



For many who have passed through Dundalk IT in recent years, either as students or staff, the iconic wind turbine is perhaps one of the first images that comes to mind when they think of their time at the college. Installed in August 2005, having been granted full planning permission in 2003, there is a timelessness about our giant companion that belies its relatively recent arrival and it would now be hard to imagine life here at DkIT without it.

The most time-consuming process of the turbine installation was creating the foundation. This took a couple of months and involved preparing the ground to receive the foundation and pouring about twenty truckloads of concrete around the lowest section of the tower and a mesh of reinforcing bars. The turbine was then erected on this foundation over the course of three days. It could have been done in two days but for strong winds on the second day.

Standing at 60m high, the turbine was the first 'urban turbine' in Ireland and the first large commercial wind turbine on a college campus in the world. It was also the first large turbine in Ireland to be an 'autoproducer' (electricity used locally). Initially limited to 700kW peak output, this was increased to 850kW in June 2007.

The total cost of the project was €1,127,000 and it saves [casino](#) the college in the region of €120,000 a year in electricity bills. In simple terms it would take about nine years to recoup the

overall cost of the project, which is comparable with any wind farm in Ireland, but, taking into account a research grant of €427,000 received from the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland in 2005, the payback time for DkIT was around six years and it has now fully paid for itself.

Thanks to Tony Richardson for the accompanying photographs. You can see more by logging in and going to the 'DkIT Campus' section of the photo gallery. More information on the Centre for Renewable Energy at Dundalk Institute of Technology can be found at:

<http://credit.ie/>

