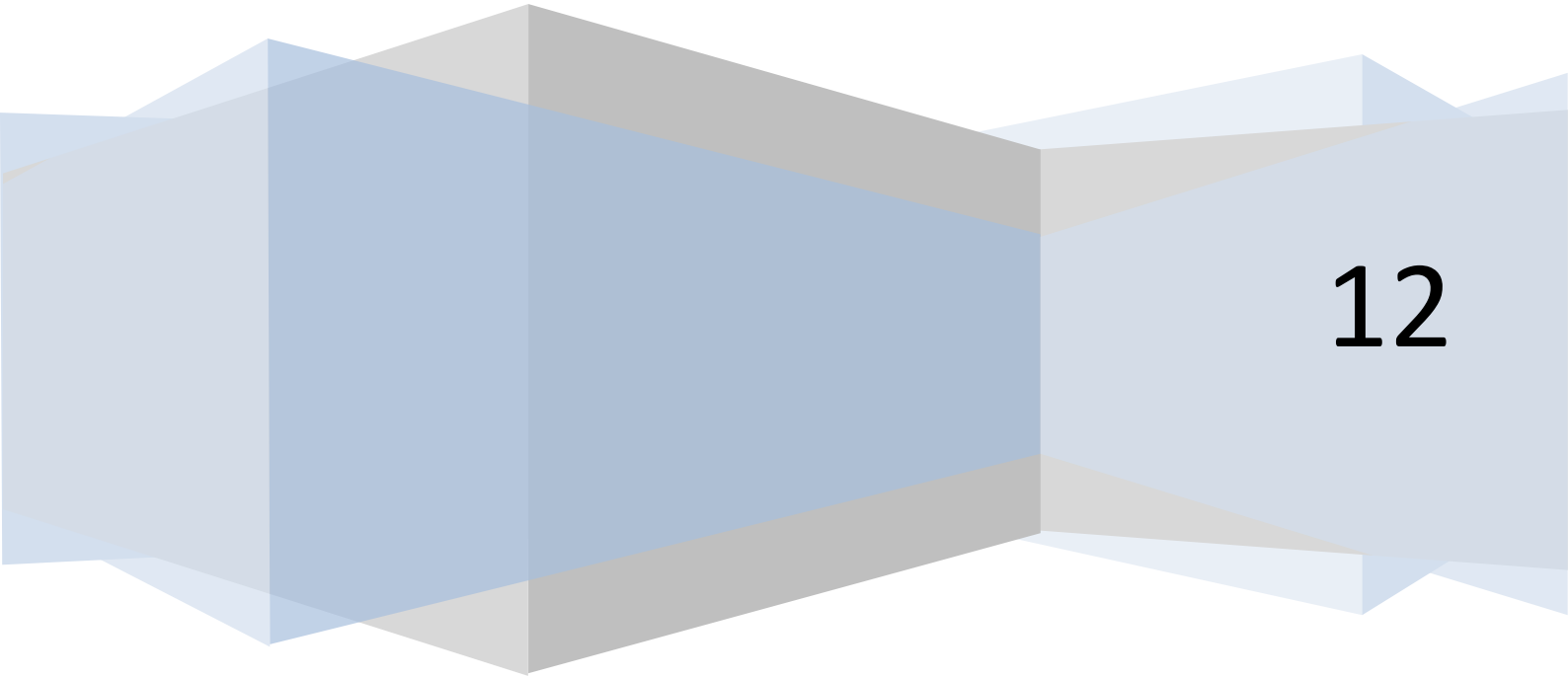


Allenwood Community Development Association (ACDAL)

# Feasibility Study of Ideas Put Forward at The

Public Meeting held on 17th November 2011

Tom Quinn



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### **The Ideas generated at the meeting are as follows.**

**OPTION 1** Wind Energy/Windmills – Interconnector already there

Would need a Feasibility study and possible case study of a similar company with SEI Charts showing average wind speed etc.

Possible issues – Noise pollution, Visual Impact, Planning permission, Profitability?

**OPTION 2** – Rental Units for Young Designers in Arts and Crafts, Fashion, Jewellery, Knitwear – Cluster Units

**OPTION 3** – With focus on job creation and start up business a Hot Desk was suggested to rent to business people who required access to phone, Internet, Printers, Faxes etc the suggested hourly rate is set at €40.00 per hour

**OPTION 4** - Re- Training, other areas to be considered was the public announcement of re training of construction workers with a readymade training centre ACDAL should ensure they are involved as a viable training centre involved in such initiatives.

**OPTION 5** – Fish farms/Fish lakes, with 40 acres available to ACDAL some community members felt some of this land could be used to invest in fishing lakes. Investors like the Credit Union or possible grants could be a possible source of income. Information was at hand among community members to inform the group that a 50% grant of the total cost would be available through the Leader Programme under the heading of Enterprise. More research would be required and costing's etc. Further suggestions included a fish tackle shop with hire facilities, and full Holiday facilities, such as clay pigeon shooting, a golf driving range, activity centre and a tourism/ visitor centre was also mentioned as a further possibility.

**OPTION 6** – A community member, Richard had a fully researched business idea for refurbishment of transport vehicle's which he was happy to share as an Income generator for ACDAL and he arranged to correspond with the General Manager on the details for the next meeting.

**OPTION 7** –A community member stressed that with 40 acres of zoned industrial land viable options were imperative, following this, a suggestion of a secure maintenance and storage service for owners of cars, vintage vehicles, caravans and camper vans was put forward and was met with a lot of agreement from those present.

**OPTION 8** – Forestry and renewable energy was put suggested as another option and was seen as a long term investment.

**OPTION 9** – A request for funding from Bord na Mona was suggested as it was felt the community is very inconvenienced with its landfill. It was pointed out by another community member that a fund is available from Bord na Mona through the County Council to apply for contribution to community activities. There is a criteria for application for funds and applications had been made in the past from ACDAL.

**OPTION 10** – A community playground was put forward as a suggestion.

**OPTION 11** The Harvesting blueberries from Larkwood Blueberry Farm and Horticulture Centre. It was felt that Blueberries were very seasonal and with costing's already completed the return on investment was very low. Details of rental of allotment's were given as staff members were available to give first -hand information. Those who rented allotments to date did not keep up the rent and there was no rollover of customers from year to year. The Horticulture centre however was been used to capacity to date with FETAC registered courses.

**OPTION 11** –Rental of Land for Recycling Purposes/Green Energy Park, Anaerobic Digester. This idea was opposed by the majority in attendance.

## **Project Scope**

To conduct an initial feasibility study on the financial costs and revenue generation potential of the ideas generated and listed above. It is not proposed to carry out an extensive study at this time. After the initial investigation the ideas will be shortlisted and a more detailed study will be conducted on the most commercially viable of the options. The evaluation will include the likely cost of the proposal, the income generation, and employment opportunities. The study will not examine the environmental impact at this time.

## **OPTION 1 Wind Energy** – *Interconnector already there*

Allenwood Wind Speeds

### **Onshore Wind Speeds**

- 50m Height: 6.75 to 7 m/s
- 75m Height: 7.5 to 7.75 m/s
- 100m Height: 8 to 8.25 m/s

County: Kildare

Town land: Allenwood North

ING Coordinates: 274983,227523

### *How a wind turbine works*

- Most wind turbines operating commercially today in Ireland consist of 3 rotor blades that rotate around a horizontal hub. The blades face into the wind and rotate as the wind passes through them. The rotor is connected to a nacelle (a housing for the generator and other electrical equipment) that is located at the top of a tower to ensure a higher and less interrupted wind flow.
- Wind turbines start operating at approximately 4 - 5 metres per second (approximately 16-18 kmph) reach a maximum output at 12 - 14 m/s and automatically shut down for safety at wind speeds greater than 25 m/s (approximately 80 km.p.h.).
- The rotating motion is accelerated through the turbine transmission (which usually includes a gearbox although they are becoming less common) into the generator that converts the motion to electricity. When more air passes through the blades, more electricity can be produced.
- The low voltage electricity from the generator is 'stepped up' through a transformer to match the national grid voltage. The electricity is transported from the wind turbine to the grid along electric cables which may be buried underground within the wind farm site.
- The electricity from the wind farm joins the national grid at a sub-station.

The average wind speed in Allenwood is just above the minimum required to operate a Wind Turbine. The proximity of trees on the site might affect the flow of the wind. Detailed wind analysis will be required before it can be stated with certainty that there is sufficient wind to make the project viable.

### *How much electricity can a wind turbine produce?*

The amount of electricity that a single turbine is able to produce depends on its size, the wind speed and the efficiency with which that specifically designed turbine is able to convert wind energy to electrical energy.

Currently the largest wind turbine in manufacture has a 6 MW capacity. Given a 31% load factor it has the potential to produce roughly 16,300 MWh in a year ( $6 \text{ MW} \times 8760 \times 0.31$ ). On average, this is enough to supply the electrical needs of around 2,700 households for the year, ( $16,300/5.93$ ) and would satisfy the total energy needs of 607 households annually. ( $16,300/26.84$ )

### *How big are wind turbines?*

Wind turbines come in many different sizes, depending on the amount of energy that it is required to produce. The larger the turbine, then (generally) the greater the amount of electricity produced. For most modern commercial turbines the tubular steel towers range from about 200 to 300 feet (60 to 90 metres) in height.

In terms of rotor diameter, large modern wind turbines have rotor diameters ranging up to 100 meters while smaller machines (around 30 meters) are typical in developing countries.

### *How much space does a wind turbine require?*

There are different spacing requirements for different types of turbines, so the amount of space required by a wind farm depends on the number and type of turbine being deployed. A typical wind farm of 4-5, V90 3MW turbines might extend over an area of 1 square kilometre, but only 1% of the land area would be used to house the turbines, electrical infrastructure and access roads; the remainder can be used for other purposes, such as farming or as natural habitat.

### *How much does it cost to make electricity from the wind?*

Wind energy is one of the cheapest of the renewable energy technologies. It can easily compete with new clean coal fired power stations and cheaper than new nuclear power. If we were look at the variable unit cost of electricity production then we would interpret the cost as being zero, i.e. there are no fuel or input costs, the energy itself is free.

However in reality we interpret the actual cost per unit of electricity as represented by the long term spread per unit allocation of the very high initial capital costs, coupled with the day to day running of the wind farm e.g. administrative and maintenance costs.

Wind Turbines cost approx €2.60 million per 3.0MW Turbine.

A Typical wind farm would cost  $4 \times €2.60 \text{ million} = €10.4 \text{ million}$  installed.

Electricity Production at 31% average load = 3.72 MW

Eirgrid pay €57/MW hour under the REFIT Tariff. = €5088 per day

Revenue per year in optimal conditions = €1.85 million for a 12MW Wind Farm.

Operating Expenses would be approx 40 % of revenue giving an operational profit of € 1.1 million

To get a return on investment would take 10 years.

Most wind turbines are built at a height above 200 metres and face in a south westerly direction. The best sites are on the west coast in elevated positions. Allenwood located on a flat bog, is not ideal. In addition there are many obstacles in the way such as high trees.

The high capital costs and financial risk make this proposal not feasible for ACDAL. It might be possible to attract a private investor which would improve the risk/ reward position for ACDAL. But why would a private investor proceed with such a project in Allenwood when there are far better locations in elevated sites on the west coast. This is not a feasible option at this time.

## **OPTION 2 – Rental Units for Young Designers in Arts and Crafts, Fashion, Jewellery, Knitwear – Cluster Units**

We have 1 Empty Unit which is 1000sqft. The current rental required for this unit is €500 per annum.

The unit could partition with temporary partitions into smaller units. The difficulty with this is that all units must meet certain minimum standards and have toilet and hand washing facilities. In addition there are strict rules regarding fire exits and not impeding exit and entry from the building. This would make it difficult to partition the building in any meaningful way.

It might be feasible to set up as a market type unit, with space rented for tables. But the unit is approx 25ft wide and 40ft long. If you allow for each table to be 4ft wide with a space of 8ft behind it that is half the width of the unit. For fire safety we cannot put tables on the other side of the unit. The maximum number of tables that would fit along one wall is 6 assuming they are 6ft long.

To cover the cost of renting the unit would require  $€500 / 6 = €83.3$  per month or €20.8 per user per week.

On top of that we would have to charge operating expenses such as.

Rates

Insurance

Security

Maintenance

Light & Heat

**This would probably double the cost.** To €40 per user per week.

The projections are based on full occupancy and would only cover the rental and operating costs if we had full occupancy. While the idea is a good one in principal it will not produce significant revenue and might end up costing money.

**OPTION 3 – With focus on job creation and start up business a Hot Desk** *was suggested to rent to business people who required access to phone, Internet, Printers, Faxes etc the suggested hourly rate is set at €40.00 per hour*

**This option is already at an advanced planning stage as follows.**

Allenwood Enterprise Centre is offering Hot Desk facilities to start up businesses. Each office will be fitted out with four desks fitted with privacy screens. The users will be encouraged to work as a co working community. The offices are all within the main Enterprise Building in a busy vibrant atmosphere. The rent covers a desk, executive chair, broadband, heat and light. Extra equipment such as desktop computers, printers, and filing cabinets can be hired out at low cost.

Users of the service can avail of wide range of Training Programmes, including Computer, Bookkeeping, and Health & Safety in our purpose built training rooms. County Kildare Leader Partnership holds their Business Development Programme in the Centre specifically targeted towards start up businesses.

Hot Desks cater for the needs of start-ups and small businesses - we're much more affordable than conventional serviced offices or commercial leases because you only pay for the desk space you actually use and for the time you need it. The flexibility of easy in/easy out contracts are available throughout the centre taking away the headache of being tied into lengthy leases.

Handing individuals and start-up businesses the lowest practical overheads and the highest levels of support, a truly plug-and-work environment.

**The following facilities are on offer.**

- Use of your own dedicated desk and storage locker.
- Your own unique coded access to the building 24/7/365
- Wireless broadband.
- Telephone Line Rental if required
- Coffee, tea, milk and snacks available at low cost in our Conservatory.
- Printing, photocopying & scanning at cost.
- Natural Lighting throughout
- Mailing Address

**The proposed Desk Renting rate is as follows.**



## Rates 2011 - 2012

### 4 Desk Room

Rate per Hour	Rate Per Day	Rate Per week	Rate Per Month
€7.50	€40.00	€75.00	€250.00

There is an account set up fee of €75. This fee covers the cost of setting up an account  
And introduction to the staff and Health & Safety Induction.

### Additional Services

Dedicated Phone Line		As billed
Business Coaching Hourly Rate	€55.00 per hour	
Telephone Messaging Service	€10.00 per week	
Printer Hire	€5.00 per day	includes ink & paper usage
Computer Hire	€5.00 per day	
Filing Cabinet Hire	€2.00 per day	
Conference Room Hire	€120.00 per day	
Computer Training Room Hire	€120.00 per day	

The likely revenue effects based on 50% occupancy are as follows

### Income

4 X daily Rate €40 = €160 per day. Allowing for 50% occupancy = €80 per day.

Monthly based on 20 working days = 20 X €80 = €1600

Yearly = 12 X €1600 = €19200

### Operational Costs.

Administration cost =	€500 per year
Advertising =	€500 per year
Insurance =	€1000 per year
Materials =	€500 per year

**Total Cost €2500**

The financial benefit to the company will be €16700.

If we can generate sufficient demand the number of rooms can be increased with proportionate increase in revenue. ***This proposal will be commenced on a pilot basis in 2012.***

**OPTION 4 - Re- Training**, other areas to be considered was the public announcement of re training of construction workers with a readymade training centre ACDAL should ensure they are involved as a viable training centre involved in such initiatives.

**We are currently working on new training initiatives which are as follows.**

### **Life Long Training Centre**

In 2012 we will create a new training centre called the “Allenwood Life Long Learning Centre”. This will be initially staffed by an Intern, with Qualifications in Teaching; the staff will expand as the business grows.

This centre will offer training in all aspects of life, from post secondary school, to retirement. The centre will run courses in Business, Life and Leisure Activities, Horticulture, I.T, Community Training. The training offered will be customer led. We will introduce training, that market research shows customers require. The programmes will change as customers needs change.

The training will be conducted by both in-house and external trainers. The initial Market Research and Marketing Plan will be facilitated by the appointment of an Intern, with Marketing Qualifications. At the end of 2012, a full time manager will be appointed to manage, a Fast Growing Department. Existing staff in the training centre can apply to transfer, to the new Training Section.

Projections 2011 – 2013 Life Long Training

	<b><u>2011</u></b>	<b><u>2012</u></b>	<b><u>2013</u></b>
<b>Sales</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>77800</b>	<b>128956</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b><u>3150</u></b>	<b><u>51258</u></b>	<b><u>79108</u></b>
<b>Nett Result</b>	<b>-3150</b>	<b>26542</b>	<b>49898</b>

**This option will be developed and implemented.**

**OPTION 5 – Fish farms/Fish lakes**, with 40 acres available to ACDAL some community members felt some of this land could be used to invest in fishing lakes. Information was at hand among community members to inform the group that a 50% grant of the total cost would be available through the Leader Programme under the heading of Enterprise.. Further suggestions included a fish tackle shop with hire facilities, and full Holiday facilities, such as clay pigeon shooting, a golf driving range, activity centre and a tourism/ visitor centre was also mentioned as a further possibility.

This is not really one option but a number of options that are loosely connected. From a feasibility point of view they need to be assessed separately

### **Fish Lake**

The development of an approx three acre lake in conjunction with Bord Na Mona. The lake would be stocked with fish and anglers charged a fee for fishing. The first and most obvious problem with this proposal, is that the lands behind the enterprise park are zoned industrial or education. The land would have to be rezoned, which will take time and cost money. The development of a lake of the proposed size would require considerable capital investment. We might be able to get grant assistance up to 75%, but this still leaves a contribution by ACDAL of 25% of the cost. In addition to the initial capital costs there would be considerable ongoing operating costs. These costs will include staff, insurance, maintenance, and utility costs.

The revenue would be generated from issuing fishing permits and charging for any fish taken. If the lake was stocked with trout, we would charge for any fish caught. Additional revenue could be raised from equipment hire or sales.

## **Fishing/ Fish Farming**

Wednesday 25 January 2006 09:00

### **Including Article from Farmers Journal**



Starting a fishing enterprise sounds easy: Dig a hole, fill it with water and plop in some fish. But talk to those who rely on a fishing lake to earn an income and you soon realise that the business needs to be properly planned to ensure its long-term success.

It costs about €15 – 20000 /acre to set up a fishing lake. The cost will be even higher if the lake has to be lined with clay or rubber.

And while the seemingly low level of upkeep of this type of venture has a big appeal to farmers looking at diversification, those who fail to tackle the business professionally from the outset end up with little more than a hole full of muddy water that clearly has no appeal to fishermen...

The location of the lake - not just in relation to its attraction to customers, but, more importantly, in terms of its ability to hold water and provide a sustained fishing business - is crucial.

And do not assume that trout are the only fish that pull in the anglers.

In fact, trout fishing is fast being overtaken by demand for carp, which offers a wide range of marketing options.

There can be huge costs involved if the lake has to be lined with plastic or clay, so location is important," he says.

And if you get the right advice you might not need to create a new lake at all.

Instead, an existing pond or a string of ponds can often be turned into a fishery business with professional help.

### **Where do I start?**

Don't start digging a hole and then look for advice on what to do with it.

There has been a big increase in on-farm fishing lakes, so you need to assess the competition, look closely at your location and try to find something that will set your business apart.

The location of the lake is also very important in terms of access and also to ensure water levels will be maintained (clay soil is best).

If water extraction is needed from a nearby source you need to contact the Environment Agency.

Get a fishery consultant on board from the outset to advise on the viability of creating a lake on the farm and also its management.

### **Can I get a grant?**

Some green cash might be accessible, too, if there are environmental advantages associated with the business.

Some farms have created fishing businesses by stocking a string of existing ponds, but a 1.2ha (3-acre) lake is considered the minimum size for a new venture.

### **How do I learn how to manage the lake and the fish?**

Consultants also act as advisers and can provide back-up on fish management and water quality issues for new ventures.

But most farmers who embark on this type of business say it is not difficult to master good management once you have had some guidance in the early stages.

Daily management is needed in varying degrees depending on the time of year.

The biggest labour demand, once the venture is up and running is being on hand to deal with visiting fishermen if you are operating a day-ticket business. This represents an ongoing operational cost. The staff member has to be highly skilled with a knowledge of lake maintenance, fish management, sales, first aid and if the lake is deep life saving. In addition back up staff are required for holiday and sick leave.

### **Where do I buy fish?**

Fishery consultants will advise on where to buy fish stock; there is no shortage of suppliers of trout and a range of coarse (ie non-edible) fish.

How to maintain a good stock of fish must be planned with your consultant but coarse fish will breed in well-managed water.

Advisers can help new starters harvest young fish and set up a system where small coarse fish can be grown on to restock the main lake.

### **How much competition is there?**

A lot. There is fishing on the canal nearby.

There has been a boom in fishing lakes in recent years, particularly trout lakes.

There are still good opportunities to set up coarse fisheries, but you need to take advice and try to offer something different.

Fishing for large carp is a growth market and you could create a lake and let it to a syndicate.

The members pay you an annual fee and have sole use of the lake.

### **How much will it cost and what sort of profit can I make?**

It is possible to start fishing from a lake within the first year of its creation.

To create a lake costs about €18,000/acre. So a 3 acre lake would cost €54000, just for the lake.

Stocking a 3-acre lake costs about €3900 for trout and €7500 for a mix of coarse species.

Income depends on how the fishing is marketed.

Day ticket prices for coarse fishing range from 5-10, with trout fishermen paying 20-25 a day to take up to five fish.

We would also have to construct an access road to allow cars to get to the fishing lake and provide parking. This represents an additional cost.

Income from a syndicate will vary, but a three-acre lake could generate about €10,000-20,000 a year or more, but it takes time to develop the reputation of a lake. This is a low rate of return for a high capital investment.

### **Will it stand alone as a diversification venture?**

Yes, and some thrive because they offer purely fishing.

Others combine lakes with campsites and tea-rooms to generate further income and provide more facilities.

But this adds to the set-up costs and increases the labour needs.

### **Do I need insurance?**

Check out your insurance liabilities.

Effective warning signage is essential when dealing with publicly-accessible areas of water.

Overall this is a high risk enterprise with high capital and operational costs. The financial risk to ACDAL outweighs any potential profits. This is too risky in the current economic climate.

## **Clay Pigeon Shooting**

The option of setting up an area for clay pigeon shooting also involves the re designation of the land from Industrial to Agriculture. This option also suffers from the potential danger associated with firing guns near houses, industrial units and the childcare centre. However well run accidents can happen, with potential damage to the reputation of the enterprise centre.

The equally important problem is the nuisance caused by loud gunfire. The sound may frighten the children in the childcare and put parents off, sending their children there. The noise will additionally cause a nuisance to the trainees on courses as well as the staff employed in the centre. The capital costs are not that high and the enterprise may produce an overall small profit, but may have an adverse effect on other parts of the business. Overall we might end up losing more revenue from other businesses than we make from the clay pigeon business.

On balance I do not believe that this is the answer to our funding problems.

## **Golf Driving Range**

This would require considerable capital investment. The infrastructure and area of land required would be large. The overall cost would be approx €300,000. This would only be for the driving bays, small admin building and small car park. We would also have to construct a road to take cars to the range.

Before investing significant amounts of money investing in an enterprise such as this, we need to consider the competition. There are numerous golf facilities close to major towns or close to the main roads. Would a golf enterprise located in Allenwood attract enough users to cover the operational costs, which would be high and give a payback on the capital investment? There are long established golf clubs throughout the country struggling. It is doubtful if the required investment could be found in the present economic situation to fund this development.

Overall the risk is too high for ACDAL to take and it is doubtful if we could attract a private investor in the current economic position of the country.

## **Tourism Centre, Visitor Centre, History of Electricity Generation Tourist Attractions**

This would also be considered as a high risk project. There would be high capital costs at start-up, followed by a large investment in marketing and promotion. In addition the ongoing operating costs would be high. The centre would probably need full time staff, to act as administrators, guides, sales staff, and security.

If the Tourist Centre became a major attraction it could generate considerable revenue and profit. The problem is that it is hard to estimate the potential market. Would coaches etc drive to a rural location on narrow roads to view an attraction showing the use of the bogs and how electricity was generated? Have other tourist attractions in the area been significant profit generators?

While this is a worthy development from a social point of view it would be capital intensive and a considerable draw on our financial resources during the establishment period. To get it up and running would require investment in the infrastructure and the attraction. This would be followed by investment in marketing and promotion. When the attraction opens it would require staffing right from the beginning, even if there were little or no visitors. Once established as a visitor attraction, with regular coach and independent visitors it might be profitable, but the financial risk would be considerable. The risk is high even taking into consideration the fact that there would likely be generous grants for infrastructure from the Kildare Leader Partnership along with employment grants from Pobal.

ACDAL is looking for a low risk enterprise with significant income generating capacity and the tourist type enterprises do not provide this.

**OPTION 6 – A community member, Richard had a fully researched business idea for refurbishment of transport vehicle's** *which he was happy to share as an Income generator for ACDAL and he arranged to correspond with the General Manager on the details for the next meeting.*

The Idea was shown to ACDAL by Richard and indeed it is potentially a viable project. It is a process for repairing damaged or torn seats on public transport. The process and products are known exclusively to Richard. Richard has actively tried marketing the process to the procurement divisions of the various companies involved in public transport. To date he has met with interest but no firm commitment to introduce the product.

To get this up and running would require a partnership between the innovator of the product and ACDAL. The process would require a premises and staff. ACDAL could provide the premises and the staff would have to be recruited and trained. This project is like many new innovations in that it currently has no sales, but could potentially generate considerable income. The first step that will be required will be proper market research and the creation of a marketing plan. This would research how big the market is, where it is, what the user will pay and how to best promote the benefits of the process. Assuming that the marketing feasibility study confirms the potential market and identifies the route to market, we could move on to manufacture. It may be possible to arrange grants to cover 75% of the cost of a feasibility study, to examine the market potential. This option is a high risk, with a high potential return. The main problem is whether ACDAL want to get involved in manufacture, which we do not consider a core business. The best option would be for a private investor to establish a business using this process in the Enterprise Park and pay ACDAL rent. The start up of a new enterprise such as this is capital intensive and high risk. ACDAL which is a community development company pursues a low risk business strategy which would be at odds with this option.

**OPTION 7 –A community member suggested a secure maintenance and storage service for owners of cars, vintage vehicles, caravans and camper vans**

This would require quite a large unit to hold sufficient number of vehicles to make it worthwhile.

The largest unit that is vacant at present is 1000sq ft. The rental on the unit is €5000 per annum. It is 45 ft X 22.5. On average each car would require approx a space 9ft X 18ft. Thus the unit would hold approx 4 Cars.

To cover the rental on the unit each car owner would have to pay €1250 per yr. If other vehicles were stored such as caravans they might require even more space. To accommodate different vehicle types the best way is to rent the space at €5 per sq ft per year.



In addition there would be charges for Lt & Heat, Rates, Security and Administration. There is also the inherent risk that we would not get full occupancy. The complete unit may only have 1 or 2 vehicles but still incur the costs for more. The unit would not be available to hire out while occupied by even 1 vehicle.

### **Palette Storage**

A better prospect might be to rent out storage space. The space would be for palette or box storage. A unit could be fitted out with high bay racking. This would make use of the vertical as well as horizontal space.

On average a palette takes up.

EUR 2 1,200 × 1,000 mm/47.24 × 39.37 in = 12.89Sq ft

The unit would hold 11 palettes per run along each wall and on shelves. The shelves would allow the palettes stack 4 high. This would allow a space of 14 ft between the stacks for the forklift truck.

Overall the unit could hold 11 X 2 X 4 = 88 palettes. = €5280 per annum.

We would have to pay Rates, Light, Heat, Admin out of the income generated. The unit would have to be staffed at least on a part time basis to allow for goods in and out. It is probable that the salary costs would be greater than the income generated. If we had a very large unit it might be viable but not for the size we have.

**OPTION 8** – *Forestry and renewable energy was put suggested as another option and was seen as a long term investment.*

### *Biomass*

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Biomass, which involves the burning of high energy fuels such as Miscanthus or Willow, is an option. As with the AD plant we would need to find a partner to invest in this project. The main attraction of our site would be the ease of access to the power grid. This project could deliver significant rental to ACDAL, since it would require a large site.

Biomass might attract opposition, due to concerns regarding the emissions from the smoke stack. The local residents may perceive it as an incinerator for burning waste and not a furnace to produce heat. The process of burning energy crops to produce heat, to drive steam turbines, is not that dissimilar to the process used by the peat burning station previously located here.

### *Solar*

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Solar Power Cells could be positioned on the roofs of buildings in the park and might reduce our electricity bill. It is most unlikely that Solar Power in Ireland can produce sufficient power into the national grid, to be very profitable. It would be costly and high risk.

Geothermal Energy is worth considering in the same way as the Solar Energy, it could be used to reduce the cost of bought in electricity. It is unlikely that it would be a significant income generator. The capital costs would be high and it would be a high risk project.

## **Other Potential Developments**

### *Forestation*

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If we cannot find suitable manufacturing or green energy plants, to utilise the cut away bog land behind the current Enterprise Park, forestation is one possible way that we could produce an income from the land.

I have examined the financial costs / Benefits which are as follows.

	Area acres	Hectares /Acre
Land Behind Enterprise Park	20	8.09

Timber Value and  
Return over 15 yrs  
in €.

<i>Species</i>	<i>Value Per hectare</i>	<i>Total Value</i>	<i>Annual Return  over 15 yrs</i>	<i>Grants</i>	<i>Total</i>
Sitka Spruce Lodge pole	3470	28085	1872	1373	3245
20% Diverse	3750	30351	2023	1484	3507
Diverse	4500	36421	2428	1781	4209
Broadleaf	7500	60702	4046	2968	7015
Oak	7500	60702	4046	2968	7015
Beech	7500	60702	4046	2968	7015

After expenses are paid, this will probably end up costing money and is not a viable option.

#### Water

Allenwood is located on a Major Aquifer capable of producing 4.8 mega litres per day. Allenwood is located on a Limestone structure called the Allenwood Formation. Water seeps down through the Limestone into vast underground lakes. In the future water will become a valuable commodity, which can be sold. Additional investigation is required to determine what economic value, this proximity to the Aquifer is to ACDAL and how we can maximise potential revenue.

#### **OPTION 9 – A request for funding from Bord na Mona was suggested as it was felt the community is very inconvenienced with its landfill.**

We already apply for grants from the fund set up by Bord Na Mona and administered by the county council. We have not received any funding for 2010 or 2011 despite applying. We

applied through the Drehid grant scheme and I am unaware of any other grants available from Bord Na Mona. If there are other grants, I would like the details and we will apply for them.

**OPTION 10 – A community playground** *was put forward as a suggestion.*

The childcare committee are currently exploring this option. The proposal being considered is to build a community playground on the land beside the childcare centre. The playground would be used primarily for the children using the childcare centre but would be open for use by all the children in the area.

**The cost of a fairly basic playground is as follows.**

**Bright Sparks Playground**

Size	20	15	Sq Metres 300	Cost
Safety Play Surface grass and rubber	€49.00	per sq mt		€14,700.00
Labour Construction Cost				€3,000.00
Equipment Hire				€650.00
Castle Discovery				€1,495.00
Play Tower				€1,200.00
Mrs Mop Playhouse				€2,200.00
Spring Car & Motor Bike				€1,360.00
See Saw				€894.00
Giant Covered Sand Pit				2100
<b>Total</b>				<b>€27,599.00</b>



These products are designed and built for children ages 3 - 10. All equipment complies with European Safety Standards EN1176 and conform to ROSPA guidelines and principles. The product range has been designed to assist in the development of social & interactive skills, co-ordination, physical and cognitive development.



Low Level Play Tower

(Complete with steps & slide).

Ages 3 - 8

Platform height - 750mm

Fully enclosed - Safety Railing

Fully treated, painted & sealed. (Green & yellow)

Commercial - red polyester slide (High Strength)

Installation - The legs of this tower must be concreted into the ground

Price does not include Delivery & installation

Footprint area - Tower & slide 3m x 1.2m

Price € 1200 euro (inc. Vat) (ex. factory)

Price £ 890 Sterling (inc. Vat) (ex. factory)



Mrs Mops Play House

Mrs. Mops Play House (Complete with deck & Fence).

Ages 3 - 8

Fully Treated, Painted & Sealed (Terracotta, Blue & White)

Footprint area - House only 2.2m x 1.5m

Deck only - 2.2m x 1.2m

Total - 2.2m x 2.7m

Height to Apex - 2.4m

Installation - simply fix to ground

Price does not include Delivery & installation

Price €2200 euro (inc. Vat)(ex. factory)

Price £1625 Sterling (inc. Vat)(ex. factory)



Spring Activities

Ages 4 - 10

Footprint area 1.0m x 0.3m

Safe Play area 3.0m x 2.5m

Installation - concrete into the ground (450mm)

Price does not include Delivery & installation

Types Available:

Spring Horse (Red & Blue) as in photograph.

Spring Motorbike (Blue & yellow) as in photograph

Price each €540 euro (inc Vat) (ex. factory)

Price each £400 Sterling (inc Vat) (ex. factory)

Spring Car (Blue & yellow) (Fully enclosed)

Ages 3 - 6

Price each €680 euro (inc. Vat)(ex. factory)

Price each £500 Sterling (inc. Vat)(ex. factory)



Giant Covered Sand-Pit

Ages 2.5 - 6

Fully treated, painted & sealed. (Blue, Yellow & Terracotta)

Footprint area - Internal 2.2m x 2.0m approx

External 2.4m x 2.2m approx

Wall height 450mm

Height to Apex - 2.7m

Installation - simply fix to ground

Price does not include Delivery & installation

Price €2100 euro (inc. Vat) (ex. factory)

price £1500 Sterling (inc. Vat) (ex. factory)





See-Saw

Ages 4 - 10

Fully treated, painted & sealed. (Blue, Yellow)

Footprint area 3.0m x 1.0m approx

Safe Play area 5.0m x 2.5m

Operation: Min Height 150mm

Max height 650mm

Installation - Does not require installation

Price does not include Delivery

Price €894 euro (inc. Vat) (ex. Factory)

Price £660 Sterling (inc. Vat) (ex. Factory)

Many fully fitted out Community Playgrounds cost approx €80000 -€200,000, this is one of the projects that the cost depends on how big your ambitions and how deep your pockets are.

### **Sources of Funding**

Funding for rural playgrounds may be available through the Rural Development Programme 2007-2013, from the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.

Funds are available through several headings: Encouragement of Tourism Activities - provision of infrastructural needs for tourism and countryside recreation; amenity and leisure activities; village renewal and development, and the provision of general and specialised training courses. For further information contact Leader or the Partnership Programme in your area.

Even if you are given a site, the landscape works and purchase of the equipment and safety surfacing is expensive. If you are working to a budget, half the cost will be taken up by impact absorbing surfacing under the equipment. What financial help can the local authority provide in the way of grants?

Be creative - if you are in a tourist area, then a playground is also a tourist facility. Find out what money is available locally for tourism projects and see if the playground can be part of that.



Are you in an economically deprived area? See what funding is available for projects dealing with urban and village renewal, drug prevention programmes etc.

If you go looking for money earmarked "playgrounds", you won't find it. But since a playground meets more than just a child's immediate play needs, look more broadly at how it can fit into the wider funding picture.

The following information is believed to be correct at the time of going on line but is liable to change.

## Funding for Community Groups

<b>Source</b>	<b>Potential Areas</b>
National Lottery	Starter funds for local projects - Sports Capital Fund, covers playgrounds.
Area Partnership companies	Organisational support, training to groups concerned with developing playgrounds, play groups or after-school groups.
Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. Grants for locally based community and family support groups	Grants to voluntary organisations working with disadvantaged groups; Renovation of premises and purchase of equipment to 90% of costs; Child care and crèche facilities, including running costs and equipment
Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. Development Programme	Play facilities may be a part of a larger programme to be eligible for funding.
Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. Young People's Facilities and Services Fund	Facilities for young people aged between 10 and 20 years, ball game areas, purpose-designed seats and shelters
LEADER Plus	Play facilities as part of a wider development programme
Peace II	Play facilities (e.g. PlayCare) in border counties
Department of the Environment Urban and Village Renewal Scheme, CLAR & RAPID programmes	Children's playgrounds, traffic calming, landscaping
Department of the Environment Remedial Works Scheme - local authority housing improvements	Overall environmental improvement work including development of play areas
UK based trusts (e.g. Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation)	Improving the status of children and young people
Local groups (e.g. Rotary Clubs) Forest Service, Neighbourhoods Scheme	Playground development Play facilities associated with urban woodland planting projects.

Dormant Accounts Fund - projects in RAPID, CLAR and Drugs Task Force Areas for those affected by social and economic disadvantage and disability. Specifically includes playgrounds and is also open to community groups.

**OPTION 11** *The Harvesting Blueberries from Larkwood Blueberry Farm and onsite manufacture of Jam or Yogurt The conversion of part of the Horticulture lands into community allotments.*

The biggest obstacle to using the Blueberries as the main ingredient in the production of Jams and Yogurt, is the short harvesting period. The window for harvesting is only six weeks and if we were to go into fresh food production all the fruit would have to be processed during this period or else frozen.

The cost of fitting out a suitable premises to HACCP standards would be expensive. Then staff with the necessary expertise would be required to manage and run the factory for only a few months each year. Then when the Jam or Yogurt is made we would have to invest in proper storage and distribution.

Food safety checking and product liability insurance would additional and expensive. If all the product was not sold within a certain period of time (use by date) we would have to pay to have destroyed.

While the idea in principal, that we add value to the Blueberry crop by processing it into food, is a good idea, the financial risks are very high with low potential returns on investment.

Based on 7500Kg Harvest

Value of crop when processed into Jam = €43200

Production RM Cost	<u>€25920</u>
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Gross Margin	€17280
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Storage & Distribution Costs	€12000
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Staff and Admin costs	€27200
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Financial result - €21920

**Allotments based on 5 acres**

170 plots at €150 per plot per yr rent = €25500

This is based on a plot size of 100sq metres and allowing for pathways.

The main costs associated with turning some of the unused land behind the horticulture area into

allotments will be on the capital side. The land would have to be cleared of all trees and bushes, then levelled and topsoil added. Then pathways would have to be marked out and built up with weed membrane and shingle. The allotments would have to be sectioned off and fenced.

There would be some ongoing admin and advertising costs, but they would be approx €6000 per yr.

The biggest risk with this project will be that having borne the upfront costs, if the area does not attract the necessary number of renters, the ongoing maintenance costs could spiral out of control.

## Conclusions

The principal reason for inviting the members of the public to offer suggestions on potential business ventures was to identify ways that the company could replace the income from the Anaerobic Digester (AD plant), (€120000 per yr). The development of the AD plant represented no financial risk to the company while providing a high potential return. None of the options considered equal the level of income and most represent considerable financial risk. While there are social and community reasons for not advancing the option to develop the AD plant, it remains none the less the best financial return and utilisation of a valuable resource( the ESB Interconnector)

Many of the options require ACDAL to commit resources and financing at a time when they are in short supply. I cannot recommend any of the options as a business proposal. Some of the options such as the playground and allotments maybe worthwhile as community development projects, but they will not replace the potential income from the AD plant.

Options such as the increase in training, providing hot desk facilities and the provision of onsite storage for vehicles and palettes, has some business potential they will not generate the level of income offered by the AD plant.