The Institution of **StructuralEngineers** 

# Structural analysis and design with decommissioned wind turbine blades

12 October 2021

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# Outline

- Overview of the Re-Wind project <u>www.re-wind.info</u>
- Blade Repurposing
  - Codes and standards
  - Structural Engineering Analysis and Design
  - Example Projects
    - BladeRoof
    - BladePole
    - BladeBridge
      - Cork Project Testing, Design & Construction



# **Re-Wind Partners, Projects, Funding**

#### **Network University Members:**

- Georgia Tech
- City University of New York
- University College Cork
- Queens University Belfast
- Munster Technological University

#### Funding (~\$2m 2014-current)

- NSF (CBET, PFI, I-CORPS)
- NYSERDA
- SFI
- DfE
- ENEL Green Power

#### **Current Project Partners:**

- Logisticus Group
- ENEL Green Power
- Siemens-Gamesa RE
- Cork County Council
- NYC Dept of Design and Construction (DDC)
- IEA Task 45



### **Blade Repurposing Concepts**









### Some Re-Wind Blade Repurposing Concepts



BladeHousing



BladeBridge



BladePole



BladeBarrier



## What's a wind blade? Exterior



Vestas V82 from a 2004 1.65 MW turbine 40m long blade ~ 2.5m at max chord



### Interior



#### 46.7m long Clipper C96 Spar Box (2 shear webs)



37m long GE 37 I –Beam Spar (1 shear web)



# Along the length







### **Codes and Standards**







2006





#### Table 5.2 Partial factor γ<sub>M1</sub> for laminates and structures (from Ascione et al, 2016)

Quality process and certification		
Laminates and structures	Certified production process and quality system	1.0
	Material/mechanical properties derived from tests	1.15
	Material/mechanical properties derived from theory or technical literature	1.35

#### Table 5.3 Partial factor $\gamma_{_{M2}}$ for laminates and foam cores (from Ascione et al, 2016)

Laminate type		γ <sub>м2</sub>			
		Strength verification	Local stability	Global stability	
Post-cured laminates	Variation coefficient $V_{\rm x} \le 0.10$	1.35	1.5	1.35	
	Variation coefficient $0.10 < V_x \le 0.17$	1.6	2.0	1.5	
Non-post-cured laminates	Variation coefficient $V_x \le 0.10$	1.6	1.8	1.6	
	Variation coefficient $0.10 < V_x \le 0.17$	Table 5.5 Recommended values for conv			vei
Foam core	Foam under shear	1	SLS (st	iffness)	l
	Foam under compression	1			

The draft of the <u>CEN Technical Specification (TS)</u> 'Design of Fibre-Polymer Composite Structures' was submitted to CEN at the end of January 2020 for a review process by the National Standards Bodies. <u>The TS, expected to be published by 2023,</u> <u>represents the second step of the general procedure</u> <u>established by CEN/TC250 in order to create a new generation</u> of Structural Eurocodes.

ommended values for conversion factors based on Ascione et al (2016)

	SLS (stiffness)	ULS (strength)	Notes
Temperature $\eta_{\rm et}$	0.9	0.9	Recommended values are applicable where the design maximum temperature for the structure does not exceed $T_g = 20^{\circ}$ C, where $T_g$ is the glass transition temperature.
Humidity $\eta_{\rm cm}$	0.8	0.8	Recommended values are for external bridge applications with post-cured FRP laminates.
Creep $\eta_{\rm ev}$	1.0 for short-term effects 0.5 for long-term effects	1.0 for short-term effects 0.5 for long-term effects	In the absence of more rigorous determination of creep effects, a value of 0.5 is recommended to determine the long-term stiffness, in combination with the quasi-permanent combination of actions.
Fatigue $\eta_{\rm cf}$	0.9	Verification should be carried out in accordance with Section 6.5 in Ascione et al (2016).	Fatigue is to be verified directly at ULS for structures vulnerable to fatigue. The $\eta_{ef}$ factor may be taken to be 1.0 for footbridges that are not unusually sensitive to wind.



#### 2.3.4 Material partial factors

 $y_{\rm M} = y_{\rm M1} \bullet y_{\rm M2}$ 

 $y_{M1}$  is the material partial factor linked to <u>uncertainties in</u> obtaining <u>the correct material</u> <u>properties</u>. (1.0, 1.15, or 1.35)

 $y_{M2}$  is the material partial factor owing to <u>uncertainties in material properties due to the</u> nature of the constituent parts and depends on the <u>production method</u>. (1.35, 1.5, 1.6, or 2.0)

Characteristic value must be defined as: 5 % fractile if a low value for a material property

Worst Case = 1.35 x 2.0 = 2.7 1 / 2.7 = 0.37 Best Case = 1.0 x 1.35 = 1.35 1 / 2.7 = 0.74

#### 2.3.6 Relevant conversion factors

The total conversion factor,  $\eta_c$ , for the limit states analysis should be determined from:

 $\eta_c = \eta_{ct} \cdot \eta_{cm} \cdot \eta_{cv} \cdot \eta_{cf}$ 

 $\eta_{ct}$  is the conversion factor for  $\underline{temperature\ effects};$  (0.9 or 1.0)

 $\eta_{cm}$  is the conversion factor for <u>humidity effects</u>; (0.7, 0.9 or 1.0)

 $\eta_{cv}$  is the conversion factor for <u>creep effects</u>; (0.25 to 1.0 depending on load duration)

 $\eta_{cf}$  is the conversion factor for <u>fatigue effects</u> (required when fatigue load cycles is expected to exceed 5000)





#### 6.6.4 Partial safety factors for materials

#### 6.6.4.1 Definitions

The value of the partial safety factor for materials accounts for the inherent variability and uncertainties in FRP materials, laminated sandwich structures, bonded joints, methods and load resolution. To account for this, the material factors shall be specifically developed for each material type and combination of materials. This can be done either through a reliability-based dedicated test program or through an empirical approach. When using an empirical approach, appropriate partial safety factors shall be applied as follows:

 $\gamma_m = \gamma_m 0 \gamma_m 1 \gamma_m 2 \gamma_m 3 \gamma_m 4 \gamma_m 5$ 

where

 $\gamma_{m0}$  is the "base" material factor (to be included in all analyses);

 $\gamma_{m1}$  is the factor for environmental degradation (non-reversible effects);

 $\gamma_{m2}$  is the factor for temperature effects (reversible effects);

 $\gamma_{m3}$  is the factor for manufacturing effects;

 $\gamma_{m4}$  is the factor for calculation accuracy and validation of method;

 $\gamma_{m5}$  is the factor for load characterization.





Forthcoming 2022



# What is needed for Engineering Analyses

- **1. External geometry** Airfoil shapes along the length, prebend and twist along the length.
- **2. Internal geometry** location and thickness of spar caps, webs, and shell sandwich panels along the length.
- **3. Material types** (e.g., glass, polyester, epoxy) and laminates (or sandwich laminates) for spar cap, shell and webs, Mass (or volume fractions) of fiber and resin in the laminates in the spar cap, shell and webs, Fabric types used (e.g., +-45, mats, UD)
- **4. Strength and stiffness** in the longitudinal and transverse directions and shear strength and stiffness of the spar cap, shell and web laminates; of the spar cap, shell and web laminates. Bearing strength for connections. As-received properties and estimate of residual related to virgin.
- 5. Global blade structural properties along the length El<sub>x</sub>, El<sub>y</sub>, GJ, kAG (where x and y and the chord axis and its perpendicular through the centroid of the cross-section. Principal axes and shear center.)



# **Re-Wind BladeMachine**

BladeMachine is software that automates the generation of architectural, engineering and fabrication models of the wind blades

The BladeMachine is written largely in Rhino/Grasshopper and python.







### BladeMachine – 1. LiDAR scanning





### **BladeMachine – 2. Geometry Construction**





## BladeMachine 3. "Thick" Model





### BladeMachine – 4. Section Properties and Stress Analysis



## **Examples of Engineering Analyses**

- FEM of a blade section used as a roof for a 40m<sup>2</sup> affordable house
- Structural analysis of an entire blade used as a 230 kV transmission pole
- 3. Design and analysis of a pedestrian and cyclist bridge for a greenway









## **BladePole Example**





### **BladePole - Detailed Design**









**Figure 4.** Diagrams for: (**a**) controlling axial stresses from load case 1; (**c**) controlling shear stresses from load case 2



# The BladeBridge (2016 – to-date)

- 2016-2017 Initial Concepts and Alternative Designs; Specific blade identification for demonstration project (LM13.4 or V44), LiDAR scanning of V44 blade
- 2018 Blade mechanical and structural properties determined; Preliminary bridge structural analysis and design completed
- 2019 First (ever) paper published on the BladeBridge analysis and design
  - R. Suhail et al., (2019), "<u>Analysis and Design of a Pedestrian Bridge with Decommissioned FRP Windblades</u> and Concrete," <u>Proceedings of FRPRCS14</u>, Paper 176, Belfast, UNITED KINGDOM.
- 2020 N29 (LM 13.4) Blades obtained from Everun in Northern Ireland and delivered to Munster Technological University in Cork; Bridge design engineer <u>Kieran Ruane</u> joins team; <u>BladeBridge approved in County Cork, Ireland</u>.
- 2020 N29 blades delivered to Queen's University Belfast for 8 m test bridge.
- 2021 Blade characterization and testing. Bridge detailed design.
- 2021 BladeBridge currently being constructed and installed (Oct-Dec 2021).
- 2022 Paper at Transportation Research Board, Washington, DC (Jan, 2022)
  - K. Ruane et al., (2022) "Experimental Investigation of an FRP Wind Turbine Blade for use as a Bridge Girder"



# **BladeBridges**





Nordex N29 (~13 m) Vestas V29/A29 5-8 m BladeBridge Vestas V44 (~21 m) 12-15 m BladeBridge



# **BladeBridges**





#### GE 37 (~37m) 15-25m BladeBridge

Clipper C96 (~46m) 25-35m BladeBridge



# **BladeBridges**





#### **Extensions**

#### Asymmetrical



#### 2017-2018 – Preliminary Concept and CAD model



Why this "simple" design?

- Mass market not bespoke
- It is "simple" for structural analysis, design and construction
- Fits all size blades



### **2018-2019 – Preliminary Structural Analysis**



Dr. Raj Suhail and Dr. Jian Fei Chen, Queen's University Belfast

### 2018-2019 – Preliminary BladeBridge design




# The Cork BladeBridge - 2021





# Context











# Context

















(Scale 1 : 25)



# **Conceptual Design**





Ms. Zoe Zhang, GT





# **Conceptual Design**





# **Conceptual Design**





# Windblade Alignment



Ms. Zoe Zhang, GT

Complexity of Geometry must be accounted for in actual designs: Pitch of blades, straightness of blades, spacing between blades



# **Sourcing Blades – Laser Scanning**





### Working with the N29 Blades – MTU Structures Laboratory





# Working with the N29 Blades – MTU Structures Laboratory





### Working with the N29 Blades – Scanning & Measuring





#### Working with the N29 Blades – Scanning and Measuring









#### N29 Testing and Investigating

#### Static loads



#### Connections



#### GFRP burn-out



























100 90 80 70 60 Total Load (kN) 50 40 30 20 10 Α 0.000 5.000 10.000 15.000 20.000 25.000 30.000 35.000 -5.000 -10 Average Vertical Displacement (mm)

Load (kN) V Vertical Displacement (mm)





- M12 Grade 8.8 Bolts
- M12 Grade 8.8 BlindBolts
- 12 dia Threaded Bar































# N29 Testing and Investigating – GFRP Burnout & LS-DYNA FEA (GT)







#### N29 Testing and Investigating – GFRP Burnout & LS-DYNA FEA (GT)





### Blade Bridge – Design Development





















#### **Blade Bridge – Design Development**

#### Turbine blade bridge balustrade - Idea 1



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#### Idea 1 - railing offset from blade

- balustrade appears to float above the blade, and tapers smoothly away at the point there is no further risk of falling

- maximises width of path between railings, ensuring required 3m is achieved

 retains access to the surface of the blade, allowing its smooth surface and tacility to be experienced without obstruction

Top and bottom rail, galvanised flat bar. Intermediate posts galvanised square hollow section. Infill of upright galvanised steel solid circular bar or mesh.



above: turbine blades are usually seen from a distance. The bridge creates an opportunity to appreciate them closer at hand.



Section:

Balustrade is fixed to bridge structure on the off-side from the deck, allowing the balustrade to "float" above the blade.


### Turbine blade bridge balustrade - Idea 2



#### Idea 2 - turbine pinwheels applied to railings

 small aluminium pinwheels fixed to the balustrade highlight the use of the turbine blade as part of the bridge structure

- incorporates a playful feature within the balustrade to strengthen the identity of the bridge and add meaning

Top and bottom rail, flat bar painted steel. Intermediate posts painted square hollow section steel. Infill of upright painted steel solid circular bar with painted aluminium rotating pinwheels. r**igh**t: inspiration - Najla El Zein Studio, Wind Portal, 2013 below: grouped wind turbines





Section:

Balustrade is fixed to bridge deck allowing simple construction. Potential requirement to widen deck to achieve required 3m width between railings.

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### Turbine blade bridge balustrade - Idea 3



#### Idea 3 - applied ribbons

- ribbons of metal applied to the ribbons represent the flow of wind along the blade
- ribbons would need to be raised sufficiently off ground to prevent climbing

Top and bottom rail, galvanised flat bar. Intermediate posts galvanised square hollow section. Infill of upright galvanised steel flat bar with galvanised or painted steel ribbons fixed from back.



above: ribbons applied to the railings communicate the current of air round the blade



Section:

Balustrade is fixed to bridge deck allowing simple construction. Potential requirement to widen deck to achieve required 3m width between railings.

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## Turbine blade bridge balustrade - Idea 4



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#### Idea 4 - variable thickness railings

- simple railing thickens and reduces in response to the shape of the blade

 greater visibility around the blade focuses attention there, while the surrounding landscape is partially screened

- shorter extent of railing still allows access to the blade

Top and bottom rail, galvanised flat bar. Intermediate posts galvanised square hollow section. Infill of upright galvanised steel flat bar, double thickness as shown.



Section:

Balustrade is fixed to bridge deck allowing simple construction. Potential requirement to widen deck to achieve required 3m width between railings.



## Turbine blade bridge balustrade - Idea 4



#### Idea 4 - extension

 railing continues to follow the line of the blade, tapering down to the point where it meets the ground
railing emphasises the form of the blade, and helps to integrate it better into the context

Top and bottom rail, galvanised flat bar. Intermediate posts galvanised square hollow section. Infill of upright galvanised steel flat bar, double thickness as shown.



above: articulation of railings creates banding

## the paul hogarth company





## Turbine blade bridge balustrade - Idea 5



## the paul hogarth company





## Turbine blade bridge balustrade - materials



#### Galvanised mild steel

- hard wearing
- effective contrast with turbine blade



#### Painted aluminium

- reference to modern wind 20 turbine blades
- effective contrast with 30 turbine blade used in bridge
- stand out from surrounding 39 landscape to highlight the bridge



#### Weathering steel

39-

æ

effective contrast with turbine blade

landscape





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integration into the



# Acknowledgements

Re-Wind Cork BladeBridge Team: Paul Leahy, Kieran Ruane, Russell Gentry, Larry Bank, Angie Nagle, Zoe Zhang, An Huynh, Marios Soutsos

Re-Wind Kansas BladePole Team: Russell Gentry, Tristan Al-Haddad, Ammar Alshannaq, Yulizza Henao-Barragan, Angie Nagle, Chloe Kiernicki, John Respert

Re-Wind Catalog Team: Larry Bank, Asha McDonald, Chloe Kiernicki, Alex Poff, Zoe Zhang, Sakshi Kakkad, Angie Nagle, Emily Lau

Re-Wind BladeMachine Team: Russell Gentry, Mehmet Bermek, Chloe Kiernicki, Ammar Alshannaq, Sakshi Kakkad

Re-Wind GIS Team: Jenny McKinley, Emma Delaney, Conor Graham

Re-Wind Principal Investigators: Larry Bank (CUNY/GT), Russell Gentry (GT), Paul Leahy (UCC), Jenny McKinley (QUB), Jian-Fei Chen (QUB)

Re-Wind Sponsors: NSF, SFI, DfE, MTU, ENEL Green Power, Logisticus, Cork County Council



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All publications also available at www.re-wind.info

