



# TOBIN

**Ballyfasy Wind Farm,  
Co. Kilkenny**

**Planning Statement**

**December 2025**

**BUILT ON KNOWLEDGE**

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Client:	Manogate Ltd
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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Overview of the Proposed project

This Planning Statement has been prepared by TOBIN on behalf of Manogate Ltd, a development company supported by ART Generation and FuturEnergy Ireland. This Planning Statement accompanies a planning application for the proposed Ballyfasy Wind Farm, which is located in County Kilkenny.

The project comprises 10 wind turbines with an estimated installed capacity of between 57 MW and 72 MW, alongside a 110 kV substation, internal access roads, construction compounds, and associated infrastructure. The wind farm will generate clean electricity for between 40,313 and 50,922 Irish households annually, contributing significantly to Ireland's climate and energy targets.

A pre-application consultation meeting was held with An Coimisiún Pleanála (ACP) on the 20<sup>th</sup> of November 2024 under Section 37B of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). Following this, An Coimisiún Pleanála determined that the proposed project qualifies as Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) under Section 37A, and directed that the application be made directly to ACP (Ref. ABP-320900-24).

A further design flexibility consultation was held on the 26<sup>th</sup> of May 2025 under Section 37CC(1) regarding the proposed turbine specifications with a formal determination issued thereafter (Ref. ABP-322292-25). Under this process, the agreed parameters for the proposed project are:

- Total tip height range of 170.0m – 180.0m
- Rotor diameter range of 149.0m – 163.0m
- Hub height range of 95.0 m to 105.5m

### Key Benefits and Strategic Importance

The Ballyfasy Wind Farm will contribute significantly to Ireland's transition away from imported fossil fuels. In 2024, fossil fuels accounted for over 80% of Ireland's energy supply, with oil alone comprising nearly half. The proposed project has the potential to produce up to between 179,755 and 227,059 MWh (Megawatt hours) equivalent to 40,313 and 50,922 Irish households of electricity per year which will increase the share of domestically produced renewable energy and reduce reliance on carbon-intensive imports.

The integration of the Ballyfasy Wind Farm into the national grid will strengthen Ireland's energy infrastructure. The project includes a 110 kV onsite substation and supports grid-friendly technologies, contributing to national efforts to reduce curtailment and improve system stability. This aligns with EirGrid's ambition to accommodate up to 95% of electricity from variable renewable sources by 2030.

Ireland's legally binding commitment to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 and a 51% reduction in GHG emissions by 2030 requires a fivefold increase in renewable capacity. The Ballyfasy Wind Farm, with its installed capacity of between 57 MW and 72 MW, directly supports this goal. Wind energy already accounts for over 33% of Ireland's electricity supply and has driven significant emissions reductions. This project will accelerate progress toward national and EU climate targets.



## Summary of Compliance with Planning Policy and Legal Environmental Targets

The proposed wind farm is located within the administrative boundaries of Kilkenny County Council and the siting of the proposed project is compliant with the relevant corresponding provisions of Kilkenny County Development Plan 2014. A recent court judgement has determined that this is the most relevant County Development plan (2014 CDP) to consider when looking at the principle of the proposed project<sup>1</sup>. Otherwise, the remaining parts of the Kilkenny City and County Development Plan 2021 (2021 CDP) are still in force and the project is found to be compliant with this too. A detailed assessment is provided under Section 4.5 of this report.

Since the adoption of the Kilkenny City and County Development Plan 2021-2027, there have been significant policy changes at international and national level in relation to climate change and renewable energy which need to be considered when assessing the proposed project. The County Development Plan in Kilkenny is effectively inconsistent with national and EU energy policy.

The Ballyfasy Wind Farm qualifies as Strategic Infrastructure Development under the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended and is supported by strong national and EU policy frameworks, including the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Acts, the National Planning Framework, and the Renewable Energy Directive (RED III). Although the Kilkenny County Development Plan (CDP) currently has no wind energy designations due to a Draft Ministerial Direction<sup>2</sup>, the proposed site has historically been identified as suitable for wind energy development in the preceding CDP.

The planning application is accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR), Natura Impact Statement (NIS), and Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), which collectively demonstrate that the project will not adversely affect designated Natura 2000 sites, protected species, or sensitive habitats or give rise to any significant environmental effects. Mitigation measures such as clear span bridges, horizontal directional drilling, and 50-meter buffer zones have been incorporated to protect watercourses and biodiversity. The layout ensures a minimum setback of 720 meters from residential properties, exceeding the requirements of both the 2006 and Draft 2019 Wind Energy Guidelines.

The proposed project also complies with Kilkenny County Council's Development Management Requirements across a wide range of environmental considerations, including noise, shadow flicker, landscape and visual impact, archaeology, water quality, flood risk, and waste management. Grid connection details have been developed in consultation with transmission operators, and a full Traffic and Transport Assessment and Road Safety Audit have been completed.

The Ballyfasy Wind Farm proposed project demonstrates a robust approach to planning and environmental compliance, supporting Ireland's transition to a low-carbon, climate-resilient future.

<sup>1</sup> **High Court Judgment ([2023] IEHC 577) – *Save The South Leinster Way & Anor v An Bord Pleanála & Ors***  
[Save The South Leinster way and Another v an Coimisiún Pleanála and Others - vLex Ireland](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Adopted City and County Development Plan - Kilkenny County Council](#)



## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 PURPOSE OF THE PLANNING STATEMENT

The purpose of this Planning Statement is to support the planning application for the proposed Ballyfasy Wind Farm by providing a comprehensive overview of the project's rationale, design, policy alignment, and environmental considerations.

It outlines the strategic importance of the development in meeting Ireland's renewable energy and climate targets. It serves to demonstrate how the project complies with relevant planning legislation, including national and EU policy frameworks, and the Kilkenny County Development Plan.

The report is structured to guide the reader through key aspects of the proposal:

- Sections 1 and 2 introduce the project and its context;
- Sections 3 and 4 present the relevant strategic, national, regional and local policy context; and
- Section 5 outlines recent wind farm decisions and key takeaways.

Together, these sections provide justification for the proposed wind farm, highlighting its contribution to national energy security, emissions reduction, and consideration of environmental factors.

It is also noted that this report is intended as complementary and should be read in conjunction with the detailed information provided in the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR), the Natura Impact Statement (NIS) and other supporting documents of the submitted planning application.

### 1.2 APPLICANT DETAILS

The Applicant for planning permission is Manogate Ltd, a co-development company supported by ART Generation and FuturEnergy Ireland.

ART Generation is a wholly Irish owned renewable energy company founded in 2002. It is a well-established energy development company with responsibility for managing the development, construction, and operation of projects throughout Ireland. The company has developed a substantial portfolio in excess of 20 onshore wind farms in Ireland and operates a number of wind farms. It has a large portfolio of Tier 1 onshore and offshore wind farm projects at various stages of development. ART Generation most recently developed three wind farms in the counties of Kilkenny and Tipperary.

FuturEnergy Ireland is a joint venture company owned on a 50:50 basis by Coillte and ESB. FuturEnergy Ireland is actively looking to drive Ireland's transition to a low carbon economy. The company's ambition is to develop more than 1 GW of renewable energy capacity by 2030 and make a significant contribution to Ireland's commitment to produce 80% of electricity from renewable sources by the end of the decade.

### 1.3 SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The site of the proposed Ballyfasy Wind Farm is located in the southern portion of County Kilkenny between the villages of Listerlin (approximately 3 kilometres (km) northeast),

Mullinavat (approximately 4 km west), Glenmore (approximately 5 km southeast), and Slieverue (approximately 9 km south).

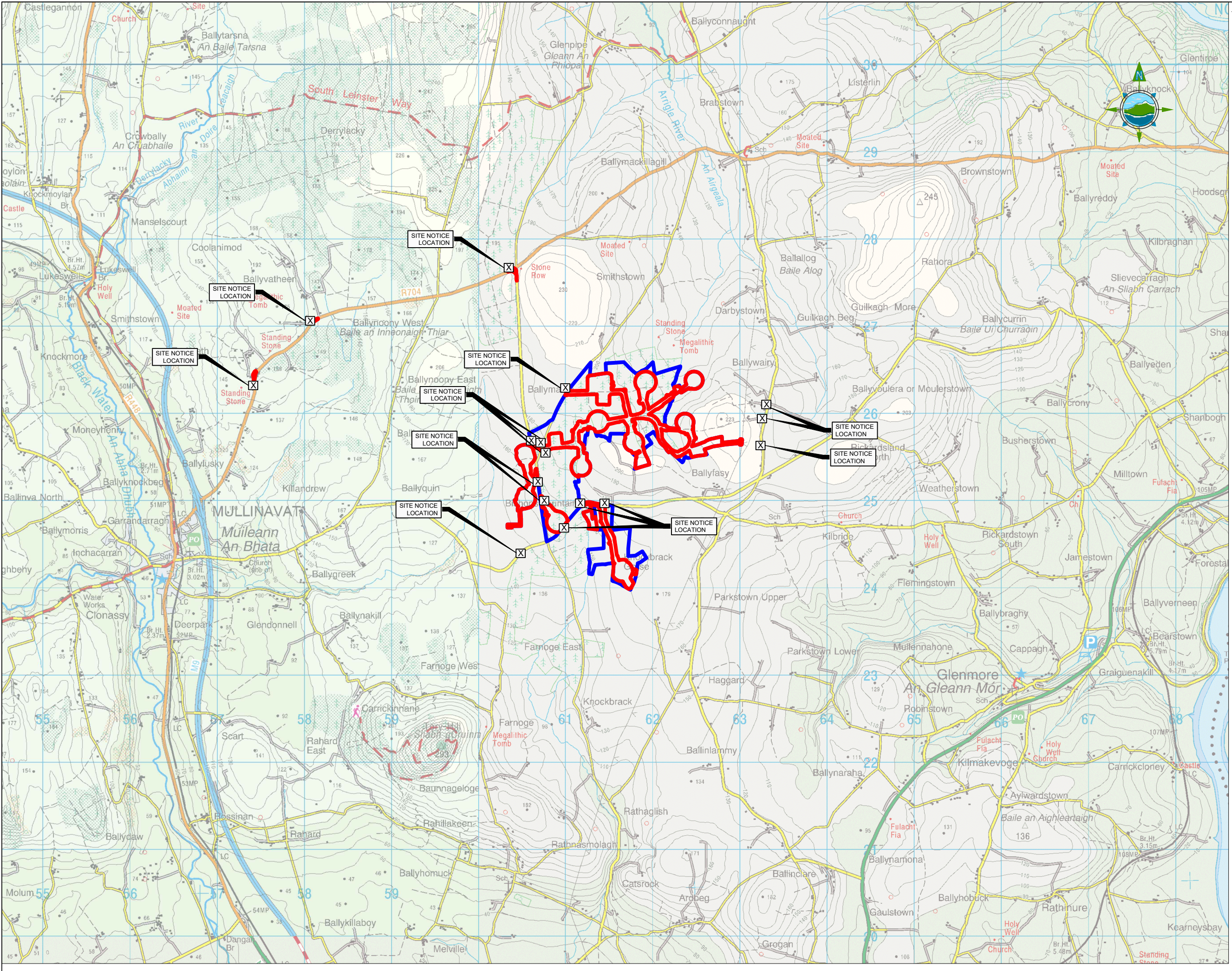
The proposed wind farm site is bordered by local roads L3417, L7499 and L3424. It is located approximately 4 km east from the M9 motorway at Mullinavat.

The landscape of the proposed wind farm site is largely agricultural with areas of coniferous forestry occurring. The ground levels of the site vary from around 140 m Ordnance Datum (OD) to 220 mOD. The highest points are found in the north-east areas of the site, while the southwest corner has the lowest elevation. Two watercourses traverse through the proposed wind farm site; the Smithstown Stream, which is a tributary to the Arrigle River and the Smartcastle Stream.

The proposed wind farm site is located in the townlands of Ballywairy, Bishopsmountain, Knockbrack, Ballymartin, and Ballyfasy Upper in County Kilkenny.

Please refer to Figures 1-1 and 1-2 below for the proposed wind farm regional site location and site layout.





**GENERAL LEGEND**

PLANNING APPLICATION  
BOUNDARY

LANDS UNDER CONTROL  
OF DEVELOPER

SITE NOTICE  
LOCATION

☒

**NOTES:**  
GRID CONNECTION APPLICATION TO BE SUBMITTED  
AS A SEPARATE APPLICATION TO AN COIMISIÚN  
PLEANALA.

**NOTES:**  
1. DRAWINGS FOR PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY.  
2. FIGURED DIMENSIONS ONLY TO BE TAKEN  
FROM THIS DRAWING.  
3. GRID REFERENCES TO ITM.  
4. ALL LEVELS SHOWN RELATE TO ORDNANCE  
SURVEY DATUM AT MALIN HEAD

Co. Kilkenny

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A	26.11.25	PLANNING ISSUE	MN	AM	
Rev	Date	Description	By	Chkd.	

Client:

MANOGATE LTD.

Project:

BALLYFASY WIND FARM  
PLANNING APPLICATION

Title:

Figure 1-1:  
REGIONAL SITE LOCATION MAP

Scale @ A1:

1:20,000

Prepared by:

Checked by:

Date:

M. Nolan

A. Murphy

November 2025

Drawing Status:

Planning

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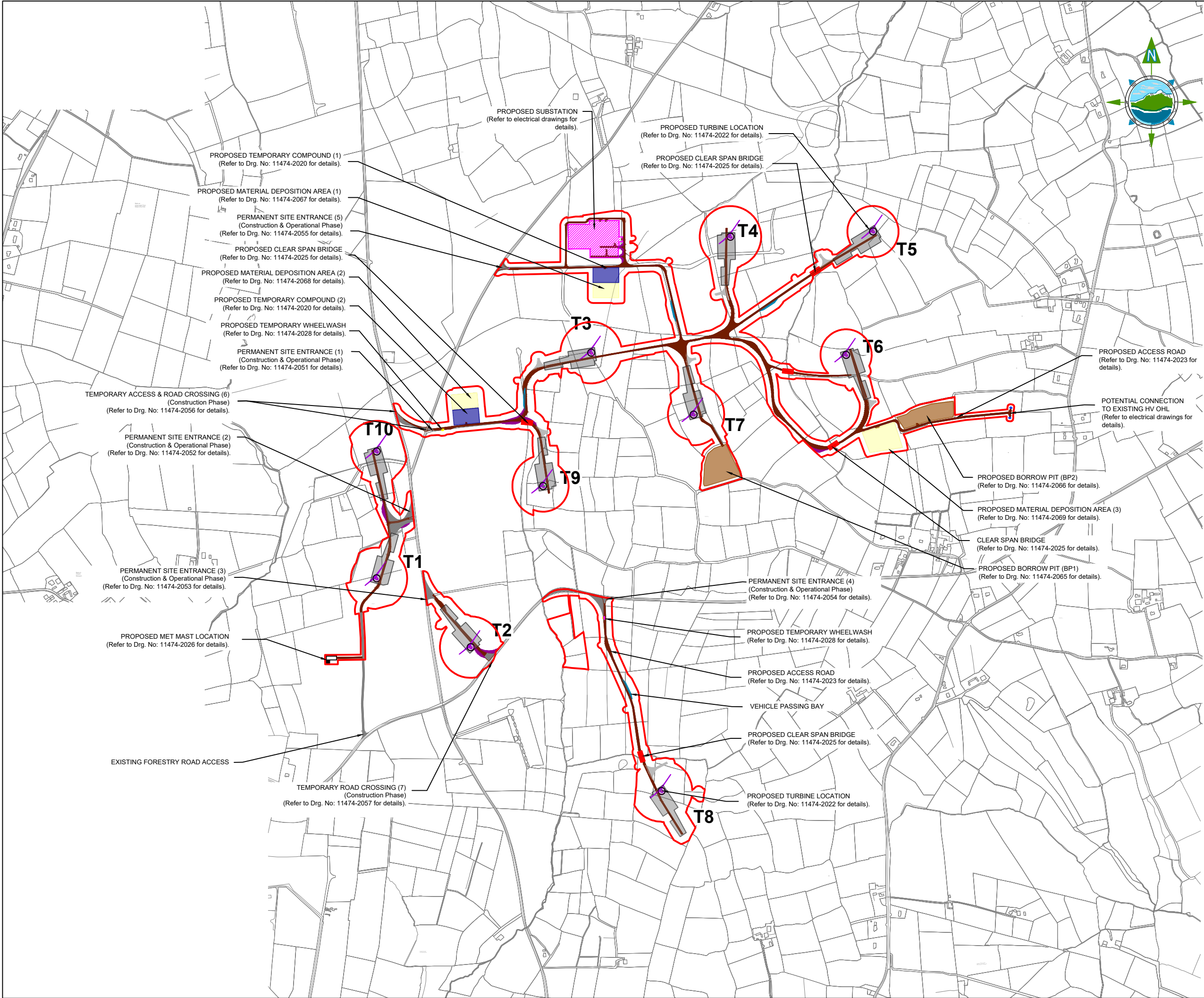
Drawing No.:

Revision:

11474-2000

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**GENERAL LEGEND**

APPLICATION BOUNDARY

PROPOSED PERMANENT ACCESS ROAD

PROPOSED TURBINE HARDSTAND

PROPOSED TEMPORARY COMPOUND LOCATION

VEHICLE PASSING BAY

VEHICLE OVERSAIL AREA

PROPOSED MATERIAL DEPOSITION AREA

PROPOSED TURBINE LOCATION

PROPOSED SUBSTATION LOCATION

PROPOSED BORROW PIT

PROPOSED CLEAR SPAN BRIDGE

VEHICLE OVERRUN AREA

**NOTES:**

GRID CONNECTION APPLICATION TO BE SUBMITTED AS A SEPARATE APPLICATION TO AN COIMISIÚN PLEANÁLA.

- NOTES:**
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**Co. Kilkenny**

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A	26.11.25	PLANNING ISSUE	MM	AM
Rev	Date	Description	By	Chkd.

Client: **MANOGATE LTD.**

Project: **BALLYFASY WIND FARM PLANNING APPLICATION**

Title: **Figure 1-2: SITE MASTER PLAN**

Scale @ A1: **1:7,000**

Prepared by: **M. Nolan**    Checked by: **A. Murphy**    Date: **November 2025**

Drawing Status: **Planning**

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## 1.4 PLANNING CONTEXT AND LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

The overall proposed project will be the subject of two planning applications to An Coimisiún Pleanála:

- This application is made under Section 37E of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended and will seek permission for the Ballyfasy Wind Farm, and include for an onsite 110 kV substation and works to the proposed Turbine Delivery Route (TDR). This is the subject of this planning application.
- The second application will be made under Section 182A of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, as it comprises development for the purposes of electricity transmission and will seek approval for two Grid Connection Options (GCO).

Both planning applications are accompanied by a number of plans and particulars, a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) and an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR).

Whilst acknowledging that each application must be judged on its own merits, we note that the proposed grid connection and the proposed wind farm development form part of a single project. As such, ACP is requested to have regard to the legal and policy imperatives supporting the wind farm development when considering the proposed grid connection.

This Planning Statement is accompanied by a letter from Field Fisher Solicitors (see Appendix A), confirming that two properties (EirCode X91 K7R7 and X91 P6K8), which are located within the project area, are currently being purchased and will not be used for residential purposes during the operation of the project. Therefore, these two properties have not been considered as residential developments in the project Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) assessments.

## 2. PROPOSED PROJECT OVERVIEW

The first planning application, to which this Planning Statement relates, will seek permission for the following project elements all of which form part of this planning application:

### Works at the proposed wind farm site

- Erection of 10 no. wind turbines with a maximum blade tip height range from 170 m-180 m inclusive, a rotor diameter range from 149 m-163 m inclusive, and a hub height range from 95 m-105.5 m inclusive, and all associated foundations and hard-standing areas respective of each turbine;
- A new site entrance with access onto the Local Road L3417;
- Modifications at one existing site entrance with access onto the Local Road L3417 ; two existing site entrances with access onto the Local Road L7499; one existing site entrance with access onto Local Road L3424;
- A temporary road crossing each to allow turbine delivery along the Local Road L3417; to allow turbine delivery along the Local Road L7499; to allow turbine delivery along the Local Road L3424;
- Construction of 2 no. temporary construction compounds with associated temporary site offices, parking areas and security fencing;
- Construction of 3 no. temporary deposition areas;
- Construction of 5 no. clear span bridges;
- Installation of 1 no. permanent meteorological mast up to a height of 100 m with a lightning finial extending above the mast;
- Two no. borrow pits;
- Construction of new internal site access roads and upgrade of existing site roads, to include passing bays and all associated drainage;
- Two no. temporary construction stage Moby Dick type wheel wash systems (with over ground settlement tank);
- Construction of drainage and sediment control systems;
- Construction of 1 no. permanent 110 kilovolt (kV) Air Insulated Switchgear (AIS) Electrical Substation with associated compound. The substation will be configured as either a tail-fed design or a loop-in design, depending on the final grid connection arrangement. The Substation Compound will include:
  - 1 no. EirGrid Control Building containing, a Relay Room, Battery Room, Generator Room, Messroom, WC, and Workshop/ Store Room;
  - 1 no. Independent Power Producer (IPP) Control Building containing a Switchgear Room, Control Room, Office, Messroom, WC, Control Room, and Store Room;
  - Lightning Masts;
  - A Telecommunications mast;
  - Parking;
  - Security Palisade Fencing;
  - Electrical Plant and Infrastructure and Grid Ancillary Services Equipment;
  - Drainage Infrastructure;
  - All associated and ancillary works.
- All associated underground electrical and communications cabling connecting the wind turbines to the proposed wind farm substation;

- All related site works and ancillary development including berms, landscaping, ecological enhancement and soil excavation;
- Facilitating works on the public road network and at private properties to accommodate the delivery of turbine components and oversized loads. Four private locations (locations 10, 13, 14 and 15) require works to facilitate turbine and oversize load deliveries; and
- Ancillary forestry felling to facilitate construction and operation of the proposed project.

### Turbine Delivery Route Works

The proposed project also comprises facilitating works on the public road network and at private properties to accommodate the delivery of turbine components and oversized loads. Four private locations (locations 10, 13, 14 and 15) require works to facilitate turbine and oversize load deliveries. The Preliminary Route Assessment which details the required TDR works at each location for the project is presented in EIAR Appendix 2-1.

A 35-year operational life from the date of full commissioning of the wind farm is being sought for all works (other than temporary and permanent works specified above), and the subsequent decommissioning. The onsite substation and grid connection will remain permanent infrastructure and form part of the Irish national grid network. Planning permission is being sought for a period of 10 years.

The 10 wind turbines will have an installed capacity of between 57 MW and 72 MW, which will improve the security of supply and reduce reliance on energy imports.

The 179,755 and 227,059 MWh of electricity produced by the proposed wind farm will be sufficient to supply the equivalent of between 40,313 and 50,922 Irish households with electricity per year.

This planning application is covered by the provisions of the Renewable Energy Directive III (Directive (EU) 2023/2413) and will be subject to a completeness check under Section 37JA of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended.

## **2.1 SITE SELECTION RATIONALE**

The Applicant has assessed potential land for wind energy development via a comprehensive GIS-based screening of approximately 441,000 hectares of Coillte-managed land. This three-phase process evaluated land availability, environmental constraints, wind resource viability, and grid connectivity. Phase 1 excluded lands with environmental designations, existing commitments, or insufficient wind speeds. Phase 2 assessed proximity and capacity of grid infrastructure. Phase 3 involved national-level screening in 2014 and 2017, identifying viable sites for detailed environmental assessment and planning. This methodology is aimed at ensuring selected sites were environmentally suitable, technically feasible, and aligned with national renewable energy goals, with alternatives and environmental impacts detailed in the accompanying EIAR.

Following the studies of alternative sites the subject site was considered the most suitable having regard to environmental considerations; planning policy considerations; setback distance to dwellings, road access and proximity to the national grid. Further information on the site selection process is contained in the Consideration of Reasonable Alternatives chapter, contained in the accompanying EIAR.

Further detailed assessments were undertaken to confirm the suitability of the site which was examined under the following headings:

- Wind resource / speed in the area;
- Proximity to the national grid;
- Planning policy designations;
- Environmental designations (avoidance of Natura 2000 sites and other nationally designated sites);
- Accessibility, and road network;
- Availability of lands;
- Distance from settlements and residential properties;
- Landscape and Visual Impact; and
- Telecommunication, Archaeological, Geotechnical and Hydrological constraints.

Having considered the site and wider environ landscapes, proximity to designated sites, land availability, distance from residential properties etc. the proposed wind farm site was further investigated. The available wind resource and the proximity of the subject site to infrastructure for connection to the national grid was a key driver on the final selection of the site. The site proposed for the proposed project emerged as an optimal location for a wind energy development. A summary of its findings is provided in Table 2-1.

**Table 2-1: Summary of the key findings with respect to the site chosen for the proposed wind farm site**

Criterion	Proposed wind farm site
Grid Access/Capacity	The proposed wind farm site was determined to be well-placed in terms of proximity to existing grid infrastructure and in terms of available grid capacity at the relevant nodes. The proposed project will include an onsite 110 kV substation. Two grid connection options are feasible for this project at this location.
County Development Plans and Zoning	The proposed project is partially located in an area identified as "Acceptable in Principle" under the Kilkenny County Development Plan 2014 – 2020. The relevance of this plan is set out further in this report.
Proximity to Houses	In general, the proposed wind farm site is surrounded by a mixture of forestry and agricultural land. Given the extent of the land, it was considered that the setback distance requirements of 500 m (as stated in the current Wind Energy Guidelines 2006), could easily be met at this location. The nearest residential dwellings are more than 4 x tip height from the proposed turbine locations which is also in compliance with the Draft Revised Wind Energy Development Guidelines 2019.
Wind Resource Assessment	The Wind Atlas mean wind speed was determined for the proposed wind farm site and was considered to be suitable in the context of operational efficiency and the nature of modern-day turbine technology. The 2013 SEAI Wind Speed Atlas identifies the proposed wind farm site as having a wind speed of between 8.1 m/s and 8.4 m/s at 100 m above ground level, identifying the site as a candidate for wind energy.
Ecological Sensitivity	There are no NHAs or pNHAs in or immediately adjacent to the proposed wind farm site. Furthermore, there are no sites designated under the EU Habitats Directive (SACs) and EU Birds Directive (SPAs) located within the footprint of the proposed project.
Archaeological Sensitivity	There are no known recorded monuments or buildings within the proposed wind farm site.



Landscape Capacity/ Cumulative Impact	There are three commissioned wind farms to the west and north east of the site namely; Ballymartin Wind Farm, Smithstown Wind Farm and Rahora Wind Farm, respectively. The consented Castlebanny Wind Farm is located to the north. In addition, the Great Island to Kilkenny 110 kV line crosses over the east of the site. However, as noted in Chapter 13 of the submitted EIAR (Landscape and Visual Impact), the proposed project, whether considered in isolation or cumulatively with nearby existing wind energy developments, will not give rise to significant visual effects.
Land Use	<p>The land use/activities on the site are primarily commercial forestry and agriculture. The topography of the proposed wind farm site varies from around 140 mOD to 220 mOD. The highest points are found in the north-east areas, while the southwest corner has the lowest elevation.</p> <p>Areas of forestry will be clear-felled at some point in the future as part of the ongoing forestry growth cycle, while agricultural areas are subject to intensive management. Based on the above, the land use at the site was found to be compatible with wind farm installation.</p>
Flood Plain Analysis	There is no record of pluvial flooding or surface water ponding at the proposed wind farm site that would prohibit the development of the proposed project. Surface water arising at developed areas of the site will be managed by a dedicated stormwater drainage system designed in accordance with Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) principles, limiting discharge from the site to greenfield runoff rates.
Supporting transport Infrastructure	The transport infrastructure in the surrounding area is deemed to be sufficient to accommodate the proposed project. Five permanent site entrances will be used to access the site from local roads L7499, L3417 and L3424. Four of these are existing entrances which will require modifications, and one is a new entrance. These separate entrances will allow traffic to reach different parts of the site. This will also reduce the number of construction vehicles gaining access at one particular location. GSO one will involve cable laying works on the L7499, L3417, R704, and L3418 roads. These local roads can be accessed via the R704 regional road, which itself has direct access to the M9 Motorway. Internal access roads will be constructed as part of the initial phase of the construction of the wind farm including modifications to existing internal roads.

## 2.2 VIABLE AREA AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

During the preparation of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR), extensive environmental surveys were conducted across the proposed wind farm site, grid connection options (GCO), and turbine delivery route (TDR) to establish baseline conditions and identify site constraints. These included county roads, streams, residential dwellings, landowner boundaries, telecommunications and aviation infrastructure, ecologically sensitive areas, and archaeological sites. Using GIS mapping, separation distances to these constraints were calculated, and the findings were incorporated into the site layout. The design process was informed by both statutory and non-statutory consultation, including engagement with the public and relevant authorities, ensuring that the layout responded to environmental sensitivities and stakeholder input.

The site layout was developed through an iterative process involving the design team, environmental specialists, and internal and external stakeholders. This process considered the optimal number, size, and positioning of turbines, as well as the layout of associated infrastructure such as access roads, borrow pits, construction compounds, and the onsite

substation. Where possible, potential environmental impacts were avoided or reduced through design modifications and embedded mitigation measures. Buffers were applied to identified constraints to define a viable development area, and the resulting design solutions are detailed in Table 2-2.

**Table 2-2: Environmental Considerations**

Environmental Consideration	Required set back / constraint	Design Solutions
Residential Amenity	The existing 2006 Wind Energy Development Guidelines (WEDGs) and the 2019 Draft Revised WEDGs indicate that a 500 m or a 4 times tip height setback distance (whichever is greatest) is sufficient.	In order to minimise potential effects on residential amenity, a decision was made early in the design process to maintain a minimum set-back of 720 m (4 x the highest potential tip height of 180 m).  The proposed layout has achieved a high level of separation between dwellings and turbines by providing a minimum separation distance of 720 m. The closest dwelling is located approximately 720 m away from proposed turbine T6, which is more than 4 x times the maximum tip height in the proposed turbine range (in this case 4 x 180 m), in line with the setback requirements in the 2006 and Draft 2019 WEDGs.
Flora and Fauna	Mitigation by avoidance measures to avoid significant potential impacts on species and habitats.  A 50 m buffer set from the main infrastructure (turbines, substation, borrow pits, compounds) and the Arrigle River and the Smartcastle Stream on site and from watercourses crossing along the GCOs.	The project avoids European Sites and Nationally designated sites. The presence of sensitive flora and fauna is limited across much of the site, with majority of the wind farm site occupied by conifer plantation and improved agricultural lands. Clear span bridges will be developed on site to avoid in-stream works. Where watercourses are to be crossed by the grid connection, horizontal directional drilling will be undertaken to avoid instream works. A 50 m buffer between watercourses and the main infrastructure will be achieved.
Ornithology	Avoidance of nesting area, foraging sites and migratory routes.	Following multi-year baseline birds studies, no additional design solutions were required specifically for birds. As detailed in Chapter 7 (Ornithology) no species specific mitigations are required. Standard bird protections will be included in mitigations including having an ecological clerk of works on site, pre construction surveys, planned timing of works to avoid disturbance to nesting birds and for vegetation removal.
Soils and Geology	No notable constraint.	The proposed site is not a sensitive site in terms of soils and geological environment, due to commercial forestry and the site's low geological value. Standard good practice construction design solutions will be in place on site to protect soils and



Environmental Consideration	Required set back / constraint	Design Solutions
		geology e.g. silt curtains and designated fuel filling locations within the construction compounds.
Hydrology	Avoid impact on existing drainage regime.	In identifying and avoiding direct impacts on drainage features the proposed project has implemented 'avoidance of impact' measures. Examples include clear span bridges for watercourse crossings and replicating drainage width, side slopes and substrate for any forestry drains which need to be rerouted.
Water Quality	Minimum setback from rivers and streams and appropriate mitigation designed to avoid siltation during construction.	<p>There will be five watercourse crossings required for site access roads on the wind farm site. Clear span bridges will be constructed to avoid in-stream works. A 50 m setback from main infrastructure (turbines, substation, borrow pits, compounds) to watercourses will be maintained.</p> <p>Before any ground works are undertaken, silt fencing will be placed upslope of the watercourses on site.</p> <p>Where watercourses are to be crossed by the grid connection, horizontal directional drilling will be undertaken to avoid instream works.</p>
Noise and Vibration	The 2006 WEDGs states that 'a lower fixed limit of 45dB(A) or a maximum increase of 5dB(A) above background noise at nearby noise sensitive locations is considered appropriate to provide protection to wind energy development neighbours.' Similarly, these guidelines indicate " <i>A fixed limit of 43dB(A) will protect sleep inside properties during the night.</i> "	<p>The proposed layout has achieved a high level of separation between dwellings and turbines by providing a minimum separation distance of 720 m. The closest sensitive dwelling is 720 m away from proposed turbine T6, which is 4x times the maximum tip height in the proposed turbine range (in this case 4 x 180 m), in line with the setback requirements in the 2006 and Draft 2019 WEDGs. This high level of separation will reduce the likelihood of noise disturbance at residential receptors.</p> <p>The appropriate noise criteria will be adhered to by the proposed wind farm while in operation, as described in Chapter 12 (Noise &amp; Vibration).</p>
Shadow Flicker <sup>3</sup>	Near Zero shadow flicker.	The proposed project has committed to near zero shadow flicker as described in Chapter 10 (Shadow Flicker). This is compliant with the 2006 WEDGs and is in line with both the emerging best practice and 2019 WEDGs.

<sup>3</sup> Near Zero is a term used in the EIAR as it will take 1-2 minutes for the turbine to shut down once a shadow moves over a property. See Chapter 10 (Shadow Flicker) for more details.



Environmental Consideration	Required set back / constraint	Design Solutions
Cultural Heritage	Recorded archaeological monuments or architectural sites have been avoided and therefore there will be no direct impact.	The final layout has been designed to ensure that there is no direct impact on recorded archaeological monuments or architectural sites.
Material Assets	No significant impacts to any telecommunications networks or aviation in the area.	There is a project commitment to ensure there is no significant impact on telecommunications and aviation related activities.

## 2.3 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION PROCESS

Public consultation was initiated early in the project design process to ensure that the views and concerns of the local community were considered throughout the design of the project and the preparation of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR). The Applicant appointed two dedicated Community Liaison Officers (CLOs) to facilitate consistent, on-the-ground engagement with residents. These CLOs serve as the primary point of contact for the community, distributing project information and responding to queries or concerns. Their contact details were included in all communications to ensure accessibility.

The Applicant has committed to maintaining ongoing dialogue with the community throughout the planning, construction, and operational phases of the project. A Community Engagement Report (See Appendix 1-7 of Chapter 1 of the EIAR submitted with this application) was prepared to document the pre-planning consultation activities, which included public outreach and feedback mechanisms. This aligns with national guidance on wind energy development.

### 3. STRATEGIC JUSTIFICATION

This section of the report presents the most relevant legislation and planning policy matters to be considered by ACP when considering the proposed project. It sets out climate action targets and provides a summary of relevant international and national energy policy and legislation, as they relate to the proposed project.

The purpose of this section is to illustrate the strong policy framework supportive of the approval of the proposed project. That policy justification in turn supports the following two independent but complementary propositions:

- 1) That ACP is entitled to grant permission under the relevant corresponding provisions of the Kilkenny County Development Plan 2014, as per Judgement [2025] IEHC 541, and,
- 2) The policy framework and the obligation to act consistently with ACP's obligations for the purposes of the Climate Acts 2015-2021 would weigh in favour of a grant of permission, that should only be displaced by the most pressing counter-considerations under the rubric of either EIA or Appropriate Assessment. As addressed in the submitted planning application documents, there are in fact no such counter-considerations.

#### 3.1 IRELAND'S CLIMATE PERFORMANCE IN THE CONTEXT OF GLOBAL AGREEMENTS

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) AR6 Synthesis Report distils more than 10,000 pages of climate science from three Working Groups and three Special Reports published between 2018 and 2022. The Synthesis report reflects an undeniable scientific consensus about the urgency of the climate crisis, its primary causes, and the catastrophic and irreversible harm that will occur if warming surpasses 1.5°C, even temporarily. Human-caused climate change is already affecting many weather and climate extremes in every region across the globe – with widespread loss and damage to both nature and people.

The Paris Agreement, adopted in 2015, is a global treaty under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) aimed at limiting global warming to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels, with efforts to limit it to 1.5°C. It requires countries to submit Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) outlining their climate action plans to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and to strengthen these commitments over time. For Ireland, as part of the European Union, its obligations are incorporated into the EU's collective NDC.

The [2024 Climate Change Performance Index](#) (CCPI), which was published during COP28, has highlighted the need for additional climate action in Ireland. Although Ireland played a central role in discussions at COP28, the country is failing to take adequate action to support climate protection at home. This year, Ireland has dropped six places on the index, now sitting at number 43 (out of 63) and is one of the worst performers in the EU in terms of greenhouse gas emissions.

The CPPI report finds that while Ireland now has legally binding carbon budgets and emissions ceilings in place, under the framework of the NDCs set out in the Paris Agreement, Irish policy implementation is falling short of meeting these budgets and emissions ceilings.

One of the key issues that is highlighted by the CPPI is Ireland's lack of a long-term strategy for phasing out fossil fuel infrastructure. Transitioning to cleaner fuel sources, such as wind energy, is central to this process, with renewables being recognised globally as a critical driver in achieving the 1.5° limit. According to the International Energy Agency (IEA), tripling renewable power capacity by 2030 could significantly contribute to meeting this limit. This ambition was

recently crystallised in the final agreement reached at COP28, which calls for a “tripling of renewable energy capacity globally”.

As outlined in a recent report by KPMG, ([Accelerating onshore renewable energy in Ireland, Oct 2023](#)), 2023 recorded an increase in onshore wind energy capacity entering the planning system in Ireland over previous years. However, there are significant obstacles at play within the Irish market that are currently hindering the country’s potential to deliver on renewables targets.

Further action is required by the government to facilitate the deployment of new renewable capacity and to ensure they are meeting commitments outlined under the framework of the Paris Agreement. Within this context, KPMG has identified one such obstacle as the need to marry County Development Plans with national targets and policies:

*“the Government and local authorities are out of sync. National efforts to accelerate the delivery of renewable energy are being impeded by county councils across Ireland amending County Development Plans, which can increase the risk of prolonging Ireland’s dependence on fossil fuels.” p.4*

## 3.2 EU LEVEL

### 3.2.1 Revised Renewable Energy Directive (RED III) (Directive (EU) 2023/2413)

The European Union has been a global leader in climate action, with its policy framework evolving to meet increasingly ambitious environmental goals. The European Green Deal (2019) serves as the EU’s roadmap to transform its economy and society for sustainability, aiming for net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

Central to these efforts is the EU Climate Law (2021), which makes the 2050 climate neutrality goal legally binding for the EU and establishes the 2030 emissions reduction target in law.

To operationalize the Green Deal’s goals, the Fit for 55 package was introduced in 2021. This legislative framework targets a 55% reduction in EU greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 (compared to 1990 levels).

The Fit for 55 package included a Commission proposal<sup>4</sup> to revise the Renewable Energy Directive (EU) 2018/2000, with some of the key adopted provisions highlighted below:

- **Increased ambition for renewable energy**

RED II<sup>5</sup> had set a binding overall Union target to reach a share of at least 32% of energy from renewable sources in the Union’s gross final consumption of energy by 2030. The text that has been adopted by the European Parliament and endorsed by COREPER increases this target to 42.5 %.

Additionally, the RED III Directive obliges EU Member States to “collectively endeavour to increase the share of energy from renewable sources in the Union’s gross final consumption of energy in 2030 to 45 %”<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52021PC0557>

<sup>5</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32018L2001>

<sup>6</sup> Article 3, paragraph 1.



The associated recital (Recital 5) included in the final agreed text provides useful context:

*“The REPowerEU Plan set out in the Commission communication of 18 May 2022 (the ‘REPowerEU Plan’) aims to make the Union independent from Russian fossil fuels well before 2030. That communication provides for the front-loading of wind and solar energy, increasing the average deployment rate of such energy as well as for additional renewable energy capacity by 2030 to accommodate the higher production of renewable fuels of non-biological origin..... In that context, it is appropriate to increase the overall Union renewable energy target to 42,5% in order to significantly accelerate the current pace of deployment of renewable energy, thereby accelerating the phase-out of the Union’s dependence on Russian fossil fuels by increasing the availability of affordable, secure and sustainable energy in the Union. Beyond that mandatory level, Member States should endeavour to collectively achieve an overall Union renewable energy target of 45 % in line with the REPowerEU Plan.”<sup>7</sup>*

This indicates a significant increase in the mandatory targets for renewable energy in the EU, aiming for a more sustainable and independent energy system, with signals of further increasing ambitions through the 45% stretch target. This increased ambition for renewable energy at an EU level will be addressed in all future iterations of the national Climate Action Plan.

- **Measures to accelerate the pace of deployment of renewable energy projects**

The RED III Directive also includes specific observations and measures related to the accelerated deployment of renewable energy, storage and grid infrastructure projects across EU member states.

Ireland has transposed some of the RED III provisions into Irish legislation. As such, the Directive is highly relevant for three reasons:

- Firstly, it envisages and requires a step-change in terms of the immediacy and ambition for renewable energy development across the Member States, without which the Unions climate neutrality objective simply cannot be achieved.
- Secondly, it identifies the social and environmental benefits of renewable energy development as noted in Recital 2 “By reducing those greenhouse gas emissions, renewable energy can also contribute to tackling challenges related to the environment, such as the loss of biodiversity, and to reducing pollution” and which will help to achieve the aim to “protect, restore and improve the state of the environment by, inter alia, halting and reversing biodiversity loss” while bringing “broad socioeconomic benefits, creating new jobs and fostering local industries”.
- Thirdly, and significantly the Directive identifies the imperative necessity for the designation of suitable sites by Member States for the development of renewable energy. While the Directive does not displace the designations County Development Plan, that imperative strongly supports the submission that ACP can and should grant permission if it is satisfied that the proposed Wind Farm accords with proper planning and sustainable development.

<sup>7</sup> Emphasis added throughout document unless otherwise indicated.



RED III also establishes a rebuttable presumption that renewable energy projects are of overriding public interest and public health importance, when balancing legal interests in the individual case. This means that renewable energy developments, such as the proposed Ballyfasy Wind Farm, must be prioritised and assessed with urgency and consistency in line with Ireland's binding EU obligations to achieve a 42.5% share of renewables by 2030. The transposition of RED III reinforces the legal and policy imperative to support projects that contribute to climate neutrality, energy security, and environmental sustainability.

### 3.3 NATIONAL LEVEL

#### 3.3.1 Climate Action and Low Carbon Act (2015) as amended

The relevant international and EU level policy and legislation outlined above are transposed under the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015 (as amended).

This Act provides the statutory basis for the national transition objective. It commits Ireland to being carbon neutral by 2050 and to match Ireland's targets with those of the EU. While there are no explicit targets set out within the Act itself, the legislation obliges the State to consider any existing obligations of the State under the law of the European Union or any international agreement. In effect the Act formally obliges the State to adhere to EU targets.

The purpose of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act, 2021 is to provide for the approval of plans 'for the purpose of pursuing the transition to a climate resilient and climate neutral economy by the end of the year 2050'. The Act has set a target of a 51% reduction in the total amount of greenhouse gases over the course of the first two carbon periods ending the 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2030 relative to 2018 annual emissions.

#### Planning Authority's Obligations under the Climate Act 2015, as amended

For the purpose of this planning statement and the proposed project, it is helpful to include reference to the planning authority's obligations under current climate law. Section 17 of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act (Amendment) 2021 requires that:

*"(1) A relevant body shall, in so far as practicable, **perform its functions in a manner consistent with—***

- (a) the most recent approved climate action plan,*
- (b) the most recent approved national long term climate action strategy,*
- (c) the most recent approved national adaptation framework and approved sectoral adaptation plans,*
- (d) the furtherance of the national climate objective, and*
- (e) the objective of mitigating greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to the effects of climate change in the State."*

For context, it is worth noting that the text highlighted in bold is amended wording of section 15 of the previous 2015 Act, which required:

*"15. (1) A relevant body shall, in the performance of its functions, **have regard to...**[sections (a) to (e) as set out above]"*

The change in wording, demonstrates a change in requirements from "have regard to" various national objectives, to, a must "perform their functions in a manner consistent with" the latest



national climate action policies. This change in wording represents a considerable raising of the legal bar.

### 3.3.2 Declaration of a Climate Emergency

Ireland declared a climate emergency on the 9<sup>th</sup> of May 2019. This declaration was made through an amendment to a parliamentary motion related to a report on climate action. The amendment, which declared a "climate and biodiversity emergency," was accepted by both the government and opposition parties, making Ireland the second country in the world, after the United Kingdom, to declare a climate emergency formally.

The Emergency was declared against a backdrop of GHG emissions that were described by the Governments' Climate Change Advisory Council as "*disturbing*" and that Ireland was "*completely off course in terms of its commitments to addressing the challenge of climate change*".<sup>8</sup>

### 3.3.3 Climate Action Plans 2024 & 2025

The Climate Action Plan 2025 (CAP25) is the third annual update to Ireland's Climate Action Plan and was published on the 15<sup>th</sup> of April 2025.

CAP25 builds upon the previous Climate Action Plan 2024 (CAP24) by refining and updating the measures and actions required to deliver the carbon budgets and sectoral emissions ceilings and it should be read in conjunction with CAP24, in contrast to previous iterations of the Climate Action Plan. It provides a roadmap for taking decisive action to halve Ireland's emissions by 2030 and achieve climate neutrality by no later than 2050, as committed to in the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2015 (as amended). It also lays out a roadmap of actions which will ultimately lead us to meeting our national climate objective of pursuing and achieving, by no later than the end of the year 2050, the transition to a climate resilient, biodiversity rich, environmentally sustainable and climate neutral economy. It aligns with the legally binding economy-wide carbon budgets and sectoral emissions ceilings that were agreed by Government in July 2022.

CAP25 finds that 'rapid and significant reductions in GHG emissions are required if we are to meet the 2015 Paris Agreement and the UN's Sustainable Development Goals'. As such, Section 1.4 of CAP25 sets out the importance of 'accelerating climate action' and stating that 'the economic benefits of the transition to climate neutrality are being recognised and acted upon internationally' and further stating that, 'this points to the need to act now, with urgency, to ensure Ireland's future in a low-carbon world.'

In terms of the current scenario in the electricity sector, CAP25 notes that in the first half of 2024, emissions were down over 17%, (their lowest level for decades) and noting increasingly positive signs across solar and wind energy. It also found that Irish wind farms generated nearly 40% of Ireland's total electricity demand in the first half of 2024, making Ireland third in the world for installed wind power capacity per capita.

Section 11.2.1 of CAP25 emphasises that Ireland's plan to further reduce emissions in the electricity sector focuses on a renewables-led system, which means accelerating the deployment of new renewable electricity generation capacity and infrastructure.

As with CAP24, CAP25 also seeks to accelerate the delivery of onshore wind by providing 9 GW of onshore wind by 2030. CAP24 also acknowledges that some sectors and communities will be

<sup>8</sup> Climate Change Advisory Council Annual Report 2018 at pp.ii-iv.





more impacted than others with the costs of transition to a low carbon economy. To address this, CAP24 embodies Just Transition principles which are also supported by CAP25, and a Just Transition Commission has been established to provide advice to the Government; and retains one of the most important measures of CAP23 which is to increase the share of electricity demand generated from renewable energy sources to 80% by 2030. This national target is retained under CAP25.

CAP25 also places significance on the revised NPF, as it supports the development of electricity grid infrastructure via setting out regional renewable electricity capacity allocations for 2030. As such, Regional Assemblies and Local Authorities must plan for sufficient wind and solar energy development to meet these targets. Each Regional Assembly will prepare a Regional Renewable Energy Strategy (RRES) to coordinate efforts and set specific targets for local authorities. The Final Revised NPF which is now adopted, is considered essential to ensure a pipeline of projects to meet the electricity carbon budget program.

It is also important to note the key metrics to deliver abatement in electricity as outlined in CAP24 to deliver a decarbonised economy for Ireland by 2050, as shown in Figure 3-1.



Table 12.5 – Key Metrics to Deliver Abatement in Electricity<sup>71</sup>

Theme	2025 KPI	2025 abatement (vs. 2018) MtCO <sub>2</sub> eq.	2030 KPI	2030 abatement (vs. 2018) MtCO <sub>2</sub> eq.	2031-2035 measures
<b>Accelerate Renewable Energy Generation<sup>72</sup></b>	50% renewable electricity share of demand  6 GW onshore wind capacity  Up to 5 GW solar PV capacity, including at least 1 GW of new non-utility solar	2.21	80% renewable electricity share of demand  9 GW onshore wind capacity  At least 5 GW offshore wind capacity  8 GW solar PV capacity, including 2.5 GW of new non-utility solar  Green hydrogen production from renewable electricity surplus generation	7.18	Decarbonisation Roadmap for a net-zero power system  Green hydrogen production via 2 GW offshore wind
<b>Accelerate Flexibility</b>	Maximum level of renewables at any one time on the grid: 85%  Dispatch down (excluding surplus generation) of renewables below 7%  Minimise surplus generation  Required long term storage (4 hour plus) in place	See above abatement figure	Maximum level of renewables at any one time on the grid: 95-100%  Dispatch down (excluding surplus generation) of renewables below 7%  Minimise surplus generation  Required additional long-term storage (4 hour plus) in place  At least 2 GW of new flexible gas-fired generation  Zero-emission gas-fired generation from biomethane and hydrogen commencing by 2030	See above abatement figure	Required additional long duration storage technologies in place  Increased zero emission gas-fired generation to enable a net zero power system
<b>Demand Management</b>	Demand side flexibility 15-20%  Zero carbon demand growth	2.21	Demand side flexibility 20-30%  Zero carbon demand growth	7.18	Demand side flexibility 30%  Zero carbon demand growth
<b>Total Estimated Abatement Potential</b>					

Figure 3-1: CAP24 Key Metrics to Deliver Abatement in Electricity

### 3.3.4 National Energy Security Framework

The National Energy Security Framework was published by the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications in 2022 to provide an overarching and comprehensive response to Ireland's energy security needs in the context of the war in Ukraine.

The Framework sets out how the government can support households and businesses, with a particular focus on protecting those most at risk of fuel poverty, how it is already ensuring Ireland's energy security, and how it will speed up the country's shift to increased energy efficiency and indigenous renewable energy systems. It also sets out how consumers and businesses can be supported to save energy and save money.

The Framework sets actions in response to issues such as ensuring the security of energy supply in the near-term and over the longer term, reducing Ireland's dependency on imported fossil fuels.

Within the context of the proposed project, the framework seeks to replace fossil fuels with renewable energy sources such as wind.

### 3.3.5 National Planning Framework & RSES for the Southern Region

The National Planning Framework (NPF) is the Government's high level, strategic plan for future development in Ireland. The need for increased renewables at appropriate locations across the country is clear in national and regional spatial planning frameworks and strategies. The NPF 2025, states it is an objective to:

"Promote renewable energy use and generation at appropriate locations within the built and natural environment to meet national objectives towards achieving a climate neutral economy by 2050." (Objective 70)

A First Revision of the NPF was approved on the 8<sup>th</sup> April 2025. There are a number of significant changes to energy policy and objectives, with an increased emphasis on the importance of renewable energy development and the infrastructure to support this.

Chapter 9, section 9.1 relates to Climate and Environmental Capacity which sets out the following overarching aims to allow 'Resource Efficiency and Transition to a Climate Neutral Economy':

- Sustainable Land Management and Resource Efficiency Adopting the principles of the circular economy to enable more sustainable planning and land use management of our natural resources and assets.
- Climate Neutral Economy: Our need to accelerate action on climate change.
- Renewable Energy: Our transition to a climate neutral energy future.
- Managing Waste: Adequate capacity and systems to manage waste in an environmentally safe and sustainable manner.

The Chapter identifies that Ireland's transition to a zero carbon energy future requires:

- A shift from predominantly fossil fuels to predominantly renewable energy sources;
- Increasing efficiency and upgrades to appliances, buildings and systems;
- Decisions around development and deployment of new technologies relating to areas such as wind, smartgrids, electric vehicles, buildings, ocean energy and bio energy; and

- Legal and regulatory frameworks to meet demands and challenges in transitioning to a zero carbon society.

The NPF recognises that *'in the energy sector, transition to a carbon neutral economy from renewable sources of energy is an integral part of Ireland's climate change strategy and renewable energies are a means of reducing our reliance on fossil fuels.'*

Key relevant policies in the overall context of renewable energy development are as follows:

- **National Policy Objective 30** Facilitate the development of the rural economy, in a manner consistent with the national climate objective, through supporting a sustainable and economically efficient agricultural and food sector, together with forestry, fishing and aquaculture, energy and extractive industries, the bio-economy and diversification into alternative on-farm and off-farm activities, while at the same time noting the importance of maintaining and protecting biodiversity and the natural landscape and built heritage which are vital to rural tourism.
- **National Policy Objective 66** The planning system will be responsive to our national environmental challenges and ensure that development occurs within environmental limits, having regard to the medium and longer-term requirements of all relevant environmental and climate legislation and the sustainable management of our natural capital.
- **National Policy Objective 69** Reduce our carbon footprint by integrating climate action into the planning system in support of national targets for climate policy mitigation and adaptation objectives, as well as targets for greenhouse gas emissions reductions as expressed in the most recently adopted carbon budgets.
- **National Policy Objective 70** Promote renewable energy use and generation at appropriate locations within the built and natural environment to meet national objectives towards achieving a climate neutral economy by 2050.
- **National Policy Objective 71** Support the development and upgrading of the national electricity grid infrastructure, including supporting the delivery of renewable electricity generating development.
- **National Policy Objective 72** Support an all-island approach to the delivery of renewable electricity through interconnection of the transmission grid.
- **National Policy Objective 73** Support the co-location of renewable technologies with other supporting technologies and complementary land uses, including agriculture, amenity, forestry and opportunities to enhance biodiversity and promote heritage assets, at appropriate locations which are determined based upon the best available scientific evidence in line with EU and national legislative frameworks.
- **National Policy Objective 74** Each Regional Assembly must plan, through their Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy, for the delivery of the regional renewable electricity capacity allocations indicated for onshore wind and solar reflected in Table 9.1, and identify allocations for each of the local authorities, based on the best available scientific evidence and in accordance with legislative requirements, in order to meet the overall national target.
- **National Policy Objective 75** Local Authorities shall plan for the delivery of Target Power Capacity (MW) allocations consistent with the relevant Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy, through their City and County Development Plans.

Table 9.1 | Regional Renewable Electricity Capacity Allocations

Region	Energised capacity 2023 (MW)	Additional Renewable Power Capacity Allocations (MW)	Total % of National Share in 2030	Energised Capacity 2023 (MW)	Additional Renewable Power Capacity Allocations (MW)	Total % of National Share in 2030
	Onshore Wind			Solar PV		
Eastern and Midlands	284	1,966	25%	306	3,294	45%
Northern and Western	1,761	1,389	35%	0.3	959	12%
Southern	2,622	978	40%	138	3,302	43%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,667</b>	<b>4,333</b>		<b>445</b>	<b>7,555</b>	

Figure 3-2: Regional Renewable Energy Capacity Allocations

The Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy (RSES) published by the Southern Regional Assembly<sup>9</sup> states:

*"It is an objective to support the sustainable development of renewable wind energy (on shore and offshore) at appropriate locations and related grid infrastructure in the Region in compliance with national Wind Energy Guidelines."* (RPO 99)

### Development Compliance

The proposed wind farm is fully aligned with the objectives of the Revised National Planning Framework (NPF) and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES), which emphasize the urgent need for renewable energy development to achieve a climate-neutral economy by 2050.

- National Policy Objective 70 explicitly promotes renewable energy generation at appropriate locations, and the proposed site has been assessed as suitable based on wind resource availability and environmental considerations.
- The project supports National Policy Objectives 66, 69, and 71–75, by integrating climate action into the planning system, reducing carbon emissions, and contributing to national and regional renewable electricity capacity targets.
- The design and layout of the development have been informed by the principles of sustainable land management and resource efficiency outlined in Chapter 9 of the NPF, ensuring minimal environmental impact and compatibility with biodiversity and landscape protection.
- The project also aligns with RPO 99 of the Southern Regional Assembly's RSES, which seeks to support the sustainable development of onshore wind energy and associated grid infrastructure in compliance with national Wind Energy Guidelines.

The Southern Region currently has 2,622 MW of energised onshore wind capacity (2023) and an additional allocation of 978 MW to be delivered by 2030, representing 40% of the national

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.southernassembly.ie/uploads/general-files/Southern%20Regional%20Assembly%20RSES%202020%20High%20Res.pdf>

share. The proposed wind farm will contribute toward meeting this regional target, ensuring alignment with the capacity allocations set out in Table 9.1 of the NPF.

The proposed project has been evaluated through an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR), demonstrating that adverse residual environmental impacts have been avoided and that the site is appropriate for renewable energy generation. This ensures the project contributes meaningfully to Ireland's transition to a zero-carbon energy future, in line with national and regional policy objectives.

### 3.4 CONTRIBUTION TO NATIONAL ENERGY SECURITY

#### 3.4.1 Reduction in Fossil Fuel Dependency

Ireland remains heavily reliant on imported fossil fuels, with fossil fuels accounting for 81.4% of the national energy supply in 2024, and 79.7% of total energy being imported. Oil alone constituted 48.9% of Ireland's energy supply, all of which was imported.

The proposed wind farm will contribute to reducing this dependency by increasing the share of domestically generated renewable electricity. In 2024, wind energy represented 47.2% of Ireland's renewable energy supply, which itself accounted for 14.5% of the total primary energy requirement. By expanding wind capacity, the project will help Ireland transition toward a more secure and self-sufficient energy system.

#### 3.4.2 Enhancement of Grid Resilience

Wind energy integration enhances grid resilience by decentralizing generation and reducing reliance on centralized fossil fuel plants. However, grid constraints remain a significant challenge. In 2024, 14% of wind energy production was curtailed due to transmission limitations. Strengthening grid infrastructure and expanding energy storage capacity are essential to fully utilize renewable generation<sup>10</sup>. According to EirGrid's report from 2023<sup>11</sup>, the grid was able to accommodate up to 75% of electricity from variable renewable sources at any one time, with ambitions to increase this to 95% by 2030.

The proposed wind farm project will be integrated with technologies supporting grid infrastructure integration and contribute to national efforts to reinforce transmission infrastructure via the provision of BESS technologies and grid connection infrastructure. This aligns with national policy which supports the strengthening and enhancement of grid infrastructure to accommodate renewable energy integration. This will help mitigate curtailment risks and improve the grid's ability to absorb variable renewable energy, thereby enhancing overall system stability and reliability.

#### 3.4.3 Support for Ireland's Net-Zero Emissions Target by 2050

Ireland has committed to achieving net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, as outlined in the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act. Wind energy is expected to supply the majority of the electricity demand, with projections indicating the need for approximately 25 GW of renewable capacity, compared to the 4.9 GW installed in 2024<sup>12</sup>. This represents more than a fivefold increase in installed capacity.

<sup>10</sup> [Wind farms generated 32% of electricity so far in 2024](#)

<sup>11</sup> [New record for wind energy on all-island grid](#)

<sup>12</sup> [Ireland's Energy Supply and Security of Supply | SEAI Statistics | SEAI](#)



Wind farms are already making a significant impact. In 2023, wind generation accounted for 33.7% of electricity supply, contributing to a 22% reduction in electricity sector emissions, which fell to 7.6 MtCO<sub>2</sub>eq, the lowest on record<sup>13</sup>. The proposed wind farm will accelerate progress toward decarbonization, and reduce Ireland's carbon footprint in line with national and EU climate targets.

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<sup>13</sup> [Energy In Ireland](#) | [Key Publications](#) | [SEAI](#)





## 4. LOCAL POLICY CONTEXT AND COMPLIANCE

### 4.1 LOCAL PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

This section of the report will provide the local planning policy context relevant to the proposed project.

As the project is located in County Kilkenny, it is subject to the provisions of the Kilkenny City and County Development Plan 2021 – 2027 (“2021 CDP”). However, in light of a recent Judgement, the project is also subject to the corresponding provisions of the former Kilkenny County Development Plan 2014 – 2020 (“2014 CDP”). Further information on this judgement is provided below.

The remaining sections will detail the relevant policy to be considered by ACP, when assessing this planning application.

### 4.2 KILKENNY COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2014 -2020

In *Save The South Leinster Way & Anor v An Coimisiún Pleanála & Ors* [2025] IEHC 541<sup>14</sup> the High Court held that a Minister’s draft Direction<sup>15</sup> under s.31 meant parts of the old development plan remained in force “to the extent they correspond” with the new plan.

This is relevant to the proposed project, where elements of the 2021 CDP are subject to the draft Ministerial Direction.

On the 15<sup>th</sup> of October 2021, the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, issued a draft Ministerial Direction to Kilkenny County Council stating that:

*“In accordance with Section 31(4) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, those parts of the Kilkenny City and County Development Plan 2021-2027 referred to in the notices shall be taken to not come into effect, been made or amended; namely:*

*Chapter 11:*

*Section 11.4 Kilkenny Targets*

*Section 11.5.1 Current status and targets*

*Figure 11.4 Wind Strategy Areas”*

Judgement [2025] IEHC 541 finds that where the items above have not come into effect, the corresponding provisions of the old development plan should be considered when making an assessment. On this basis, the following parts of the 2014 CDP should be considered by ACP for the proposed project:

- 10.5.3 Development Management Guidance
- Appendix J Wind Energy Development Strategy
- Figure 10.2

Section 10.5.3 of the 2014 CDP requires that all wind farm applications will be assessed based on the Wind Energy Development Guidelines and Wind Energy Development Strategy (Appendix J) and also sets out various environmental considerations to be made.

<sup>14</sup> [Save The South Leinster way and Another v an Coimisiún Pleanála and Others - vLex Ireland](#)

<sup>15</sup> [Adopted City and County Development Plan - Kilkenny County Council](#)



It also specifies that pre-planning public consultation is mandatory for both small and large-scale wind farms. Applicants must engage with local communities near proposed sites before submitting applications. The Applicant has engaged in pre planning consultations with both Kilkenny County Council and ACP.

Compliance against Section 10.5.3 Development Management Guidance of the 2014 CDP is set out under Section 4.5 of this report.

Under the 2014 wind energy strategy (Appendix J of the 2014 CDP) and its corresponding strategy map “Figure 10.2”, (illustrated in this report as Figure 4-1) the proposed project is partially located in a “Preferred Area” which is described under the 2014 strategy as a “location deemed most suitable for wind energy development.” Three of the ten turbines proposed as part of Ballyfasy Wind Farm are located within the “Preferred Area”.

‘Preferred Areas’ were identified as having strong wind resource potential, low landscape and heritage sensitivity, feasible access to grid infrastructure and minimal conflict with residential or community interests.

The principle of the proposed project is therefore supported by the 2014 CDP, which currently remains in force under the judgement set out above.



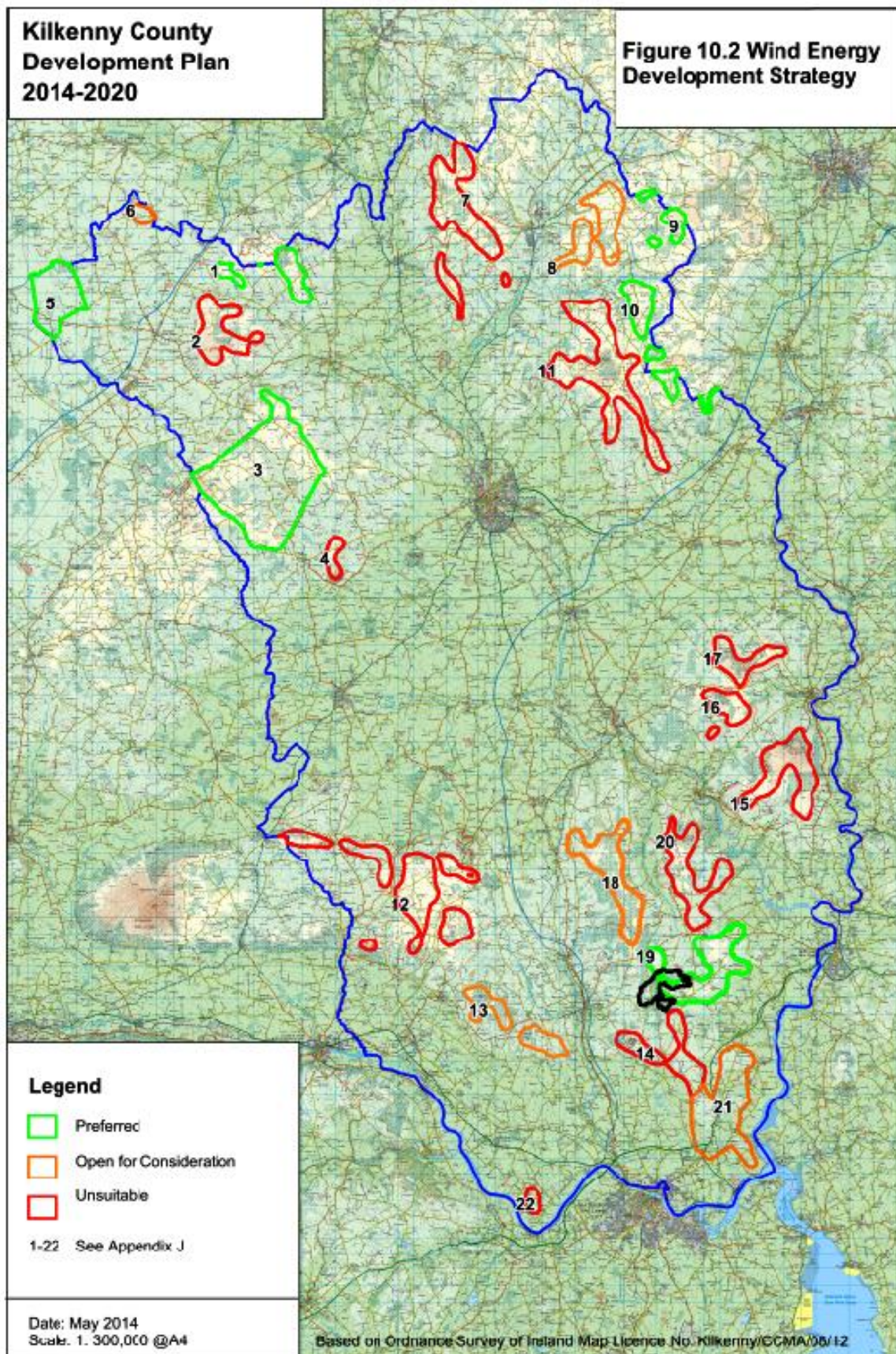


Figure 4-1: Location of the proposed project under the 2014 CDP wind energy development strategy map "figure 10.2"

### 4.3 KILKENNY COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2021-2027 (2021 CDP)

Beyond the corresponding provisions of the 2014 CDP, the remaining parts of the 2021 CDP are still in effect and should be considered by ACP for this project.

The 2021 CDP is the land use plan and overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the functional area of County Kilkenny. It is a target of the CDP to increase reliance on renewables from 30% to 70% adding 8.2GW of renewable energy capacity, which remains in effect. The CDP seeks to encourage a modal shift towards an increase in renewable energy production and it is a Strategic Aim of the CDP to:

*“generate 100% of electricity demand for the County through renewables by 2030 by promoting and facilitating all forms of renewable energies and energy efficiency improvements in a sustainable manner as a response to climate change in suitable locations having due regard to natural and built heritage, biodiversity and residential amenities”.*

Renewable energy sources are defined in the CDP as “inexhaustible natural resources which occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment”.

It is a policy of the CDP to:

- Support the implementation of the NECP (National Energy & Climate Plan (NECP) 2021-2030 and associated adaptation & mitigation measures;
- Support the implementation of Ireland’s Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Future;
- Support the implementation of the All of Government Climate Action Plan (CAP) and associated adaptation and mitigation measures;
- Support the sustainable development, maintenance and upgrading of electricity and gas network grid infrastructure to integrate a renewable energy source and ensure our national and regional energy system remains safe, secure, and ready to meet increased demand as the regional economy grows;
- Support the sustainable development of renewable solar photovoltaic energy at appropriate locations and related grid infrastructure in the region in conjunction with the Renewable Electricity Support Scheme (RESS);
- Support alternative forms of renewable energy for the electricity, heat, and transport sectors; and
- Support the integration of indigenous renewable (Non fossil) Compressed Gas, either by local virtual pipelines or grid injection into existing or future Fossil Gas Lines.

Policies in the CDP which are directly relevant to the proposed Ballyfasy wind farm consist of:

- **Objective 2B:** To support the implementation of the National Climate Action Plan and the National Climate Action Charter for Local Authorities, and to facilitate measures which seek to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases by embedding appropriate policies within the Development Plan;
- **Objective 2C:** To promote, support and direct effective climate action policies and objectives that seek to improve climate outcomes across the settlement areas and communities of County Kilkenny helping to successfully contribute and deliver on the obligations of the State to transition to low carbon and climate resilient society;
- **Objective 2G:** To reduce energy related CO2 emissions of Kilkenny County Council;
- **Objective 2H:** To achieve the commitment under the European Climate Alliance to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 10 percent every 5 years; and



- **Objective 11A:** To support and facilitate the provision of energy in accordance with Ireland's transition to a low carbon energy future by means of the maintenance and upgrading of electricity and gas network grid infrastructure and by integrating renewable energy sources and ensuring our national and regional energy system remains safe, secure, and ready to meet increased demand as the regional economy grows over the period of the plan.

### ***Overview of the Wind Energy Development Strategy 2021-2027 (Appendix K to 2021 CDP)***

Further to Judgement [2025] IEHC 541, we know that the wind energy development strategy of the 2014 CDP should be considered by ACP when assessing this application. However, for information purposes, we have also provided the status of the proposed project under the CDP 2021.

The CDP 2021 Wind Energy Development Strategy outlines a structured and evidence-based approach to facilitating wind energy development across the county, in alignment with national renewable energy targets and Ministerial Guidelines. The strategy's primary objective is to balance the promotion of sustainable energy generation with the protection of Kilkenny's environmental, cultural, and landscape assets.

Kilkenny County Council adopted a four-step methodology to identify suitable locations for wind energy development, in line with the Draft Revised Wind Energy Development Guidelines (2019) and national policy objectives:

- **Wind Resource Assessment:** The Council used SEAI's Wind Atlas to identify areas with viable wind energy potential. However, wind speed is no longer the primary determinant; feasibility is now largely left to developers.
- **Landscape Character and Sensitivity Analysis:** A county-wide landscape character assessment was conducted to evaluate the capacity of different areas to accommodate wind energy development without significant adverse visual impacts.
- **Multi-Criteria Sieve Mapping:** This step involved overlaying wind resource data with landscape sensitivity, ecological constraints, heritage assets, and population density to identify areas where development could be viable.
- **Grid Accessibility Integration:** The final step considered proximity to existing electricity transmission and distribution infrastructure, ensuring that identified areas could feasibly connect to the grid with minimal environmental and economic disruption.

Based on this process, the county was divided into three policy zones, Acceptable in Principle, Open for Consideration and Not Normally Permissible,

The proposed wind farm site is located in an area, see Figure 4-2, which was designated as 'Open for Consideration', which indicates development may be permitted subject to detailed assessment of environmental, visual, and infrastructural factors.

The strategy places emphasis on protecting Kilkenny's landscape character, heritage assets, and amenity values. Areas with high scenic value, protected views, or cultural significance are generally excluded from large-scale development unless robust mitigation measures are proposed.

Wind energy proposals in “Open for Consideration” zones must demonstrate that they will not significantly compromise the visual integrity of sensitive landscapes. The strategy encourages the use of visual impact assessments and photomontages to support planning applications.

Grid connectivity is a key determinant in the suitability of wind energy sites. The strategy highlights the importance of proximity to existing transmission infrastructure and substations to minimize environmental disruption and economic cost. Areas “Open for Consideration” are typically located within feasible distance of grid access points, though developers are required to provide detailed grid connection proposals as part of their planning submissions.

Prior to the issue of the judgement set out above, the proposed wind farm was located within an area designated as “Open for Consideration” under the 2021 CDP Wind Energy Strategy (Appendix K). While this zoning category does not offer the same suitability as areas marked “Acceptable in Principle,” it is interpreted as favourable for wind energy development subject to detailed site-specific assessment.

The site is located in a landscape area where preliminary assessments indicate that the visual impact of the development can be effectively mitigated through careful siting and design. Thirdly, the site avoids designated heritage assets and ecological constraints, and proposed relevant mitigation measures where necessary to ensure compliance with conservation policies and prevent adverse environmental impacts.

Additionally, the site benefits from proximity to existing grid infrastructure, which enhances its feasibility and reduces the need for extensive new transmission development. The project also aligns with national and local climate objectives, contributing to Ireland’s renewable energy targets for 2030 and 2050. Taken together, these factors provide a robust rationale for permitting the proposed wind farm on this site.



## 4.4 HISTORICAL SUITABILITY OF THE PROPOSED SITE

Since 2008 the proposed wind farm site has consistently been located within zones identified as favourable towards wind energy development under the relevant county development plan. While the criteria has evolved from wind speed to landscape and community impact, the site has remained within areas designated for wind energy development in Kilkenny.

Therefore, the proposed wind farm site has a strong historical precedent for suitability. This consistency across development plans reflects a long-standing recognition of the site's strategic value for wind energy generation.

The 2008–2014 strategy was Kilkenny's first comprehensive framework for wind energy planning. It aimed to evaluate the county's wind energy potential, define environmental and planning considerations and recommend policy improvements for wind energy development.

The strategy was developed in response to national and EU-level climate and energy commitments, and the Wind Energy Development Guidelines (2006).

The strategy used a sieve mapping approach to identify areas suitable for wind energy development. This involved overlaying multiple datasets, including:

- **Wind Resource Mapping:** Based on SEAI wind atlas speed data
- **Environmental Constraints:** Ecological designations (e.g., SACs, SPAs), archaeological sites, and protected structures were excluded.
- **Zone of Visual Influence:** All permitted Wind Farms within the County and in adjoining counties within 10km was considered.
- **Adjoining Wind Energy Strategies:** Wind Energy Strategy Areas of adjoining counties within 10kms of the County was considered.
- **Landscape Sensitivity:** A landscape character assessment was used to identify areas with low visual sensitivity.
- **Infrastructure Access:** Proximity to roads and grid infrastructure was considered essential for feasibility.

The outcome of the sieve mapping was a zoning map that classified land into three categories:

- **Acceptable in Principle:** Areas with good wind resource, low environmental sensitivity, and feasible grid access.
- **Open for Consideration:** Areas with moderate constraints requiring site-specific assessment.
- **Not Normally Permissible:** Areas with high environmental or visual sensitivity.

"Acceptable in Principle" areas were explicitly identified as the most favourable zones for wind energy development.

The proposed wind farm site was located within one of these "Acceptable in Principle" zones under the 2008–2014 strategy, indicating early recognition of its suitability for wind energy development as seen under Figure 4-3 below.



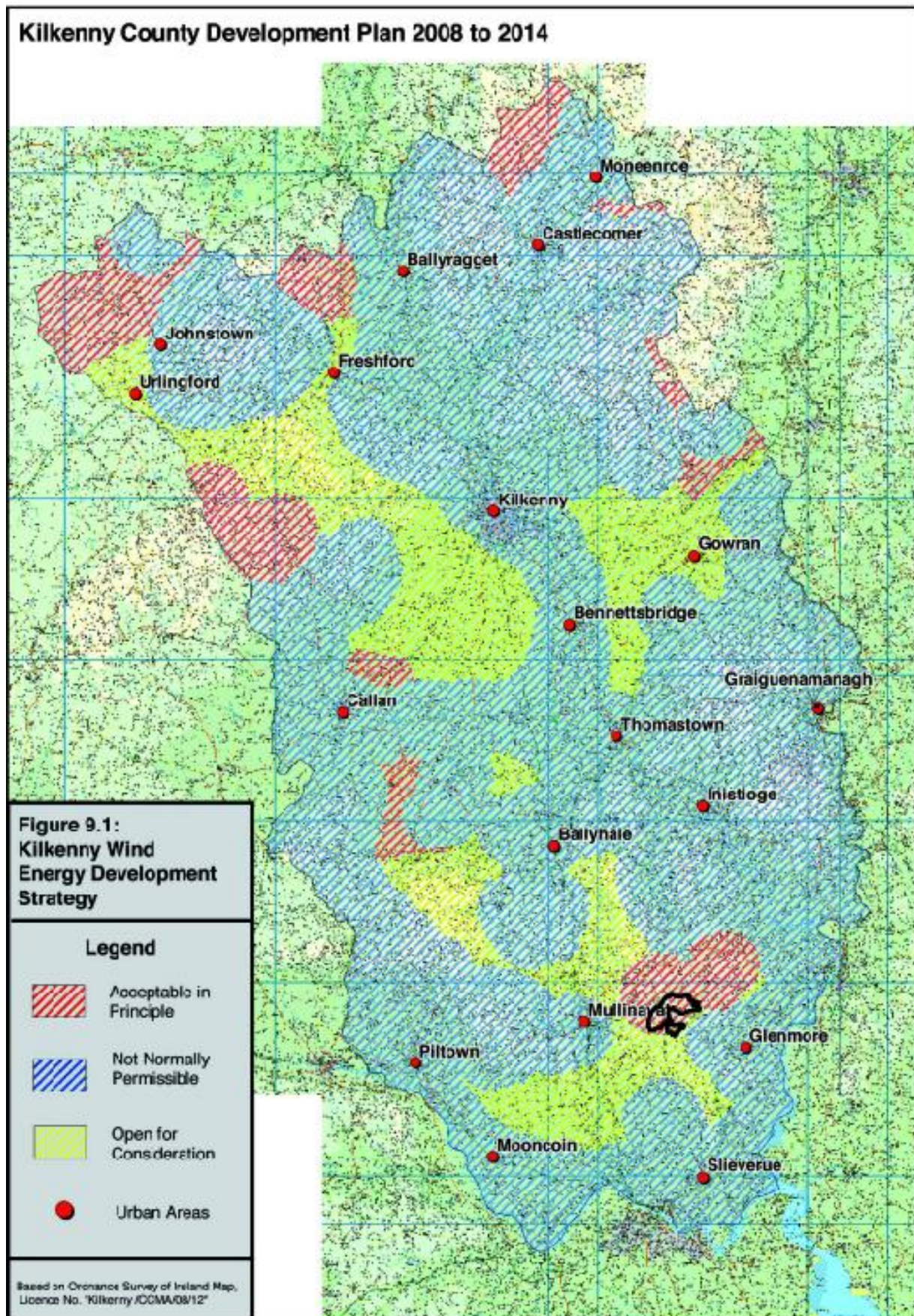


Figure 4-3: Site within Wind Energy Designations 2008-2014 (proposed wind farm indicated in black)

## 4.5 OTHER PLANNING POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

The project has been assessed against the Development Management Requirements set out in the 2014 and the 2021 CDPs, including those relating to biodiversity, landscape protection, archaeology, water quality, and community engagement. Table 4-1 and Table 4-2 below provides an overview of how the Ballyfasy Wind Farm complies with these policy requirements and contributes to the broader planning objectives for renewable energy and sustainable development in County Kilkenny.



**Table 4-1: Consideration of development management requirements (CDP 2014)**

Development Management Requirement	Development Compliance
<p><b>Residential amenity</b></p> <p>The two main impacts on residential amenity from any wind farm development are noise and shadow flicker. These two elements must be examined as part of any application. The Guidelines indicate that noise is unlikely to be a significant problem where the distance from the nearest turbine to any noise sensitive property is more than 500 metres. Where any proposed distance between a wind farm and neighbouring offices or buildings is less, the Council will look for additional noise and shadow flicker mitigation.</p>	<p>All turbines comply with the mandatory 500 m setback and exceed this by achieving a minimum distance of approximately 720 m (four times tip height) from any residential property, ensuring visual and amenity impacts are minimized.</p> <p>A detailed noise assessment, including turbines and ancillary infrastructure, confirms compliance with best practice limits set out in the Wind Energy Development Guidelines (WEDGs) and Ministerial guidance. Construction and operational noise and vibration have been assessed under BS 5228 standards, with predicted levels below threshold values and no significant effects anticipated.</p> <p>Shadow flicker has been comprehensively mitigated. The Applicant commits to near-zero shadow flicker at any occupied dwelling within 1.63 km (ten rotor diameters) of turbines, achieved through predictive software and automatic turbine shutdown systems. Residual effects are negligible and cumulative assessment is unnecessary. The EIAR concludes that no significant post-mitigation impacts on residential amenity will occur.</p>
<p><b>Ground Conditions/Geology</b></p> <p>In accordance with the Wind Energy Development Guidelines, information on the underlying geology shall accompany any wind farm development application.</p>	<p>Chapter 8 (Land, Soils and Geology) provides information on the underlying site geology, stating that, <i>"the existing environment is described in terms of geomorphology (landscape and topography), superficial and solid geology. The proposed wind farm study area is described in Section 8.3.1 and shown in Figure 8-1 of the EIAR. The regional review of geological and hydrogeological conditions covers a zone of 2 km from the proposed wind farm. The proposed wind farm site is not a sensitive site in terms of the soils and geological environment, and the following description of the existing environment confirms this. The study area for the works area of the proposed TDR and proposed GCOs uses a 200 m buffer on the proposed, based on the limited excavation works."</i></p>
<p><b>Flora and Fauna</b></p> <p>Any impacts on birds or rare flora, mammals, amphibians and fish need to be assessed. For the purposes of this Development Plan, a registered thoroughbred stud farm is considered to be a noise and flicker sensitive property as referred to in the Wind Energy Guidelines. In particular, the provisions of the Wind Energy</p>	<p>The proposed Ballyfasy Wind Farm has taken into consideration Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the EU Habitats Directive, to ensure that the development will not adversely affect the integrity or conservation objectives of any designated Natura 2000 sites. An Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) has been undertaken in to evaluate potential impacts on nearby Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs).</p>

Development Management Requirement	Development Compliance
Guidelines in relation to noise and flicker will apply to registered thoroughbred stud farms.	<p>Where necessary, mitigation measures have been incorporated to avoid or reduce any potential adverse effects, ensuring the project aligns with both EU and national biodiversity protection standards.</p> <p>The NIS submitted with the application concludes that</p> <p><i>"There would be no adverse effects on the integrity of any European sites during the development and operation of the proposed project, either alone or in-combination with any other plans or projects."</i></p> <p>In relation to shadow flicker, as noted above, the Applicant commits to near-zero shadow flicker at any occupied dwelling within 1.63 km (ten rotor diameters) of turbines, achieved through predictive software and automatic turbine shutdown systems. Therefore residual effects are negligible and cumulative assessment is unnecessary.</p>
<b>Access to grid</b> Details of consultations with the electricity transmission operators regarding the nature and location of a proposed grid connection should be submitted as part of the pre-planning consultation.	<p>The Applicant has engaged in early and proactive consultation with the relevant electricity transmission operators during the pre-planning stage. These discussions informed the design and routing of the proposed grid connection to ensure technical feasibility, environmental sensitivity, and alignment with national grid development strategies.</p>
<b>Proximity to Roads and Railways</b> At a minimum, turbines shall be set back a distance equalling the blade tip height of the turbine from National and Regional roads and railways. Set-back from other roads will be site specific and determined at application stage.	<p>All turbines have been sited in accordance with safety and planning guidelines to maintain appropriate setbacks from transport infrastructure. Each turbine is located at a minimum distance equal to the blade tip height plus 10% from National and Regional roads and railways, ensuring operational safety and reducing potential visual impacts. For local roads, site-specific assessments were undertaken to determine suitable setbacks based on road usage, visibility, and topography. These measures ensure safe integration of the development into the surrounding landscape while adhering to relevant planning requirements.</p>
<b>Interference with communication systems</b> Any wind farm applicant should contact individual broadcasters to inform them of the proposals. A list of the licensed operators is available on <a href="http://www.comreg.ie">www.comreg.ie</a> . Mobile phone operators should also be informed. Contact should also be made with the	<p>As part of the pre-planning process, the Applicant has proactively engaged with all relevant licensed broadcasters and mobile phone operators listed by ComReg to inform them of the proposed project and assess any potential impacts. Formal consultation was also undertaken with the Irish Aviation Authority to ensure the wind farm does not interfere with aviation communication or radar systems. The</p>

Development Management Requirement	Development Compliance
Irish Aviation Authority. The outcome of such consultations shall accompany planning applications.	outcomes of these consultations, including feedback and recommendations, have been documented and submitted with the planning application. This approach demonstrates full compliance with regulatory requirements and safeguards the integrity of communication and aviation systems.
<b>Landscape Impact Assessment</b> All applications shall be accompanied by a Landscape Impact Assessment Report, as set out in Appendix 3 of the Wind Energy Development Guidelines, to include an assessment of the impact on any existing rights of way and established walking routes. Applicants should refer to Development Management Standards in Section 8.2.10.6 View and Prospects for further guidance.	A comprehensive Landscape Impact Assessment Report has been prepared in accordance with Appendix 3 of the Wind Energy Development Guidelines and submitted as part of the EIAR to support this application. The assessment evaluates potential visual impacts, views and prospects (as per Section 8.2.10.6 of the Development Management Standards), and considers effects on existing rights of way and established walking routes. The site layout and design have incorporated these findings to minimize landscape and recreational impacts, ensuring the development integrates sensitively into its surroundings.

**Table 4-2: Consideration of planning policy and development management requirements (CDP 2021) (Detailed table provided as Appendix B)**

Theme	Policy Summary	Statement of Consistency – Ballyfasy Wind Farm
<b>Renewable Energy</b>	<b>Policy 11A &amp; related energy policies</b> – Support Ireland’s transition to a low-carbon energy future, implementation of NECP, and sustainable grid upgrades.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Installed capacity of c. 57–72 MW, generating c. 179,755–227,059 MWh/yr, powering approx. 40,313–50,922 Irish homes and displacing fossil fuel generation.</li> <li>• Supports national, regional and local climate targets and improves security of supply over a 35-year operational life.</li> <li>• Contributes to Kilkenny’s emissions reduction commitments (e.g. European Climate Alliance target of 10% every five years).</li> <li>• Provides a RESS-compliant Community Benefit Fund supporting local sustainability and climate initiatives.</li> <li>• The proposed project is <b>consistent</b> with the renewable energy and grid policies of the Statutory Development Plan.</li> </ul>

<b>Biodiversity</b>	<b>Policy 1A – Appropriate Assessment</b> – Implement Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive and avoid adverse effects on Natura 2000 sites.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AA Screening and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) prepared for the wind farm and grid connection.</li> <li>• Assessment includes all relevant SACs and SPAs and considers in-combination effects.</li> <li>• The NIS concludes <b>no adverse effects on the integrity of any European site, alone or in combination, in view of their conservation objectives.</b></li> <li>• The proposed project is therefore <b>consistent</b> with Policy 1A and related biodiversity protection policies.</li> </ul>
<b>Biodiversity</b>	<b>Development Management – Ecological design</b> – Identify, protect and enhance ecological features and integrate local biodiversity and Green Infrastructure (GI).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comprehensive ecological surveys and habitat mapping have informed the site layout.</li> <li>• Turbine and infrastructure locations avoid key habitats and sensitive ecological features where possible.</li> <li>• Mitigation and enhancement include native hedgerow planting, areas of new native woodland and a new pond to support habitat connectivity and resilience.</li> <li>• These measures ensure integration with the wider GI network.</li> <li>• The proposed project is <b>consistent</b> with the ecological design and biodiversity enhancement requirements.</li> </ul>
<b>Woodlands, Trees &amp; Hedgerows</b>	<b>Development Management – Woodland &amp; hedgerow protection</b> – Protect woodlands, trees and hedgerows of amenity/biodiversity value; retain distinctive boundaries; replant with native species where loss is unavoidable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Layout informed by EIAR and specialist surveys to retain mature trees, hedgerows and characteristic stone walls where practicable.</li> <li>• Where hedgerow removal is unavoidable, replanting with native species of local provenance is proposed, in line with Appendix G of the CDP 2021.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site cross-checked against national and local woodland inventories; no native/ancient woodland is present and no protected trees will be affected.</li> <li>• New native woodland planting forms part of biodiversity enhancement measures.</li> <li>• The proposed project is <b>consistent</b> with woodland, tree and hedgerow protection policies.</li> </ul>
<b>Biodiversity</b>	<b>Development Management – Invasive species &amp; crayfish</b> – Address invasive alien species and, where relevant, crayfish plague risks with appropriate management plans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• INNS surveys undertaken in line with NBDC guidance and relevant field guides; no invasive plant species recorded within the project footprint.</li> <li>• No INNS listed on the Third Schedule (S.I. No. 477 of 2011), FPO species or Red-listed plants recorded on site.</li> <li>• No instream works are proposed and white-clawed crayfish were not recorded; a crayfish plague management strategy is therefore not required.</li> <li>• As no INNS are present, an invasive species management plan is not required.</li> <li>• The proposed project is <b>consistent</b> with invasive species and crayfish-related development management policies.</li> </ul>
<b>Landscape</b>	<b>Development Management – Landscape &amp; visual</b> – Protect landscape character and require LVIA, particularly in sensitive/upland areas; minimise loss of natural features; ensure appropriate siting and design.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Layout and turbine siting informed by the Kilkenny Landscape Character Assessment and associated guidance.</li> <li>• A full Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has been undertaken, including uplands, river valleys, scenic routes and viewpoints.</li> <li>• Residual significance of visual effects ranges from Substantial–Moderate</li> </ul>

		<p>to Imperceptible, with overall effects assessed as <b>Not Significant</b>, including cumulatively.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Array design respects visual amenity offsets in the draft revised WEDGs, with a 4× tip-height (720m) setback from the nearest dwelling.</li> <li>• Existing topography and vegetation are used to maximise visual absorption.</li> <li>• The proposed project is <b>consistent</b> with the landscape and visual policies of the Plan.</li> </ul>
<b>Archaeology</b>	<p><b>Policy 9C &amp; Development Management – Archaeology</b> – Protect archaeological sites/monuments and their settings; require early assessment, avoidance and appropriate mitigation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Archaeological impact assessment carried out at an early stage, including review of RMP, Urban Archaeological Survey and relevant inventories.</li> <li>• Layout designed to avoid direct impacts on recorded monuments, zones of archaeological potential and any known archaeological landscapes.</li> <li>• Where in proximity to archaeological features, measures include buffer zones, monitoring and test excavation where appropriate.</li> <li>• A Visual Impact Assessment was also prepared to evaluate potential effects on the setting of upstanding monuments; development does not dominate or sever key archaeological relationships or inter-visibility.</li> <li>• A robust chance-finds/monitoring protocol will be implemented during construction.</li> <li>• The proposed project is <b>consistent</b> with archaeological protection and development management policies.</li> </ul>
<b>Flood Risk</b>	<p><b>Section 10.2.6.2 – Flood Risk</b> – Require site-specific FRA where flood risk may arise; development cannot proceed where risk is unmanageable or impacts third-party lands.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site-specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) prepared in accordance with the Flood Risk Management Guidelines and the Plan's Strategic FRA.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment confirms the development does not pose an unmanageable flood risk and does not cause adverse impacts on third-party lands.</li> <li>• Any minor risks are managed through standard design and drainage mitigation.</li> <li>• The proposed project is <b>consistent</b> with flood risk management policies.</li> </ul>
<b>The National Transmission / Distribution Network</b>	<b>Section 10.3.2 – Grid development</b> – Facilitate essential energy networks subject to need, least environmental/visual impact, health standards and avoidance of sensitive landscapes and SACs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposed grid connection route has been carefully selected with full consideration of environmental impacts, and its design prioritises minimal environmental disruption.</li> <li>• EIAR Chapter 3 Consideration of Reasonable Alternatives, outlines various grid connection options considered and outlines how the proposed grid connection options were chosen.</li> </ul>
<b>Wind Energy</b>	<b>Section 11.5.3 – Wind Energy Development Management Guidance</b> – Assess against WEDGs and County Wind Strategy, including EIA/AA, community benefit, grid, hydrology, landscape, natural/built heritage, noise, traffic and cumulative effects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposal designed in accordance with DEHLG Wind Energy Development Guidelines (2006 and updates) as well as Kilkenny County Council's Wind Strategy under Section 11.5 of the CDP which is still in effect.</li> <li>• EIAR and AA (including NIS) prepared, with mitigation measures secured through a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).</li> <li>• Extensive community engagement carried out; a Community Benefit Fund will support local energy efficiency initiatives in line with the County Climate Action Plan.</li> <li>• Grid connection, geology/ground conditions, hydrology, LVIA, ecology, built heritage, noise, traffic, cumulative effects and borrow pits addressed in the EIAR.</li> <li>• Waste and surplus materials managed in accordance with best practice and regulatory requirements.</li> </ul>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposed project is <b>consistent</b> with the wind energy development management guidance.</li> </ul>
<b>Wind Development Assessments</b>	<b>Section 11.5.3.1 – Environmental Assessments</b> – Ensure compliance with the EIA, Habitats and Birds Directives; EIAR/NIS must cover wind farm and grid connection; CEMP and compound/access details required.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Full EIAR and NIS prepared for the wind farm and its grid connection, addressing all relevant Directives.</li> <li>EIAR considers direct, indirect, secondary, cumulative and transboundary effects in the short, medium and long term, including construction and operation.</li> <li>The NIS includes a detailed analysis of potential impacts on Natura 2000 sites, ensuring full compliance with conservation obligations. Section 6.3 of the NIS considers potential effects of the proposed project in-combination with any other relevant plans or projects. This section concludes that there is no potential for in-combination effects with the proposed project and the projects identified in that section.</li> <li>A detailed CEMP accompanies the application, informing EIAR and NIS mitigation.</li> <li>Site compound and access arrangements (location, design, construction methods and reinstatement) are described in the application.</li> <li>The proposed project is <b>consistent</b> with environmental assessment requirements for wind energy.</li> </ul>
<b>Pre-planning Consultation</b>	<b>Section 11.5.3.2 – Pre-planning and public consultation</b> – Require applicant engagement with local population prior to lodging wind farm applications.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pre-application consultation undertaken with the Planning Authority and local communities.</li> <li>Public and stakeholder events provided clear information on the project and opportunities for feedback.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback informed elements of the project design, mitigation and community benefit proposals.</li> <li>• Details are provided in EIAR Chapter 1 (Introduction) / Consultation Report.</li> <li>• The proposed project is <b>consistent</b> with public consultation requirements.</li> </ul>
<b>Wind energy and Landscape</b>	<b>Section 11.5.3.3 – Impact on the landscape</b> – Use sensitivity, visual presence, aesthetic impact and significance to assess landscape effects; require Landscape Impact Assessment including ancillary infrastructure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Landscape Impact Assessment, prepared in accordance with Appendix 3 of the WEDGs, evaluates quantitative and qualitative landscape effects across all relevant Landscape Character Types.</li> <li>• Both the turbine array and ancillary infrastructure (grid connection, access roads, substation) have been assessed for visual impact and designed to integrate with the existing landscape.</li> <li>• Overall landscape and visual effects, including cumulative, are assessed as <b>Not Significant</b>.</li> <li>• The proposed project is <b>consistent</b> with the Plan's approach to landscape assessment for wind energy.</li> </ul>
<b>Noise Impact</b>	<b>Section 11.5.3.4 – Noise impact and limits</b> – Require noise modelling and compliance with RRNL limits (35–43 dB(A)); additional mitigation where separations are reduced.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detailed noise and vibration assessment completed in line with BS 5228 and WEDGs.</li> <li>• All noise-sensitive locations (NSLs) are at least 720m from turbines (exceeding the 500m minimum).</li> <li>• Construction and decommissioning noise/vibration predicted below threshold values with no significant effects at NSLs.</li> <li>• Operational turbine and substation noise comply with best-practice limits; no significant vibration impacts are predicted.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposed project is <b>consistent</b> with noise and vibration policies.</li> </ul>
<b>Shadow Flicker</b>	<b>Section 11.5.3.5 – Shadow flicker</b> – Require shadow flicker study and appropriate mitigation at sensitive receptors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A Shadow Flicker Study is included in EIAR Chapter 10.</li> <li>Applicant commits to <b>near-zero shadow flicker</b> at occupied dwellings within 1.63km (10 rotor diameters) through automated turbine control / shutdown.</li> <li>No sensitive receptors lie within 720m of any turbine.</li> <li>Modelling and mitigation (screening and turbine shutdown) ensure no significant residual shadow flicker effects on the local community.</li> <li>The proposed project is <b>consistent</b> with shadow flicker policy.</li> </ul>
<b>Natural Heritage</b>	<b>Section 11.5.3.6 – Natural heritage</b> – Assess impacts on birds, rare flora, mammals, amphibians, fish and noise/flicker-sensitive receptors (including thoroughbred stud farms).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thorough ecological assessment, including seasonal surveys and habitat mapping, has been carried out.</li> <li>Mitigation includes buffers, timing restrictions on works and habitat enhancement measures.</li> <li>Potential impacts on any nearby equine facilities (including stud farms) have been considered, particularly with respect to noise and shadow flicker.</li> <li>Residual impacts on natural heritage are assessed as low and not significant.</li> <li>The proposed project is <b>consistent</b> with natural heritage policies.</li> </ul>
<b>Access to Grid</b>	<b>Section 11.5.3.7 – Access to grid</b> – Require consultation with electricity transmission operators on grid connection nature and location at pre-planning stage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Early and ongoing consultation undertaken with the relevant electricity transmission operators to agree a technically feasible and environmentally sensitive grid solution.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation outcomes and correspondence are included in the application documentation.</li> <li>• The proposed project is <b>consistent</b> with access-to-grid requirements.</li> </ul>
<b>Proximity to Roads and Railways</b>	<b>Section 11.5.3.8 – Proximity to roads/rail</b> – Minimum setback of blade tip height +10% from national/regional roads and railways; site-specific setbacks from other roads.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All turbines are sited at a minimum distance equal to the blade tip height plus 10% from National and Regional roads and railways, ensuring safety and minimising potential visual or operational impacts.</li> <li>• For other local roads, site-specific assessments have been carried out to determine appropriate setbacks, taking into account road usage, visibility, and local topography. These measures ensure that the development maintains safe distances from transport infrastructure while integrating harmoniously into the surrounding landscape and adhering to planning guidelines.</li> </ul>
<b>Proximity to power lines</b>	<b>Section 11.5.3.9 – Proximity to power lines</b> – Turbines must maintain falling distance plus flashover distance from overhead transmission lines.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Turbine locations are designed to ensure a minimum clearance of the full falling distance from foundations plus the relevant flashover distance to all overhead lines.</li> <li>• The proposed project is <b>consistent</b> with power line setback and safety requirements.</li> </ul>
<b>Interference with communication systems</b>	<b>Section 11.5.3.10 – Communications &amp; aviation</b> – Consult broadcasters, mobile operators and Irish Aviation Authority; address potential interference.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevant licensed broadcasters and mobile operators (as per ComReg) have been consulted regarding the proposed project.</li> <li>• The Irish Aviation Authority has been consulted to confirm no unacceptable impacts on aviation communications or radar.</li> <li>• Outcomes of these consultations are documented and submitted with the application.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposed project is <b>consistent</b> with communication and aviation safeguard policies.</li> </ul>
<b>Set-back Distances</b>	<b>Section 11.5.3.11 – Residential setback</b> – Require 4× tip-height separation (min 500m) from residential curtilage, subject to noise limits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Every turbine is located at least four times the turbine tip height (720m) from the nearest point of any residential curtilage.</li> <li>The 500m minimum is exceeded in all cases and noise limits are met (see Noise chapter).</li> <li>The proposed project is <b>consistent</b> with residential setback policies.</li> </ul>
<b>Effects on Equine Facilities</b>	<b>Section 11.5.3.12 – Equine industry</b> – Assess and mitigate impacts on equine facilities, including noise and shadow flicker.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A dedicated assessment has been carried out to evaluate the effects of the development on noise and shadow flicker—both of which are known to influence the behaviour and welfare of horses. Where potential impacts were identified, appropriate mitigation measures such as increased setback distances, turbine curtailment strategies, and visual screening have been incorporated into the project design. Residual impacts have been assessed as minimal, confirming that the development will not adversely affect the operation or safety of equine facilities in the area.</li> </ul>
<b>Roads Development</b>	<b>Section 12.11.10.1 – Roads Development</b> – Ensure compliance with national road guidance, sight distance standards, limited hedgerow removal, TTA and Road Safety Audit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proposal assessed in accordance with <i>Spatial Planning and National Roads – Guidelines for Planning Authorities</i>.</li> <li>Sight distances and stopping distances meet, as far as possible, TII DMRB and DN-GEO-03060 standards, and DMURS / DN-GEO-03084 where relevant.</li> <li>Access design avoids extensive removal of hedgerows, embankments and traditional boundaries, consistent with the Rural Design Guide.</li> <li>A full Traffic and Transport Assessment and Road Safety Audit have been prepared.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A Traffic Management Plan (including passing bays, widened approaches, internal loops and compounds) minimises construction-phase impacts.</li><li>• The proposed project is <b>consistent</b> with roads development management policies.</li></ul>
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## 5. CONCLUSION

The Ballyfasy Wind Farm represents a strategically important renewable energy development that aligns with Ireland's national and EU climate obligations, energy security goals, and planning policy frameworks. With a proposed capacity of between 57 MW and 72 MW, the project will generate clean electricity for over 40,313 and 50,922 households annually, significantly reducing reliance on imported fossil fuels and contributing to Ireland's legally binding target of achieving net-zero emissions by 2050.

The project has been designed to comply with all relevant European Directives, including the EIA, Habitats, and Birds Directives, and is supported by a comprehensive Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR), Natura Impact Statement (NIS), and Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). These documents demonstrate that the development will not adversely affect designated Natura 2000 sites, protected species, or sensitive habitats or give rise to any significant effects on the environment. Mitigation measures such as clear span bridges, horizontal directional drilling, and buffer zones have been incorporated to protect watercourses and biodiversity. The site layout also ensures compliance with noise, shadow flicker, and visual impact guidelines, maintaining a minimum setback of 720 metres from residential properties, exceeding the requirements of both the 2006 and Draft 2019 Wind Energy Development Guidelines.

From a local policy perspective, the site has historically been designated as suitable for wind energy development under County Development Plans since 2008 and remains in an area partially identified as "Acceptable in Principle" under the 2014 CDP wind energy strategy.

This planning statement demonstrates that the project meets the criteria for proper planning and sustainable development, supported by national policy objectives under the National Planning Framework (NPF), the Southern Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES), and the Climate Action Plan 2025. These frameworks collectively call for accelerated deployment of renewable energy, enhanced grid infrastructure, and integration of climate action into local planning decisions.

The project also complies with Kilkenny County Council's Development Management Requirements across multiple environmental considerations, including roads and transport, grid access, waste management, archaeology, landscape protection, and community engagement. A full Traffic and Transport Assessment and Road Safety Audit have been completed, and the grid connection has been designed in consultation with transmission operators to ensure technical feasibility and minimal environmental impact. The project includes a Community Benefit Fund under the RESS scheme, ensuring that local communities share in the economic and social benefits of the development.

At the EU level, the Ballyfasy Wind Farm is supported by the Renewable Energy Directive (RED III) and the European Green Deal, all of which emphasise the urgent need to expand renewable energy capacity. These instruments establish a rebuttable presumption that renewable energy projects are of overriding public interest when balancing the legal interests in an individual case and mandate streamlined permitting processes. Ireland's obligations under these frameworks are legally binding and increasingly urgent, given its current underperformance in emissions reduction and renewable energy deployment. The relevant provisions of RED III have recently been transposed in Ireland through the European Union (Planning and Development) (Renewable Energy) Regulations 2025.



In conclusion, the Ballyfasy Wind Farm aligns with national and EU policy while preventing adverse environmental impacts via robust assessments and mitigation measures. The proposed project will make a significant contribution to Ireland's binding climate targets, energy independence, and regional development. It has been rigorously assessed and designed to meet all planning, environmental, and legislative requirements, and its approval would reflect a proactive and legally consistent response to the climate emergency. It is respectfully submitted that planning permission should be granted in recognition of the project's strategic importance and alignment with national and EU obligations.

## APPENDIX A

### SOLICITORS LETTER

Date: 9th day of December 2025.

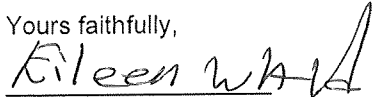
An Coimisiun Pleanála,  
64 Marlborough Street,  
Rotunda,  
Dublin 1,  
D01 V902.

**Re: Ballyfasy Wind Farm, County Kilkenny**

Dear Sirs,

I hereby give my irrevocable consent to any Planning Application (s) made by or on behalf of FuturEnergy Ireland Development DAC, its project partners or its associated companies in connection with the proposed Wind Farm. I confirm that I am the registered owner of the property comprised in Folio 9122F of the Register of Freeholders for County Kilkenny and as shown edged [red] on the attached plan. I am aware that my said property and the dwellinghouse thereon will be situated in close proximity to the Wind Farm and I consent to and raise no objection, requisition or enquiry as regards same.

Yours faithfully,



EILEEN WARD

SIGNED

Witness:

Address:

Occupation:

*Solicitor*

THOMAS CARROLL  
M.W. KELLER & SON  
SOLICITORS LLP.  
8 GLADSTONE STREET  
WATERFORD

Date: 9th day of December 2025.

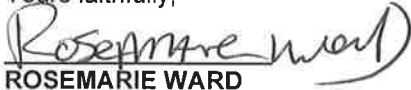
An Coimisiun Pleanála,  
64 Marlborough Street,  
Rotunda,  
Dublin 1,  
D01 V902.

**Re: Ballyfasy Wind Farm, County Kilkenny**

Dear Sirs,

I hereby give my irrevocable consent to any Planning Application (s) made by or on behalf of FuturEnergy Ireland Development DAC, its project partners or its associated companies in connection with the proposed Wind Farm. I confirm that Eileen Ward is the registered owner of the property comprised in Folio 9122F of the Register of Freeholders for County Kilkenny and as shown edged red on the attached plan. I am aware that the said property and the dwellinghouse thereon will be situated in close proximity to the Wind Farm and I consent to and raise no objection, requisition or enquiry as regards same.

Yours faithfully,

  
ROSEMARIE WARD

SIGNED

Witness:

Address:

Occupation:

*Mrs. Cath. Strab. Waterford*  
*8 Gladstone Street*  
*Solicitor*

**M.W. KELLER & SON  
SOLICITORS LLP.  
8 GLADSTONE STREET  
WATERFORD**

Date: 9th day of December 2025.



## APPENDIX B

### CONSIDERATION OF PLANNING POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS (CDP 2021) – TABLE 4-2 DETAILED RESPONSE

Theme	Policy Wording	Project Response
Renewable Energy	11A) To support and facilitate the provision of energy in accordance with Ireland's transition to a low carbon energy future by means of the maintenance and upgrading of electricity and gas network grid infrastructure and by integrating renewable energy sources and ensuring our national and regional energy system remains safe, secure and ready to meet increased demand as the regional economy grows over the period of the plan.	<p>The proposed Ballyfasy Wind Farm will make a substantial contribution to Kilkenny County Council's climate and planning objectives outlined in policies 2B, 2C, 2E, 2G, and 2H. With an installed capacity of between 57 MW and 72 MW, the development will generate approximately 179,755 to 227,059 MWh of clean electricity annually—enough to power between 40,313 and 50,922 Irish households each year. This will directly support the reduction in reliance on fossil fuels and improving the security of Ireland's energy supply.</p> <p>The project also aligns with the strategic objectives of the National Planning Framework and the Southern Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy, by integrating climate considerations into local development and enabling the practical delivery of national climate targets. Over its proposed 35-year operational lifetime, the wind farm will help reduce Kilkenny County Council's energy-related CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and contribute to the European Climate Alliance commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 10% every five years. In addition, the project will deliver a Community Benefit Fund under the RESS scheme, supporting local sustainability initiatives and ensuring that communities across Kilkenny are active participants in Ireland's transition to a low-carbon, climate-resilient society.</p>
	Support the implementation of the NECP (National Energy & Climate Plan (NECP) and associated adaptation & mitigation measures	
	Support the implementation of Ireland's Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Future.	
	Support the sustainable development, maintenance and upgrading of electricity and gas network grid infrastructure to integrate a renewable energy source and ensure our national and regional energy system remains safe, secure and ready to meet increased demand as the regional economy grow.	
Biodiversity	1A) To implement the provisions of Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the EU Habitats Directive and ensure that any plan or project within the functional area of the Planning Authority is subject to appropriate assessment in accordance with the Guidance Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities, 2009 or any subsequent version, and is assessed in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive in order to avoid adverse impacts on the integrity and conservation objectives of the site.	The proposed Ballyfasy Wind Farm has taken into consideration Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the EU Habitats Directive, to ensure that the development will not adversely affect the integrity or conservation objectives of any designated Natura 2000 sites. An Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening has been undertaken in to evaluate potential impacts on nearby Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs).

Theme	Policy Wording	Project Response
		<p>Where necessary, mitigation measures have been incorporated to avoid or reduce any potential adverse effects, ensuring the project aligns with both EU and national biodiversity protection standards.</p> <p>The NIS submitted with the application concludes that “<i>In absence of mitigation, the potential risks to the Lower River Suir SAC and the River Barrow and River Nore SAC is the potential reduction in water quality and potential risks to the River Nore SPA is a reduction in available food biomass due to water quality degradation. However, following the application of the detailed mitigation measures, potential adverse effects would be avoided, and it can be determined that there would be no risk of adverse effects on the qualifying interest and special conservation interest species, or on overall site integrity in light of the conservation objectives for the Lower River Suir SAC, the River Barrow and River Nore SAC and the River Nore SPA.</i></p> <p><i>There would be no adverse effects on the integrity of any European sites during the development and operation of the proposed project, either alone or in-combination with any other plans or projects.”</i></p>
<b>Biodiversity</b>	<p>Development Management Requirement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Require all developments in the early pre-planning stage of the planning process to identify, protect and enhance ecological features and habitats, and making provision for local biodiversity (e.g. through protection of existing breeding sites, and provision of appropriate new infrastructure such as swift, bat and barn owl boxes, bat roost sites, green roofs, etc.) and provide links to the wider Green Infrastructure network as an essential part of the design process.</li> </ul>	<p>Comprehensive surveys have been carried out identifying key biodiversity assets within and adjacent to the site. The layout of the wind farm has been informed by habitat mapping and analysis to minimise any impacts to biodiversity.</p> <p>The project also includes various mitigation and ecological enhancements measures such as planting hedgerows, areas native woodland and creating a new pond, which will support species movement and ecological resilience. These provisions demonstrate a proactive approach to biodiversity integration and align with the County Development Plan’s emphasis on ecological enhancement as an essential component of sustainable infrastructure development.</p>
<b>Woodlands, Trees and Hedgerows</b>	<p>Development Management Requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To protect existing woodlands, trees and hedgerows which are of amenity or biodiversity value and/or contribute to landscape</li> </ul>	<p>The layout of the development has been informed by this assessment to ensure the retention of mature trees, hedgerows, and any</p>

Theme	Policy Wording	Project Response
	<p>character of the county, and to ensure that proper provision is made for their protection and management, when undertaking, approving or authorising development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure that when undertaking, approving or authorising development that sufficient information is provided to enable an assessment of impacts on woodlands, trees, and hedgerows.</li> <li>• To have regard to, and seek the conservation of identified trees and woodlands from a) the National Survey of Ancient and Long-Established Woodlands, b) the Tree Register of Ireland (c) sites of significance identified in the Kilkenny Woodlands Survey 1997, (d) the National Survey of Native Woodlands, and (e) Survey of Mature Trees in Kilkenny City and Environs, in the assessment of planning applications</li> <li>• To retain hedgerows, and other distinctive boundary treatment such as stone walls, when undertaking, authorising or approving development; where the loss of the existing boundary is unavoidable as part of development, to ensure that a new hedgerow is planted using native species, and species of local provenance to replace the existing hedgerow and/or that the wall is re-built using local stone and local vernacular design.</li> <li>• To discourage the felling of mature trees to facilitate development and, where appropriate make use of Tree Preservation Orders to protect important trees and groups of trees which may be at risk or have an amenity, biodiversity or historic value.</li> <li>• To require the planting of native broadleaved species, and species of local provenance, in new developments as appropriate. See Appendix G for a list of native trees and shrubs.</li> </ul>	<p>distinctive boundary treatments, such as stone walls, that contribute to the landscape character of the area.</p> <p>Where the removal of hedgerows is unavoidable, the project includes proposals for replanting using native species of local provenance, in line with Appendix G of the Development Plan. The site has also been cross-referenced with national and local woodland inventories, including the National Survey of Ancient and Long-Established Woodlands, the Tree Register of Ireland, and the Kilkenny Woodlands Survey (1997), to ensure that no significant woodland features are adversely impacted. There is no native woodlands on site but planting of native woodland is proposed as part of the project biodiversity enhancement measures. The project team has also reviewed the potential for Tree Preservation Orders and confirmed that no protected trees will be affected by the proposed project.</p>
<b>Biodiversity</b>	<p>Development Management Requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To require relevant development proposals to address the presence or absence of invasive alien species on proposed development sites and (if necessary) require applicants to prepare and submit an</li> </ul>	<p>Surveys for invasive non-native species (INNS) were carried out using guidance from the NBDC 'Ireland's Regulated Invasive Alien Plant Species' (NBDC, 2025) and 'Field Guide to Invasive Species in Ireland' (Early et al., 2018).</p>



Theme	Policy Wording	Project Response
	<p>Invasive Species Management Plan where such a species exists to comply with the provisions of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011-2015.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For proposals connected to surface water systems, risks associated with the spread of crayfish plague shall be considered and applicants should submit a crayfish plague management strategy where appropriate.</li> </ul>	<p>No INNS listed on the Third Schedule (S.I. No. 477 of 2011) were identified within the footprint of the proposed project. Additionally, no FPO species or Red listed plant species were recorded within the proposed wind farm site during surveys.</p> <p>White-clawed crayfish, a species listed under Annex II and V of the EU Habitats Directive and protected under Irish Wildlife Acts, is a qualifying interest of the River Barrow and River Nore SAC and the Lower River Suir SAC—both of which are hydrologically connected to the proposed development. Although field surveys conducted at six aquatic sites within the study area did not record the species, suitable habitat features were present, and desktop studies confirmed its presence within the grid squares encompassing the project area. Given its designation and potential presence within the zone of influence (Zol), the species was assessed as being of international importance and considered further in the impact assessment.</p> <p>The primary risk to white-clawed crayfish arises from habitat degradation due to water quality impacts during the construction phase. Activities such as sediment runoff or pollutant discharge into nearby watercourses including the Smartcastle Stream, Arrigle River, and Blackwater (Kilmacow) could lead to deterioration of water quality in downstream habitats, rendering them unsuitable for the species. These impacts are likely to result in short-term, negative, and significant effects at an international scale, particularly given the species' sensitivity and conservation status.</p> <p>To mitigate these risks, a suite of measures outlined in Chapter 9 (Hydrology and Hydrogeology) of the EIAR will be implemented. These include best practice construction techniques, sediment control measures, and watercourse protection strategies designed to prevent contamination and preserve habitat quality. By applying these mitigation measures, the project aims to avoid adverse effects on white-clawed crayfish and ensure compliance with conservation obligations under EU and national legislation.</p>

Theme	Policy Wording	Project Response
Landscape	<p>Development Management Requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To protect the landscape character, quality and local distinctiveness of County Kilkenny, and have regard to the guidance set out in the Landscape Character Assessment.</li> <li>• Where necessary, to require that applications are accompanied by a visual impact assessment, particularly in upland areas, river valleys and areas of greater sensitivity.</li> <li>• To facilitate appropriate development that reflects the scale, character and sensitivities of the local landscape throughout the county, and require that developments minimise the loss of natural features such as trees, hedgerows and stone walls.</li> <li>• To facilitate, where appropriate, developments that have a functional and locational natural resource requirement to be situated on steep or elevated sites (e.g. reservoir, telecommunications or wind energy structures) with reference to the appropriate County strategies currently in place, and to ensure that any residual adverse visual impacts are minimised or mitigated.</li> <li>• To ensure that development in upland areas or on steep slopes will not have a disproportionate or dominating visual impact (due to excessive bulk, scale or inappropriate siting) and will not significantly interfere or detract from scenic upland vistas, or when viewed from public areas, scenic routes, viewpoints or settlements.</li> <li>• To have particular regard to the potential impacts of new development on sensitive upland areas, and to materially consider the difficulty of establishing and maintaining screening vegetation when assessing development proposals in these areas.</li> <li>• To continue to permit development that can utilise existing structures and settlement areas whilst taking account of the local visual absorption opportunities provided by existing topography and</li> </ul>	<p>The site layout and turbine positioning have been informed by the guidance set out in the Kilkenny Landscape Character Assessment, ensuring that the development reflects the scale, character, and sensitivities of the surrounding landscape. A comprehensive Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has been undertaken, with particular attention given to potential impacts on upland areas, river valleys, scenic routes, and public viewpoints. The assessment concludes that the residual significance of visual effect as a result of the proposed project ranges from Substantial-Moderate to Imperceptible. The most notable effects tend to occur within the immediate surroundings of the proposed wind farm site, particularly at local community receptors, major route receptors, and centres of population (such as Ballyfasy). From these nearby receptors, the proposed turbines will become one of the defining built features, resulting in a notable degree of visual change and a marked increase in the intensity of built development within the local landscape context. Nevertheless, the turbines are generally well accommodated within this locally elevated landscape, which is characterised by existing wind energy development and typical working land uses, such as extensive areas of conifer forestry and a patchwork of pastoral farmland. It is, in fact, the broad underlying land uses — notably the extensive forestry plantations — that assist in assimilating the scale of the turbines into the receiving landscape.</p> <p>Furthermore, the proposed turbine array has been designed in accordance with the visual amenity offset guidance outlined in the Draft Revised WEDGs (2019), which refer to a setback of four times the proposed maximum tip height (720 metres in this instance) from the nearest residential dwellings.</p> <p>Also within the central study area, Tory Hill, located to the southwest of the proposed wind farm site, was identified at an early stage of the development as a sensitive visual receptor. While the proposed</p>

Theme	Policy Wording	Project Response
	<p>prevailing vegetation and to direct new development whenever possible towards the vicinity of existing structures and mature vegetation in the Lowland Areas, River Valleys and Transitional Areas. • To recognise that in the Lowland Areas which are comprised of low lying open environments, tall and bulky development sometimes can have a disproportionate impact against the landscape particularly when viewed from the predominantly low lying areas of the public realm. Visually obtrusive and/or insensitive development shall be discouraged in such instances.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure that development in the River Valleys will not adversely affect or detract from either protected views (see Appendix H) (especially from bridges) or distinctive linear sections of river valleys (especially open floodplains) when viewed from settlements.</li> <li>• To maintain the visual integrity of areas of greater sensitivity in the county and ensure that any development in these areas is appropriately sited and designed. Applicants shall demonstrate that the proposed development can be assimilated into the landscape and will not have a disproportionate visual impact on the landscape.</li> </ul>	<p>turbines will be clearly visible from the summit of this elevated location, they present in a clear and legible manner across the broader landscape patterns. Owing to their loose spacing, the turbine array does not significantly block or obstruct views of the uplands to the northeast from this vantage point.</p> <p>Overall, it is assessed that the proposed project, whether considered in isolation or cumulatively with nearby existing wind energy developments, will give rise to visual effects that are classified as Not Significant.</p> <p>The development also seeks to retain natural features such as existing trees and hedgerows, wherever possible, and where removal is unavoidable, proposals include replanting and reconstruction using native species and local materials. The site's elevated location is justified by the functional requirements of wind energy generation, and its siting has been guided by the County's wind energy strategy to ensure that the project does not dominate scenic vistas or detract from the visual quality of the landscape. The design also takes advantage of existing topography and vegetation to enhance visual absorption and reduce prominence when viewed from sensitive receptors. These measures demonstrate that the proposed wind farm has been sensitively integrated into the landscape and complies with the County Development Plan's objectives for sustainable and context-responsive development.</p>
Archaeology	9C) To protect archaeological sites and monuments (including their setting), underwater archaeology, and archaeological objects, including those that are listed in the Record of Monuments and Places, and in the Urban Archaeological Survey of County Kilkenny or newly discovered sub-surface and underwater archaeological remains.	A comprehensive archaeological impact assessment was undertaken at the earliest stage of the planning process to identify any known or potential archaeological features within or adjacent to the proposed development site. This included a review of the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP), the Urban Archaeological Survey of County Kilkenny, and relevant national databases. The assessment confirmed that no underwater archaeological features would be affected and that the site layout could be designed to avoid direct impacts on recorded monuments or zones of archaeological potential. These findings informed the final layout of the project to
	Development Management Requirements:	

Theme	Policy Wording	Project Response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To endeavour to preserve in situ all archaeological monuments, whether on land or underwater, listed in the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP), and any newly discovered archaeological sites, features, or objects by requiring that archaeological remains are identified and fully considered at the very earliest stages of the development process and that schemes are designed to avoid impacting on archaeological heritage.</li> <li>• To require archaeological assessment, surveys, test excavation and/or monitoring for planning applications in areas of archaeological importance if a development proposal is likely to impact upon in-situ archaeological monuments, their setting and archaeological remains.</li> <li>• To ensure that development within the vicinity of a Recorded Monument is sited and designed appropriately so that it does not seriously detract from the setting of the feature or its zone of archaeological potential. Where upstanding remains of a Recorded Monument exist a visual impact assessment may be required to fully determine the effect of any proposed development.</li> <li>• To require the retention of surviving medieval plots and street patterns and to facilitate the recording of evidence of ancient boundaries, layouts etc. in the course of development. To safeguard the importance of significant archaeological landscapes from developments that would unduly sever or disrupt the relationship, connectivity and/or inter-visibility between sites.</li> </ul>	<p>ensure preservation of archaeological settings and to avoid disturbance to sub-surface remains.</p> <p>Where development is proposed near archaeological features, the project incorporates appropriate mitigation measures such as buffer zones, monitoring protocols, and, where necessary, test excavations or geophysical surveys. A Visual Impact Assessment was also prepared to evaluate potential effects on the setting of upstanding monuments, particularly in elevated or visually sensitive areas. The design ensures that the development does not dominate or detract from scenic upland vistas or interfere with the inter-visibility between significant archaeological sites. The project does not affect surviving medieval plots, street patterns, or ancient boundaries, and no significant archaeological landscapes will be severed or disrupted.</p> <p>Should any previously unknown archaeological material be encountered during construction, robust mitigation measures—including archaeological monitoring and reporting protocols—will be implemented in consultation with statutory authorities. These provisions demonstrate a proactive and responsible approach to cultural heritage protection and ensure full compliance with the Kilkenny County Development Plan's objectives for archaeological conservation and sustainable site development.</p>
Flood Risk	<p>10.2.6.2 Development Management Requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where flood risk may be an issue for any proposed development, a detailed flood risk assessment should be carried out appropriate to the scale and nature of the development and the risks arising. In particular, any area within or adjoining flood zone A or B, or flood risk area, shall be the subject of a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment appropriate to the type and scale of the development being proposed. This shall be undertaken in accordance with the Planning System and</li> </ul>	<p>A Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) has been undertaken in line with the Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines and the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment accompanying the County Development Plan. The assessment evaluated the site's proximity to flood zones A and B and any adjoining flood risk areas.</p> <p>The FRA confirms that the development does not pose an unmanageable level of flood risk and will not result in adverse impacts to third-party lands.</p>

Theme	Policy Wording	Project Response
	<p>Flood Risk Management – Guidelines and the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment accompanying this Plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If a Site Specific FRA demonstrates an unmanageable level of flood risk and/or impacts to 3rd party lands, development cannot proceed.</li> <li>• Proposals for mitigation and management of flood risk will only be considered where avoidance is not possible and where development can be clearly justified with the Guidelines' Justification Test.</li> </ul>	
<b>The National Transmission/Distribution network</b>	<p>10.3.2 Grid Development Management Requirements: Kilkenny County Council will facilitate the provision of energy networks in principle, provided that it can be demonstrated that –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the development is required in order to facilitate the provision or retention of significant economic or social infrastructure;</li> <li>• the route proposed has been identified with due consideration for social, environmental and cultural impacts;</li> <li>• the design is such that will achieve least environmental impact;</li> <li>• the lines should be planned to avoid areas of high landscape sensitivity;</li> <li>• preference should be given to undergrounding services where appropriate; the proposed infrastructure complies with all internationally recognised standards with regard to proximity to dwellings and other inhabited structures including best practice and new accepted research on the impacts on health;</li> <li>• new power lines and power installations should be sited in accordance with the requirements of the “Health Effects of Electromagnetic Fields” Report issued by the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources in 2007, and</li> <li>• where impacts are inevitable, mitigation features have been included.</li> </ul>	<p>The proposed grid connection route has been carefully selected with full consideration of environmental impacts, and its design prioritises minimal environmental disruption.</p> <p>EIAR Chapter 3 Consideration of Reasonable Alternatives, outlines various grid connection options considered and outlines how the proposed grid connection options were chosen. Some of the positives outlined for GCO One and Two are that they are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. associated with fewer environmental and community impacts across multiple categories.</li> <li>2. located within the wind farm site, reducing public disruption.</li> <li>3. favourable due to reduced land take and fewer watercourse crossings.</li> <li>4. associated with lower visual, noise, and traffic impacts</li> </ol>



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• where considered necessary by the Council, a Visual Impact Assessment and a Landscape Impact Assessment will be required for significant Grid Infrastructural projects.</li> <li>• That existing grid infrastructure should be used where possible in preference to erecting new grid infrastructure.</li> <li>• Any proposed development must avoid impact on any Special Area of Conservation.</li> </ul>	
<b>Wind Energy</b>	<p>11.5.3 Development Management Guidance All planning applications for wind energy developments shall be assessed against the DEHLG's Wind Energy Development Guidelines, 2006, (and any subsequent update of these guidelines) and the County Council's Wind Strategy. In accordance with the guidance, when considering an application for wind energy development, the planning authority may consider some, if not all, of the following matters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental Assessments (EIA, AA etc. See 10.5.3.1 below) including mitigation included in Construction Environment Management Plans (CEMPs);</li> <li>• Community engagement and participation aspects of the proposal and how its Community Benefit Fund will contribute to the wider County of Kilkenny's Energy Efficiency targets at a local level. (3CEA coordinate such proposals under the County Climate Action Plan.)</li> <li>• Grid connection details</li> <li>• Geology and ground conditions, including peat stability; and management plans to deal with any potential material impact. Reference should be made to the National Landslide Susceptibility Map to confirm ground conditions are suitably stable for project;</li> <li>• Site drainage and hydrological effects, such as o water supply and quality and watercourse crossings; o management plans to deal with</li> </ul>	<p>The proposed wind farm has been designed in accordance with the DEHLG's Wind Energy Development Guidelines (2006 and any subsequent updates), as well as Kilkenny County Council's Wind Strategy. A full suite of environmental assessments, including an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Appropriate Assessment (AA), has been undertaken, with mitigation measures detailed in a comprehensive Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).</p> <p>The applicant has actively engaged with the local community, and a Community Benefit Fund will be established to support local energy efficiency initiatives in line with the County Climate Action Plan.</p> <p>Grid connection details have been carefully planned to minimise environmental and visual impact.</p> <p>Hydrological assessments have been completed to ensure protection of watercourses, water quality, and flood risk, with mitigation measures incorporated.</p> <p>A detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment has been prepared, addressing the visibility of turbines and ancillary infrastructure.</p> <p>The project avoids direct and indirect impacts on ecologically protected sites and species.</p>

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	<p>any potential material impact on watercourses; o the hydrological table; o flood risk including mitigation measures;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Landscape and visual impact assessment, including the size, scale and layout and the degree to which the wind energy project is visible over certain areas and in certain views;</li> <li>• Visual impact of ancillary development, such as grid connection and access roads;</li> <li>• Potential impact of the project on natural heritage, to include direct and indirect effects on protected sites or species, on habitats of ecological sensitivity and biodiversity value and, where necessary, management plans to deal with the satisfactory co-existence of the wind energy development and the particular species/habitat identified;</li> <li>• Potential impact of the project on the built heritage including archaeological and architectural heritage;</li> <li>• It is recommended that consideration of carbon emissions balance is demonstrated when the wind energy developments requires peat extraction.</li> <li>• Local environmental impacts including noise, shadow flicker, electromagnetic interference, etc.;</li> <li>• Adequacy of local access road network to facilitate construction of the project and transportation of large machinery and turbine parts to site, including a traffic management plan;</li> <li>• Information on any cumulative effects due to other projects, including effects on natural heritage and visual effects;</li> <li>• Information on the location of quarries to be used or borrow pits proposed during the construction phase and associated remedial works thereafter;</li> </ul>	<p>Archaeological and architectural heritage have also been considered and avoided.</p> <p>Local environmental impacts such as noise and shadow flicker have been evaluated and mitigated.</p> <p>The adequacy of the local road network has been confirmed, and a Traffic Management Plan will guide the transport of turbine components.</p> <p>Cumulative impacts with other developments have been assessed, and borrow pit usage during construction will be managed with appropriate remediation.</p> <p>Waste and surplus material, will be disposed of in accordance with best practice and regulatory standards, ensuring full compliance with Council guidance.</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disposal or elimination of waste/surplus material from construction/site clearance, particularly significant for peatland</li> </ul>	
<b>Wind Development Assessments</b>	<b>Energy</b> 11.5.3.1 Environmental Assessments The assessment of the impacts of developments shall comply with the relevant European Directives as transposed into Irish legislation, including the EIA Directive, the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive. As regards the directives, these assessments will relate to all mandatory categories and where, following screening, if required, a full EIAR or NIS is produced, these must include the impacts of both the planning application and its grid connections. In relation to EIAR, the assessment must address the direct effects and any short, medium and long-term, permanent and temporary, positive and negative, indirect, secondary, cumulative and transboundary effects of the whole project, i.e. the wind energy development and the grid connection. In relation to the grid connection it is preferable that the corridor approach be used. In relation to NIS, the assessment shall consider all potential impacts on Natura 2000 sites. It is recommended that Construction Environment Management Plans (CEMPs) of projects be submitted with applications. These plans generally include mitigation measures which should ideally input into both Environmental Impact Assessment Report or Appropriate Assessment at planning application stage. All planning application submission (and in particular the EIAR) must include details of the site compound and access arrangements. The applications must include details of the location and design of the site compound and construction methods, environmental mitigation methods and proposed reinstatement.	<p>The project has been assessed in accordance with all relevant European Directives transposed into Irish legislation, including the EIA Directive, the Habitats Directive, and the Birds Directive. Following screening, a full Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and, where applicable, a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) have been prepared to address the impacts of both the wind farm and its associated grid connection.</p> <p>The EIAR comprehensively evaluates direct, indirect, secondary, cumulative, and transboundary effects across short, medium, and long-term timeframes, considering both permanent and temporary impacts.</p> <p>The NIS includes a detailed analysis of potential impacts on Natura 2000 sites, ensuring full compliance with conservation obligations. A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) accompanies the application, outlining mitigation measures that inform both the EIAR and NIS.</p> <p>The planning application also includes detailed information on the site compound and access arrangements, including location, design, construction methods, environmental mitigation strategies, and proposed reinstatement works. These measures demonstrate a robust and responsible approach to environmental protection throughout the lifecycle of the project.</p>
<b>Pre-planning Consultation</b>	11.5.3.2 Pre-planning and public consultation Applicants for small- or large-scale wind farms shall be required to engage with the local population in the vicinity of any proposed wind farm, prior to lodging their application.	<p>Public and stakeholder consultation was undertaken prior to the submission of the planning application, providing residents with clear, accessible information about the project's scope, timeline, and potential impacts. Feedback from these engagements was carefully considered and has informed aspects of the project design, including mitigation measures and community benefit initiatives.</p>

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Wind energy and Landscape	<p>11.5.3.3 Impact on the landscape Both quantitative and qualitative factors are used to estimate the potential for impact of Wind Energy developments on the landscape. In accordance with the draft Guidelines on Wind Energy, these are comprised in four parts, being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Landscape sensitivity (ranging from very low sensitivity to very high sensitivity)</li> <li>• Visual presence of the wind energy development (ranging from minimal presence to highly dominant)</li> <li>• Aesthetic impact of the wind energy development on its landscape context (ranging from major positive impact to major adverse impact)</li> <li>• Significance of the impact (ranging from insignificant to major)</li> </ul> <p>The Planning Authority will use these four elements of landscape impact assessment in considering the potential for impact of proposed wind energy development on the landscape. Landscape Character Types are distinct types of landscape that are relatively homogenous in character and are generic in nature in that they may occur in different localities throughout the county, but share similar combinations of geology, topography, land cover and historical land use, for example, Upland Areas. The Kilkenny Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) (see Chapter 9) divides the county into four landscape character types (LCTs); Upland Areas, Lowland Areas, River Valleys, and Transitional Areas. See also Figure 9.3 Landscape Sensitivities in Chapter 9 Heritage which identifies environmentally sensitive features. The Guidance notes however that a wind energy development may be located in one landscape character type, but visible from another. In such instances the entire visual unit should be taken into consideration. Chapter 11 Renewable Energy Kilkenny City and County Development Plan Volume 1 207 All applications shall be accompanied by a Landscape Impact Assessment Report, as set out in Appendix 3 of the Wind Energy Development Guidelines , and any revisions thereof including;</p>	<p>A comprehensive Landscape Impact Assessment has been prepared in accordance with Appendix 3 of the Wind Energy Development Guidelines, evaluating both quantitative and qualitative factors.</p> <p>The Landscape Impact Assessment has assessed that the proposed project, whether considered in isolation or cumulatively with nearby existing wind energy developments, will give rise to visual effects that are classified as Not Significant.</p> <p>Ancillary infrastructure, including grid connections and access roads, has been evaluated for visual impact and designed to blend with the existing landscape features. This approach ensures that the wind farm integrates sensitively into its environment while supporting renewable energy goals.</p>

Theme	Policy Wording	Project Response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Landscape and visual impact assessment, including the size, scale and layout and the degree to which the wind energy project is visible over certain areas and in certain views;</li> <li>• Visual impact of ancillary development, such as grid connection and access roads;</li> </ul>	
<b>Noise Impact</b>	<p>11.5.3.4 Noise Impact Assessment and Noise Limit The draft Guidelines indicate that noise is unlikely to be a significant problem where the distance from the nearest turbine to any noise sensitive property is more than 500 metres. Notwithstanding that there will be requirement for noise modelling as part of any wind energy development. Noise modelling carried out by the applicant in advance of and submitted with the planning application must test and demonstrate compliance with the required noise limits specified in the draft Ministerial guidance. The noise assessment shall include noise characteristics associated with both the wind turbines and any associated infrastructure such as transformers, sub-stations or any other ancillary equipment. Where any proposed distance between a wind farm and neighbouring offices or buildings is less, the Council will look for additional noise and shadow flicker mitigation. A Relative Rated Noise Limit (RRNL) in the range of 35 – 43 dB(A) shall apply at noise sensitive locations, while not exceeding the background noise level by more than 5dB(A) with an upper limit of 43 dB(A). For instance, at noise sensitive locations where existing background noise levels are measured at less than 30 dB, a maximum 35 dB(A) noise limit will be strictly imposed at lower wind speeds.</p>	<p>A detailed noise modelling study has been carried out and submitted as part of the planning application, demonstrating full compliance with the noise thresholds specified in the draft Ministerial guidance.</p> <p>The assessment includes noise characteristics associated with both the wind turbines and all ancillary infrastructure, such as transformers and substations. All noise-sensitive properties within the vicinity of the development have been identified, and the layout ensures that the minimum recommended separation distance of 720 metres is maintained.</p> <p>The Noise and Vibration Chapter of the EIA concludes that</p> <p>“The assessment of construction noise and vibration and has been conducted in accordance with best practice guidance contained in <i>BS 5228-1:2009+A1:2014 Code of practice for noise and vibration control on construction and open sites – Noise</i> and <i>BS 5228-2:2009+A1:2014 Code of practice for noise and vibration control on construction and open sites – Vibration</i>.</p> <p>Residual noise associated with the construction and decommissioned phases have been predicted to be below the proposed threshold values. The associated noise and vibration levels are not likely to cause significant effect at any NSL.</p> <p>Based on detailed information on the site layout, turbine noise emission levels and turbine hub height, turbine noise levels have been predicted at NSLs for a range of operational wind speeds. The predicted noise levels associated with the proposed project will be within the best practice noise limits recommended in WEDGs.</p>



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		<p>Therefore, it is not considered that a significant effect is associated with the proposed project.</p> <p>Operational noise from the proposed substation has been assessed and found to be within the adopted criteria.</p> <p>No significant vibration effects are associated with the operation of the site'.</p>
Shadow Flicker	<p>11.5.3.5 Shadow Flicker Where the turning blades of wind turbine cause intermittent shadows at sensitive nearby receptors, this is called shadow flicker. Shadow flicker generally can become an issue at properties 130 degrees either side of North relative to the wind turbines. A Shadow Flicker Study detailing the outcome of computational modelling for the potential for shadow flicker from the development should accompany all planning applications for wind energy development and suitable mitigation will be required.</p>	<p>A comprehensive Shadow Flicker Study has been conducted using computational modelling to assess the potential for intermittent shadow effects at sensitive receptors located relative to the turbines.</p> <p>The study identifies all properties potentially affected and quantifies the duration and frequency of shadow flicker events.</p> <p>The Shadow Flicker Chapter of the EIA concludes that <i>"the incorporation of set-back distances from the proposed turbines to buildings, which have been considered and implemented in the design of the proposed wind farm site layout, means that there are no sensitive receptors located within 720 m of a proposed turbine location. The assessment above has considered the full range of proposed turbine dimensions. The potential for shadow flicker to occur is entirely predictable and the modelling software used in this assessment and installed in the proposed wind turbines can accurately predict when shadow flicker has potential to occur at specific properties. This design measure, along with the implementation of screening and turbine shutdown mitigation measures, will ensure that there are no significant post-mitigation effects of shadow flicker on the local community irrespective of which turbine is selected within the turbine range."</i></p>
Natural Heritage	<p>11.5.3.6 Natural Heritage Any impacts on birds or rare flora, mammals, amphibians and fish need to be assessed. For the purposes of this Development Plan, a registered thoroughbred stud farm is considered to be a noise and flicker sensitive property as referred to</p>	<p>A thorough ecological assessment has been undertaken to identify and evaluate potential impacts on birds, rare flora, mammals, amphibians, and fish within and surrounding the project area. The assessment includes seasonal surveys and habitat mapping to ensure</p>

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	in the Government's Wind Energy Development Guidelines , and any revisions thereof.	<p>that sensitive species and habitats are protected throughout the construction and operational phases.</p> <p>Where necessary, mitigation measures such as buffer zones, timing restrictions, and habitat enhancement strategies have been incorporated into the project design.</p> <p>Additionally, the presence of any registered thoroughbred stud farms in the vicinity has been considered, with specific attention given to minimising noise and shadow flicker impacts in accordance with the Government's Wind Energy Development Guidelines. These measures reflect a strong commitment to biodiversity conservation and responsible development, ensuring the wind farm coexists harmoniously with the surrounding natural environment.</p>
<b>Access to Grid</b>	11.5.3.7 Access to grid details of consultations with the electricity transmission operators regarding the nature and location of a proposed grid connection should be submitted as part of the pre-planning consultation.	In accordance with section 11.5.3.7 of the Development Management Guidance, the developers of the proposed wind farm have undertaken early and proactive consultation with the relevant electricity transmission operators regarding the nature and location of the proposed grid connection. These consultations were carried out as part of the pre-planning process and have informed the design and routing of the grid infrastructure to ensure technical feasibility, environmental sensitivity, and alignment with national grid development strategies. Details of these consultations, including correspondence and preliminary agreements, have been submitted with the planning application to demonstrate coordination and compliance with regulatory requirements. This approach ensures that the grid connection is viable, efficient, and integrated into the broader energy network with minimal disruption.
<b>Proximity to Roads and Railways</b>	11.5.3.8 Proximity to Roads and Railways. At a minimum, turbines shall be set back a distance equalling the blade tip height of the turbine plus 10% from National and Regional roads and railways. Set-back from other roads will be site specific and determined at application stage.	All turbines are sited at a minimum distance equal to the blade tip height plus 10% from National and Regional roads and railways, ensuring safety and minimising potential visual or operational impacts.

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		For other local roads, site-specific assessments have been carried out to determine appropriate setbacks, taking into account road usage, visibility, and local topography. These measures ensure that the development maintains safe distances from transport infrastructure while integrating harmoniously into the surrounding landscape and adhering to planning guidelines.
<b>Proximity to power lines</b>	11.5.3.9 Proximity to power lines The minimum clearance for all turbines and overhead transmission lines must be falling distance (measured from the edge of the foundation) plus an additional flashover distance for the relevant voltage.	All turbines are sited with a minimum clearance that includes the full falling distance measured from the edge of each turbine foundation plus an additional flashover distance appropriate to the voltage of nearby overhead transmission lines. This ensures that the development adheres to best practice in terms of electrical safety and operational integrity, while also minimising risk to infrastructure and maintaining compliance with planning and engineering guidelines.
<b>Interference with communication systems</b>	11.5.3.10 Interference with communication systems Any wind farm applicant should contact individual broadcasters to inform them of the proposals. A list of the licensed operators is available on <a href="http://www.comreg.ie">www.comreg.ie</a> . Mobile phone operators should also be informed. Contact should also be made with the Irish Aviation Authority. The outcome of such consultations shall accompany planning applications.	As part of the pre-planning process, the applicant has contacted relevant licensed broadcasters and mobile phone operators, as listed by the Commission for Communications Regulation (ComReg), to inform them of the proposed development and assess any potential impacts.  In addition, formal consultation has been undertaken with the Irish Aviation Authority to ensure that the wind farm does not interfere with aviation communication or radar systems of nearby airports. The outcomes of these consultations, including any feedback or recommendations received, have been documented and submitted with the planning application. This proactive approach demonstrates the developer's commitment to safeguarding communication infrastructure and complying with national regulatory standards.
<b>Interference with communication systems</b>	11.5.3.11 Appropriate Setback Distance to apply As regards individual residential properties, it is required that applications for wind energy development should demonstrate a setback distance for visual amenity purposes of 4 times the tip height should apply	Each turbine is sited at a minimum distance of four times the tip height from the nearest point of the curtilage of any residential property in the vicinity of the development, ensuring that visual

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	between a wind turbine and the nearest point of the curtilage of any residential property in the vicinity of the proposed development, subject to a mandatory minimum setback of 500 metres. Discretion applies to planning authorities when agreeing separation distances for small scale wind energy developments such as auto producers or where the owner(s) and occupier(s) of the relevant property or properties are agreeable, provided minimum noise requirements are met.	impacts are appropriately mitigated. In all cases, the mandatory minimum setback of 500 metres has been adhered to.
<b>Effects on Equine Facilities</b>	11.5.3.12 Effects on Equine Facilities Applications for wind energy developments shall be accompanied by an assessment detailing potential impacts, mitigation and residual impacts upon the equine industry. Such assessments shall, inter alia, consider issues including noise and shadow flicker.	A dedicated assessment has been carried out to evaluate the effects of the development on noise and shadow flicker—both of which are known to influence the behaviour and welfare of horses. Where potential impacts were identified, appropriate mitigation measures such as increased setback distances, turbine curtailment strategies, and visual screening have been incorporated into the project design. Residual impacts have been assessed as minimal, confirming that the development will not adversely affect the operation or safety of equine facilities in the area.
<b>Roads Development</b>	<p>12.11.10.1 Roads Development Management Requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure that future development affecting national primary or secondary roads shall be assessed in accordance with the guidance given in Spatial Planning and National Roads - Guidelines for Planning Authorities.</li> <li>• To ensure that the required standards for sight distances and stopping sight distances are in compliance as far as possible, with current road geometry standards as outlined in the TII document Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) and TII Standard DN-GE0-03060 Geometric Design of Junctions; and o the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) and TII Standard DN-GE03084 'The Treatment of Transition Zones to Towns and Villages on National Roads' where appropriate.</li> </ul>	<p>The development has been assessed in line with the guidance provided in <i>Spatial Planning and National Roads - Guidelines for Planning Authorities</i>, ensuring that any potential impact on national primary or secondary roads is appropriately addressed.</p> <p>Sight distances and stopping sight distances have been evaluated and designed to comply, as far as possible, with current road geometry standards outlined in the TII Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB), TII Standard DN-GE0-03060, and the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS), including TII Standard DN-GE0-03084 where applicable.</p> <p>The project avoids extensive removal of hedgerows, embankments, or other natural features in line with Section 2.8 of the Rural Design Guide. A full Traffic and Transport Assessment has been carried out in accordance with the <i>Traffic Management Guidelines</i> and <i>Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines</i>, given the scale of the development</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the case of single houses in the countryside such standards should not be achieved by the extensive removal of hedgerows, ditches, embankments, trees or old walls, and should be in accordance with Section 2.8 of the Rural Design Guide.</li> <li>• All significant development proposals will be required to have transport and traffic assessments carried out in accordance with the publication Traffic Management Guidelines and the Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines (where the development affects a national road).</li> <li>• Planning applications involving a new access or significant changes to an existing access to a national road, will be required to include a Road Safety Audit.</li> </ul>	<p>and its interaction with national roads. Additionally, a Road Safety Audit has been completed and submitted with the planning application to ensure safe access and minimise risks associated with construction traffic and long-term operation.</p> <p>To minimise the impact of the proposed project during the construction phase a Traffic Management Plan has been prepared. The site layout incorporates passing bays, widened approaches to the site access, internal access track loops and compounds to assist with the traffic management and delivery on the site by providing adequate locations clear of the public road for vehicles to queue, facilitating larger HVs onsite to pass each other safely and reducing the high-risk reversing manoeuvres on site.</p>



