction phase.

SSE Renewables

SSE Renewables is a leading developer and operator of renewable energy generation, focusing on onshore and offshore wind, hydro, solar and battery storage.









Part of energy infrastructure company SSE plc, UK-listed in the FTSE100, it is delivering clean power assets to increase SSE's operational renewable generation capacity from 5GW today to up to 9GW by 2027 as part of a ~€24bn clean energy plan, the five-year Net Zero Acceleration Programme (NZAP) Plus. This includes delivery of the world's largest offshore wind farm in construction, the 3.6GW Dogger Bank Wind Farm.

SSE Renewables operates some of the largest onshore wind farms on the island of Ireland

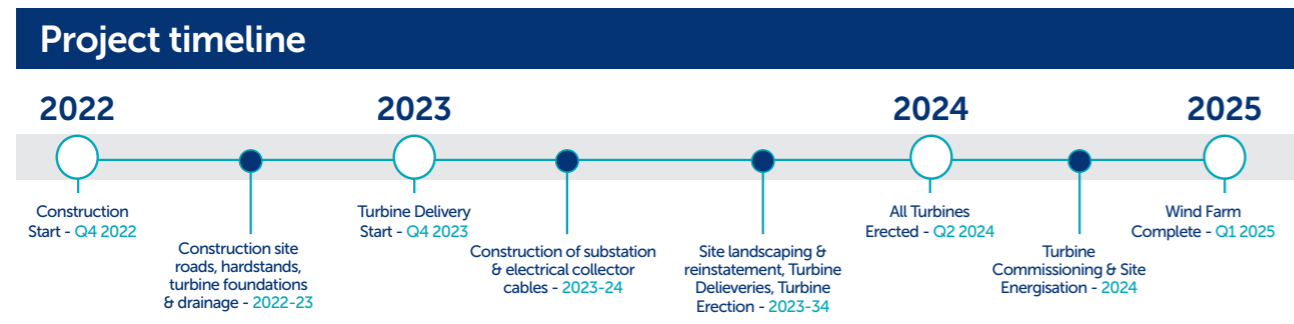
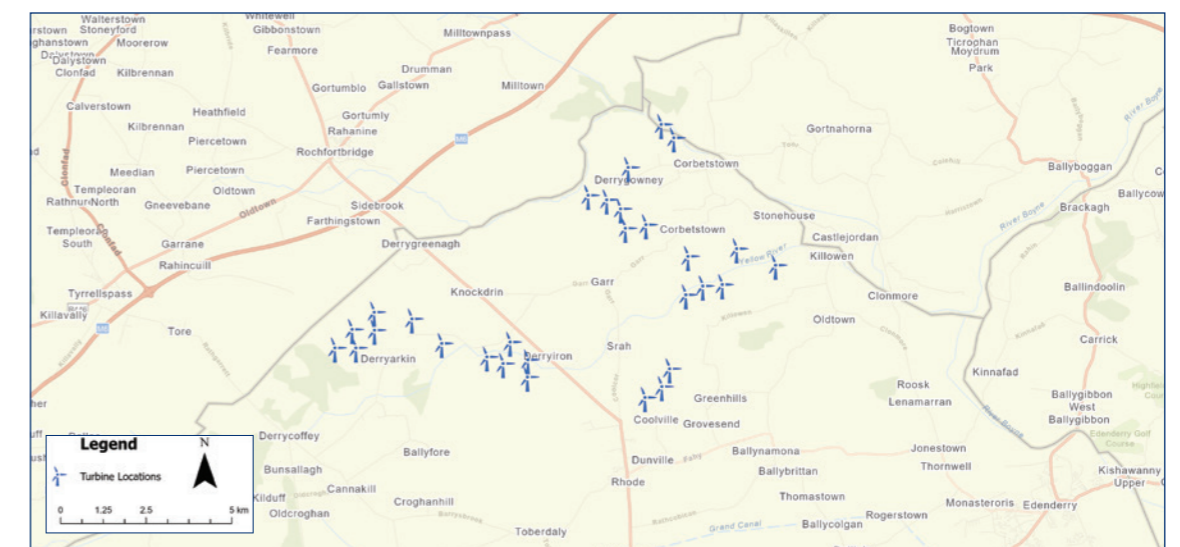
including the 174MW Galway Wind Park in Connemara and the 73MW Slieve Kirk Wind Park outside Derry City.

SSE Renewables has a team of over 2,000 renewable energy professionals with a passion for championing clean energy delivery, each based across the markets in which it operates. Its core market focus is on the UK and Ireland, with a growing international presence in carefully selected markets in Continental Europe and Japan.

Benefits of the Project

-  101MW of clean green energy
-  66,000 homes powered
-  Contributing to Ireland's Climate Action Target of 80% renewable electricity by 2030
-  Offset almost 70,000 metric tonnes of harmful CO2 emissions
-  Investment in local economies and communities
-  150 jobs created at peak of construction period
-  Substantial Community Benefit Fund
-  Construction Fund supporting over 70 local causes to date

Location Map: Yellow River Wind Farm



[^]Total annual homes powered quoted based on projected capacity, typical wind load factor of 32%, and typical annual consumption (4,200kWh). Quoted CO2 emissions abated based on projected annual MWh output and latest average CO2 Emissions (0.291t/MWh) in the All-Island Single Electricity Market, and published by the CRU in its Fuel Mix Disclosure and CO2 Emissions for 2018, September 2019.

Purpose

The purpose of the Public Consultation Process was to ensure the allocation of future CBFs reflects the actual needs and desires of the community. The process aimed to;

- **Promote Inclusivity** by engaging a wide range of individuals and stakeholders, the process ensured that diverse voices and perspectives are heard in designing the strategy.
- Through consultative engagement methods, the community can identify and **shape strategic priorities**, needs and opportunities for funding.
- **Enhance transparency** through the consultation process by building trust in the community through the provision of information about the decision-making process and future community benefits.
- Ensure **maximum input** from those living closest to the wind farm. Projects and initiatives that are shaped by community input are more likely to be relevant, effective and sustainable.
- Identify **local representatives** who will join the Community Benefit Fund Committee (CBFC) and actively promote the opportunities this CBF offers.
- Research **local and government policy** to ascertain ways this fund can leverage maximum investment and impact for the communities living in the Area of Benefit

Diagram 3: Community Benefit Timeline



Overview of the Consultation Process

The table below outlines the range of activities undertaken to engage and consult with the community near Yellow River Wind Farm.

This process has ensured a robust and comprehensive community consultation on the structure of the proposed CBF took place. As part of the public consultation process, SSE Renewables with the support of Offaly Local Development Company, actively engaged with local communities

to gather valuable insights that will shape the Funding Strategy, which will outline how the Yellow River Wind Farm CBF will be invested. The table below details the range of consultation activities. Further details are provided on the content of each activity in the report.

Table 1: Consultation Activities

Activity	Description
SLA with Offaly Local Development Company	Engaged Offaly Local Development CLG to support the funds administrator to co-facilitate consultative activities, including the establishment of the CBF committee.
Public Consultation Planning	Several channels (in person, online and digital) were utilised to inform the community of the means by which they could engage in the consultation process.
Information Drop-in Sessions	6 x drop-in information sessions held in Offaly, Meath, Westmeath and Kildare. These sessions provided project updates, information and sought feedback on the upcoming CBF.
Online Needs Assessment	The public were invited to complete an online needs assessment surveys to identify gaps, prioritize actions and inform the decision-making process to support the shaping of strategic priorities.
Qualitative and Quantitative Survey	The public were invited to complete an online Qualitative and Quantitative Surveys after the results of the Needs Assessment was compiled to provide residents and stakeholders an opportunity to express ideas and suggestions in designing the Funding Strategy.
Yellow River Wind Farm Website	Designated website providing information on the Yellow River Wind Farm, project updates, newsletters and contact details. The newsletters were uploaded to the website which gave the QR code and link to the surveys. Yellow River SSE Renewables
Youth Forum	To ensure all members of the community are represented a youth forum was held at St Marys Secondary School in Edenderry.
Active Elderly Forum	Representation of all age groups was a priority, and the local Active Elderly Forum were provided with the facts about the wind farm and asked for their feedback.
Briefings with Relevant Stakeholders	Throughout the development and construction stages of Yellow River Wind Farm, SSE have maintained regular contact with key stakeholders including Offaly County Council and political representatives at a national and local level.
Desktop Research	To gather and analyse existing data on the area profile from Census 2022, local and county development plans were also reviewed. This information provided a well-informed foundation to assist in identifying key issues, understanding community needs and to develop effective strategies for engagement and decision making.
Community Champions	Those who expressed an interest in joining the Community Benefit Committee and receiving updates on the CBF will be kept informed about the fund. All community organisations were invited by OLDC to sign up for the Community Champions register for updates on the CBF.
Community Liaison Officer	The CLO acts as a bridge between SSE Renewables and the local community ensuring transparent communication, managing the construction fund and addressing any queries from residents.
Supporting Local Schools	The provision of information and interactive educational programmes in local schools near Yellow River, provided a means to enhance communications about the community consultation process.

Key Stakeholders

Local Community Agency Groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offaly Local Development Company • Public Participation Network (PPN) • Comhairle na nÓg 		Public Service Bodies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County Councils • Statutory Agencies • DECC 	
Local Residents	Community and Voluntary Groups	Community Champions	Community Benefit Fund Committee

Community Consultation Activities

SLA with Offaly Local Development Company

Offaly Local Development Company (OLDC) is supporting SSE Renewables to work together with the community to deliver the Yellow River Wind Farm CBF Strategy, having over 30 years' experience working directly with communities across Offaly specifically in the community development sector.

OLDC is a local partnership company providing a mix of multidisciplinary supports to individuals, communities and business startups across the county, working collaboratively with them to develop a range of innovative local solutions, addressing needs in employment, availability of community & social infrastructure, supports to foster enterprise (private and community) and access to training and tailored supports to individual, group and families. Support from OLDC was instrumental for SSE Renewables in ensuring the Public Community Consultation process was communicated through all the relevant channels in the local areas and leaders in the community were identified.



Working with OLDC to support the process significantly enhanced the project's success and community engagement by providing pivotal local knowledge on activities, services, organisations and relevant stakeholders as well as community venues and amenities. Through their years of work in the county, their local knowledge was valuable when planning the consultation events across a broad spectrum of age groups and organisations. Through extensive engagement and knowledge in the locality they brought together diverse stakeholders and supported SSE to establish the Community Fund Committee, which is now in place. They will continue to support SSE Renewables with the work of the committee in developing the Funding Strategy, animation events and launching the fund.



Public Communication of the Consultation Plan and Activities

The public consultation planning for the CBF aimed to ensure there would be broad awareness and effective communication about the multifaceted consultation activities and events leading to intensive community engagement and participation. In planning the public consultations, the goal was to gather the voices of the community and integrate them into the decision-making process, fostering a sense of ownership and collaboration.

Clear and accessible language and visual aids where necessary were used to make the information easier to understand. The Yellow River designated webpage and email address provided a mechanism for continuous engagement with the community. The Community Champion register which remains open to the public is a means for the public to receive updates on the CBF activities. The table below details the communication channels and platforms used.

Table 2: Communication Channels for Consultation Planning

Communication Channel	Activities
Traditional Media	Local Newspapers, radio and community bulletin boards.
Communication Channel	Social media channels, newsletters, email invites and (newsletters (March / Summer 2023 and Spring / Autumn 2024) and a designated Yellow River email address.
Direct Engagement	Information boards at events with take away information brochures, targeted groups (Youth and Elderly Forums) and educational programmes.
Community Liaison Officer	Present in the community throughout the consultation process and attendance at all events, delivered information to households, encourage participant and available to answer any questions.

Table 3: Calendar of Events

Date	Event Type	Location	Time	Venue	# people
20/04/2023	Consultation Event – Drop In	Rhode, Co. Offaly	4.00 – 8.00pm	Rhode Parish Hall,	26
25/04/2023	Consultation Event – Drop In	Castlejordan, Co. Meath	4.00 – 8.00pm	Castlejordan National School	21
26/04/2023	Consultation Event – Drop In	Ballybryan, Co. Offaly	4.00 – 8.00pm	Scoil Naoimh Phadraig, Ballybryan	14
27/04/2023	Consultation Event – Drop In	Cannakill, Co. Offaly	4.00 – 8.00pm	Croghan Community Hall	16
02/05/2023	Consultation Event – Drop In	Tyrrellspass, Co. Westmeath	4.00 – 8.00pm	Tyrrellspass Community Centre	17
03/05/2023	Consultation Event – Drop In	Kishawanny Lower, Co. Kildare	4.00 – 8.00pm	Edenderry Golf Club	26
21/06/2023	Consultation Event – Active Elderly Forum	Rhode, Co. Offaly	11.00 – 1pm	Kilclonfert Community Centre	28
21/09/2023	Consultation Event – Youth Forum	Edenderry, Co. Offaly	10 – 12.20pm	St. Marys Secondary School	32

Information Drop-in Sessions

Overview of Drop-in Sessions

Community information events were held in various locations around Yellow River Wind Farm. These drop-in sessions focused on the proposed CBF and gave updates on the progress of the project. Community Representatives from SSE Renewables were in attendance to receive feedback and answer any questions that may have arisen. This has ensured there has been a wide range of feedback received on how the Fund will contribute to the local area. Attendees were able to review the pop-up stands at their leisure and a takeaway brochure was available.

Once attendees had reviewed all the project information and discussed any questions or concerns with the project team, they were invited by Offaly Local Development Company to complete a needs assessment survey online and put forward any proposed actions for their local area that they felt should be included in the funding strategy. In doing so they were asked to consider the following:

- What are your community's challenges/ issues and threats?
- What are your community's resources/ assets and opportunities?
- What actions should be prioritised for support in your community?
- Are the resources in your local area helping to meet the UN Sustainable Development Goals?

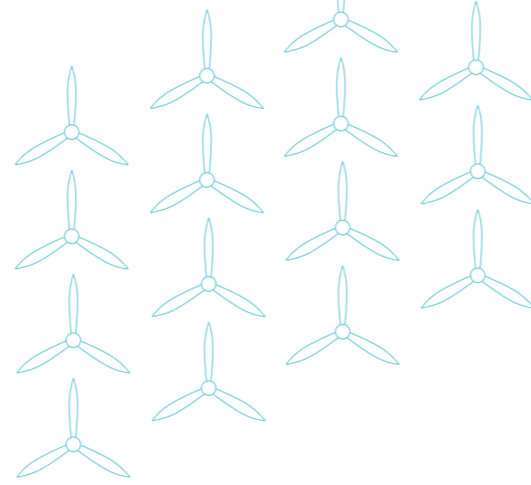
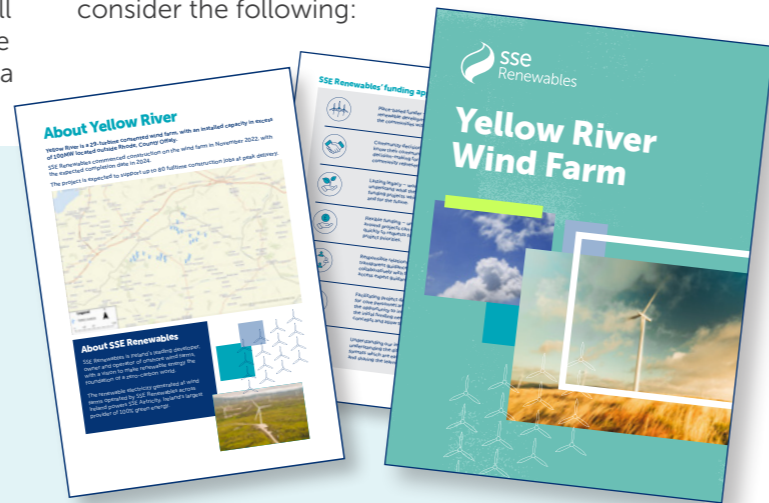


Table 4: Advertising Activities

Media Outlet	Type of Activity	Activities Timing
Midland Tribune	Newspaper Advert	April 2023
Tullamore Tribune	Newspaper Advert	April 2023
Offaly Topic	Newspaper Advert	April 2023
Offaly Independent	Newspaper Advert	April 2023
Westmeath Independent	Newspaper Advert	April 2023
Westmeath Topic	Newspaper Advert	April 2023
Westmeath Examiner	Newspaper Advert	April 2023
Athlone / Mullingar Advertiser	Newspaper Advert	April 2023
Leinster Leader	Newspaper Advert	April 2023
Kildare Nationalist	Newspaper Advert	April 2023
Liffey Champion	Newspaper Advert	April 2023
Meath Topic	Newspaper Advert	April 2023
Meath Chronicle	Newspaper Advert	April 2023
LMFM	Radio Advert	May 2023
Midlands 103	Radio Advert	April 2023
KFM	Radio Advert	May 2023
Social media	SSE Renewables platforms	April / May 2023
Community Champions	Register of residents and organisations to be kept informed of CBF updates	Ongoing
OLDC	Phone/email contact with groups and stakeholder to invite them to events	April / May 2023

Table 5: Number of Consultation Responses

Responses from Drop-In and Online Consultations	#Responses
Community Champions	166
Needs Assessments	69
Qualitative & Quantitative Online Surveys	88
EOI to join Committee	60
Application to join Committee	40

Overview of the Needs Assessment Survey

To help shape and guide the Funding Strategy a comprehensive survey has been open from November 2023 and closed in April 2024.

In order to advise the Yellow River CBFC on how best the community would like this funding invested, all members of the community were invited to complete a needs assessment form. Both the paper and online surveys were widely advertised to all age cohorts and stakeholders as part of the public consultation events as outlined above. There were 69 Responses to the survey, which took an average time of 44 minutes to complete. 76% of respondents were from Offaly, 14% from Westmeath and 8% from Kildare.

challenges and possible interventions exist in the area with a view to understanding the social, economic and cultural needs and gaps in the region. The needs assessment also focused on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals; 3. Good Health and Wellbeing, 4. Quality Education, 7. Affordable & Clean Energy, 8. Decent work and Economic growth, 11. Sustainable Cities & Communities, 13. Climate Action and 15. Life on Land to obtain information on the of areas and sustainable activities required for development and enhancement of the local areas.

In responding to the needs assessment survey, the community were asked to consider and highlight what strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, local

The responses were collated and classified into the following themes:

- Work and Economic Growth
- Sustainable Cities and Communities
- Affordable Clean Energy
- Climate Action
- Life on Land
- Tourism Heritage Culture
- Community Infrastructure
- Intervention Projects



Overview of Qualitative and Quantitative Survey

Having completed the Needs Assessment Survey as part of the community consultation process, the results of the Needs Assessment were correlated into a Qualitative and Quantitative Survey.

Having completed the Needs Assessment Survey as part of the community consultation process, the results of the Needs Assessment were correlated into a Qualitative and Quantitative Survey. The aim of the survey was to gather comprehensive and actionable data that can guide decision making and resource allocation. The surveys provided residents and stakeholders an opportunity to express ideas and suggestions in designing the Funding Strategy.

88 responses were received with an average time of 16:32 to complete. The highest number of responses were from the following townlands: Rhode (30), Edenderry (16) Croghan (6) and Clonmore (4). 88% of responses were received from residents in Offaly, 8% were from Westmeath, 2% were from Kildare and 2% from Meath.

All 166 Community Champions who had registered to be kept informed were invited to express which ideas and suggestions were important to them and therefore should be deemed as priorities in the Funding Strategy. The survey was also circulated to all near neighbours within a 2km radius of Yellow River wind farm and those living along the turbine delivery route by the local Community Liaison Officer.

These responses give quality information about the level of support for the various ideas and suggestions which were put forward by the community, both locally and across the region. This information will help to design and shape the Funding Strategy with oversight from the CBF Committee. The topics ranked strongest were the Natural Environment, Social and Education with Transport featuring as the weakest topics in the area.

Table 6: Survey themes by priority

01	Natural Environment: Walk & Nature Trails, Woodlands & Forest, Nature & Wildlife
02	Social: Clubs, Services & Facilities, Festivals and Events,
03	Education: Schools, skills courses
04	Waterways: Canal and Rivers
05	Built Environment: Architectural heritage, Community Buildings, Facilities, general area
06	Health & Wellness: Mental Health Services, outdoor recreational facilities
07	Transport: Public Transport, commute time, connectivity



Yellow River Wind Farm Website

In addition to in person events, all information was made available to those that were unable to attend the consultation events through the Yellow River Wind Farm webpage.

In addition to in person events, all information was made available to those that were unable to attend the consultation events through the Yellow River Wind Farm webpage. **Yellow River | SSE Renewables**

This included the Needs Assessment and Qualitative and Quantitative surveys and the expression of interest form to join the committee. The forms were made available through QR code displayed in the newsletter. Individuals were able to scan the QR code using their mobile device to complete the forms.

Alternatively, interested people could contact the SSE Renewables Community Liaison Officer for more information and to have the information delivered to them. The Yellow River webpage contains information on the Yellow River Wind Farm, including project milestones and updates and individuals can access information on the previous 4 newsletters from March 2023, Summer 2023, Spring 2024 and Autumn 2024. An email address and telephone number are provided for the CLO to ensure any queries or communication received is responded to promptly.



Overview of Youth Forums

In order to ensure all members of the community are represented SSE Renewables organised a Youth Forum discussion at St. Mary's Secondary School, Edenderry with the purpose of gaining an insight into the views of the younger members of the community.

The Youth Forum was a key step in gathering perspectives from 32 students ranging from first year to Leaving Cert. It sought to understand any significant challenges that are currently facing their communities and their visions for any opportunities that will be identified in the Funding Strategy.

Group Exercises

This involved 3 group exercises;

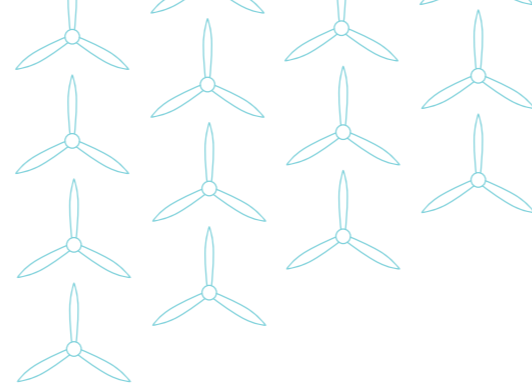
1. SWOT analysis.
2. Brainstorming issues or pressures felt by the youth and their community under 6 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDG) categories.
3. Suggest potential projects that would address the identified issues / pressures.



Overview of Active Elderly Forums

SSE Renewables attended a local Active Elderly Forum to share information about Yellow River wind farm and to give members an opportunity to share their views on needs and priorities for the CBF.

It followed the same format as the public drop-in clinics. The opportunities and benefits of the CBF were presented to the group and displayed on information boards in the venue. There was an open discussion session and attendees were asked to present what they felt were the needs and opportunities in the area. Attendees were asked to complete the online survey manually or in their home.



Briefing with relevant Stakeholders

From the initial development and pre-construction phase to the construction and post-construction stages of Yellow River Wind Farm, SSE Renewables have engaged with and communicated regularly with key stakeholders including Offaly County Council and political representatives at a national, regional and local level.

This has included regular engagement with Councillors across the county, Chamber of Commerce and 3 high level meetings with Offaly County Council to brief them on the latest developments on Yellow River including the CBF.



Desktop Research

Small Area Population Statistics (SAPS) is a source of relevant statistics in respect of the Yellow River Windfarm in County Offaly.

The data points provide detailed information pertaining to demographic analysis, and household information, economic insights, education, infrastructure and services in the area. The statistics below detail areas which lie within 5 km and 10 km of the windfarm and are sourced from the Census 2022 Small Area Statistics. By analysing the data, stakeholders can make informed decisions, ensuring that the consultation addresses the actual needs and priorities.

Stakeholder mapping identified what existing organisations, community and voluntary groups and social enterprise organisations are in the areas within proximity to the Yellow River Wind Farm. By mapping out the local organisations it is possible to identify which community and voluntary

organisations are currently operating in the area. This assists in understanding the current service provision to local residents and gaps that need to be addressed, allowing the community needs and priorities to be aligned with the Funding Strategy and ensuring resources are directed where they can have the most significant impact.

Local and regional development plans prepared by statutory, community and voluntary agencies were reviewed and provided a comprehensive understanding of existing policies, planned initiatives, infrastructure and wider regional growth strategies ensuring that community feedback is aligned with broader development goals and priorities.

Area Profile

- SAPs (Age, Population, Access to Broadband, Employment and Socio-Economic Profile)
- Pobal HP Deprivation Indices
- Community Groups
- Stakeholder Mapp

Mapping Local & Regional Needs

- Offaly County Development Plan
- SICAP
- LEADER
- Offaly Social Enterprise Network
- SEAI – Better Energy Community

SAPS Area Overview: Population, Access to Broadband

Location	Under 14	15 -19	20 - 64	65+	Population	Access to Broadband
within 5km	2316	850	6480	1830	11476	2873
within 10km	6886	2495	19034	4454	32869	8397

SAPS Area Overview: Employment Status

Location	Employed	Unemployed	Student	Retired	Homemaker	Unable to work	Other	Total
within 5km	5004	368	1029	1481	750	473	55	9160
within 10km	14486	1315	2899	3624	2084	1412	163	25983

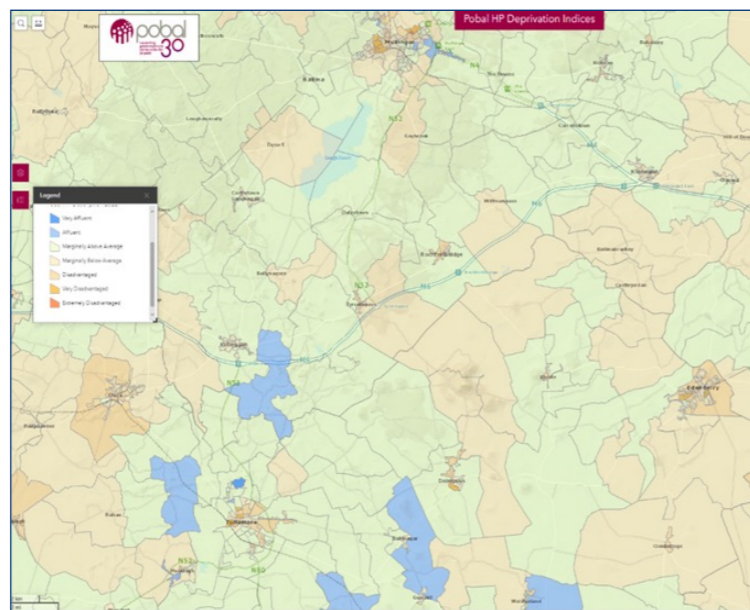
SAPS Area Overview: Socio Economic Profile

Location	Professional / Management	Semi-skilled / manual	Semi-skilled / Unskilled	Gainfully occupied but unknown	Total
within 5km	4174	3856	1758	1688	11476
within 10km	11030	11113	5645	5081	32869

Pobal HP Deprivation Indices

The Pobal HP Deprivation Index, which is Ireland's primary social gradient tool uses data from Census 2022, analysing ten measures of an area's levels of disadvantage.

These focus on educational attainment, employment status and numbers living in individual households. This Index provides planners and communities with the opportunity to understand where disadvantage still exists in our society today. This data allows for effective planning and the targeting of resources towards projects and areas have a positive and lasting impact.



Map 2: Pobal Map



Community Champions

SSE Renewables established a Community Champions register where residents and organisations were invited to sign up to receive communication and stay informed of any updates in relation to the CBF.

It is necessary to ensuring continuous support and engagement within the community. The large number of individuals, as detailed below show the diverse range of organisations and schools that signed up reflect the civic commitment in the area to foster community engagement and continue

their impactful work with the funding opportunities that will emerge with the CBF. By registering, these champions ensure they are well informed and ready to maximise the benefits of the fund for their respective causes.

Individuals	Sporting / Club / Society	Registered Charity / Social Enterprise	Other Voluntary or Community Organisation	Schools	Other
57	47	13	23	14	10

Community Liaison Officer

The CLO played a crucial role in the consultation process for the CBF associated with the wind farm.

Through his availability to the community in their local areas, attendance at public meetings, drop-in sessions and other engagement activities, the CLO facilitates meaningful dialogue and gathers valuable feedback that shapes the CBF's priorities. Furthermore, the construction fund, administered by the CLO provides the necessary financial resources to support community initiatives and

other community engagement efforts. The work of the CLO ensures that the consultation process is thorough and inclusive, facilitating a well-informed and community-driven approach. Together the CLO and the construction fund help build trust and foster a collaborative relationship between SSE Renewables and the community.



Rhode Croghan Senior Citizens

Yellow River Construction Fund

SSE Renewables has allocated a Construction Fund to invest in and support worthy local causes while the wind farm is being constructed.

The objective of the fund is to provide financial support for small projects in the area and to promote awareness of the development and provide information. SSE Renewables has sponsored over 60 projects and initiatives since construction began in 2022. Some of the project and initiatives sponsored since construction

began include, the Edenderry Music Festival for 2 years in a row, Rhode St. Patrick's Parade, Rhode Tidy Towns, Rhode Athletic Club, Rhode Croghan Senior Citizens, Rhode Community Games and Ballinabrackey GAA Club and the Historical Society.

SSE Renewables Supporting Local Schools

Providing education in local schools significantly enhances the community consultation process.

When students and their families are well informed about the potential benefits and impacts of community projects, they can participate more effectively in discussions and decision-making processes. Educational programs raise awareness about the activities of the Wind Farm, environmental education and the importance of

CBFs and how they can be used to address local needs. Moreover, schools can serve as hubs for distributing information and gathering feedback. This in turn encourages broader family and community involvement ensuring that the diverse range of voices and perspectives are heard during consultations and over the 16.5-year

SSE Renewables have also supported a number of projects in schools in the area, including the provision of laptops and a Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths (STEM) project which has seen all six schools in the area receive dedicated teacher training in February 2024 to promote STEM within their schools. In addition to a 12-week interactive programme which uses the First Lego League and supports schools to explore and learn about energy as part of the Irish curriculum.

The Yellow River team has given school talks on the benefits of renewable energy and the importance of climate action, as well as informing students on how Yellow River Wind Farm will support these goals. Incorporated in the presentations is a section on forestry, biodiversity, and sustainability and how you can play your part in sustainable actions. The SSE Yellow River team also presented native trees (Oak, Birch and Alder) to primary school children in 5th and 6th classes across 4 local schools.

Yellow River Wind Farm Community Benefit Fund Committee

Attendees to the drop-in sessions were also invited to complete an Expression of Interest to become a CBFC Representative, 60 expressed an interest.

The fund committee concept places communities at the heart of the decision-making process and has a key role in providing leadership within the community, and in ensuring the funds are used to facilitate community and sustainable development and climate action. The committee is made up of voluntary, community representatives and will have the ultimate responsibility for shaping and delivering the fund strategy. Following a subsequent virtual overview session 42 residents applied to be considered for the committee. Interviews were held to determine who would be appointed to the first committee. Due to the number of interested parties' interviews were held over two days with 8 members of the community appointed to the committee. The fund committee interviews were also a valuable source of local insight, diverse perspectives and expertise as part of the community consultation process.

The committee oversee the drafting and development of the Community Consultation Report and the Funding Strategy. When the Community Benefit Fund opens the committee will be responsible for reviewing applications and making funding awards. Following the induction of the committee, and on review of the Inclusive and Representative criteria outlined below, it was proposed to recruit additional members to ensure the committee would represent the widest cross-section of the community as possible. The youth committee representative will be appointed in the new year, bringing the committee to 10 members of the community.

The CBFC is made up of local champions who will be the decision-making body for the fund for three years. The Fund Committee comprises:

- **Volunteer Community Representatives will be the decision-making body.**
- **Representatives for the Developer (SSER Community Investment Manager / OLDC). Developer representatives will sit on the committee but do not influence the decision-making progress and have no voting privileges.**



Inclusive and Representative Committee

Gender Balance:	Geographical Balance:	Age Balance:
≥ 40% female members	≥ 40% female members	≥ 1 15 years of age (TY Student)
≥ 40% female members	≥ 2 within 5km, ≥ 2 within 6-10km, ≥ 1 outside 10-15km	≥ 1 18 - 30 years of age
		≥ 1 31 - 45 years of age
		≥ 1 31 - 45 years of age

Declaration of Interests

On appointment, members were inducted to the committee and have committed to be guided by the following:

- Terms of reference
- Anti Bribery policy
- Safety guidance
- Conflict of Interest policy
- Lobbying / canvassing policies



Term of Membership

The CBFC membership will operate on a three-year cycle. The youth representative will participate for a period of two years. This means that after two - three years, there will be a new call for applications for representatives for the CBFC.



Committee Overview Statement

Following a comprehensive community consultation, the CBFC is dedicated to addressing the needs and aspirations identified by the residents and community groups in proximity to Yellow River Wind Farm.

Our mission over the next three years is to enhance the quality of life within the community by developing and implementing a strategic funding plan that aligns with the priorities voiced during the consultation process. The long-term funding strategy that will span the 16.5 years of CBFs will focus on securing resources to support key local and major projects and initiatives that will promote community, social, economic, cultural and environmental development and progress. We are committed to fostering transparency, inclusivity and collaboration, ensuring that all community members have a stake in our collective future to create sustainable and impactful benefits for all.

The priority themes identified will guide the development of the CBF Strategy. Our community has expressed a strong desire to enhance and preserve our natural environment. The walking trails, conservation of the woodlands and forests, rivers and canals are vital natural environment assets that require attention to promote physical and mental health and wellbeing. As well as protecting local flora and fauna and supporting biodiversity. These initiatives aim to foster a deeper connection with nature and promote sustainable development of the natural resources for future

generations. The importance of social cohesion and community engagement was highlighted through the need for clubs, services, facilities and cultural activities that cater to all age groups and celebrate community spirit. Education remains a cornerstone of the development of the community. The expansion of educational activities in schools, other centres and within community organisations will empower individuals to increase their employment opportunities and support lifelong learning. Preserving our architectural heritage and improving community buildings and facilities will focus on maintaining the character of our area while ensuring that community spaces are functional, and welcoming was also a priority theme recognised.

We are focused on addressing these priority themes through the CBF, ensuring that our community continues to thrive and grow. By addressing these priorities, community life will be enhanced through sustainable projects that create lasting legacy, while supporting and strengthening local organisations to ensure a vibrant, resilient and cohesive community for generations to come. Thank you to everyone who participated in the consultation and shared their valuable insights.

Next Steps

The Yellow River Community Fund Committee will be meeting regularly to develop and design the Funding Strategy for the Yellow River Community Benefit Fund.

The Community Consultation report will provide the basis for The Strategy that will detail key elements of the Yellow River Community Benefit Fund. The Funding Strategy will be published in 2025.



If you haven't already signed up for our Community Benefit Fund updates, scan the QR code and provide your details, or follow this link:

<https://forms.office.com/e/X5CdtfeUk>

You can get a copy of our Community Consultation, Newsletters and Contact Details on Yellow River | SSE Renewables

**For further information about SSE Renewables,
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