

Summary of Engagement 2025: Greenhills Renewable Energy Development

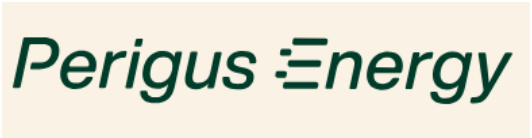


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1. February 2025 to present:

- The project Community Liaison Officer (CLO) received multiple calls on a weekly basis from local residents, with queries in relation to the project. Face-to-face meetings were arranged where requested, to provide further information to these residents. Some highlighted concerns about things like the duration of construction, noise, or traffic, while others wanted to highlight potential uses for the community benefit fund in the local area. Additionally, some residents wanted to explore the potential for their lands to be included in the project proposal.
- Over the course of the engagements, over 277 direct consultations were had with individuals or households, mostly face-to-face on doorsteps or at the local community centre, with a small number held virtually on video call. Note that this figure includes potentially meeting the same individual or household multiple times. 48 phone calls were received by the CLO following delivery of the third newsletter, significantly higher volume of phone calls received in the months up to that point by the project CLO at all hours, including in the evening, outside of typical office hours and at weekends. The dedicated project email address, set up in August, received approx. 70 emails that had been responded to at the time of writing.
- Genuine broad queries that were received from people in the locality were collated and answered in Newsletter 2*, while personal queries were typically responded to directly in person or over the phone. Due to the resource-intensive nature of this consultation process, individuals that issued a statement in relation to the project, either in support or opposition, typically received only a general acknowledgment, as there were no queries included requiring clarification.

2. February 2025:

- Newsletter 1 was delivered to approximately 342 houses within 1.5km of the general site area. These were hand delivered at doorsteps where there was somebody home, or otherwise left in post boxes. Introductions were made and an outline of the proposal was provided, along with contact info for any queries residents may have over the coming months. The newsletter outlined some initial project information in relation to the solar farm, BESS and substation components of the overall development proposal. Explanations were provided outlining how the planning process, as well as the community benefit fund concept, would work. Further information was provided around biodiversity net-gain, the potential benefits for pollinators and the need for utility-scale solar on a national level. A regional map showing the site and existing 220kV overhead line locations was provided. FAQs were provided, seeking to address some common concerns that residents may have. 42 households were directly spoken to, all within 1km of the proposal, with a further unrecorded number outside of the 1km range also directly engaged.
- Direct conversations were had with the local Park National School, to discuss suitable setbacks, the community engagement fund and the project in general.

*Note: email addresses with the 'Orsted' domain provided as part of the newsletters delivered to the community automatically forward to the same contacts in Perigus Energy.

3. March 2025:

- A press release was issued out to the media to introduce the project to a wider audience. This was reported on by multiple national media outlets, including RTE, the Irish Independent, the Farmers Journal and the Irish Examiner.
- Letters were issued to all sitting Cork TDs, with a particular focus on East Cork. These letters invited them to visit our office, to discuss our project pipeline in Cork (including Greenhills) and to help inform them of the local, regional and national benefits of renewable energy. Responses were received from An Taoiseach Micheál Martin, Colm Burke TD and Pádraig O'Sullivan TD, all of whom attended in-person discussions over the coming months, during which the Greenhills project was highlighted for their attention.

4. April 2025:

- Further letters were again issued to East Cork TD's, seeking to engage directly with them in relation to the Greenhills project. These letters were sent to James O'Connor TD, Pat Buckley TD, Liam Quaide TD and Noel McCarthy TD. No responses were received.

5. June 2025:

- Further letters were again issued to East Cork TD's, seeking to engage directly with them in relation to the Greenhills project and discuss any queries they may have. These letters were sent to James O'Connor TD, Pat Buckley TD, Liam Quaide TD and Noel McCarthy TD. No responses were received.

6. July 2025:

- A pre-application consultation meeting was held with Cork County Council, to introduce the project to their planning team and allow them to provide observations, raise concerns and highlight any specific information that they thought necessary for inclusion with any future planning application. Following this meeting, the council issued the developers representatives with a copy of the official meeting minutes. They also took the opportunity to provide extensive additional detailed information from specialists who had not been present at the meeting, highlighting to the developer what sort of specific surveys and information they were expecting to see as a part of the planning application.
- A letter was sent to Cork Co. Co. CEO seeking a meeting to discuss our project pipeline in Cork, including the Greenhills proposal.

7. August 2025:

- Newsletter 2 was delivered by hand to approximately 342 houses within 1.5km of the general site area, following the same doorstep delivery protocols as Newsletter 1. This newsletter provided a more localised map, outlining the solar study area within which the proposed infrastructure would sit. Dates were provided for one-on-one appointments at the local community centre, which could be pre-booked by contacting a member of the team, with a number of phone and email contacts provided to help facilitate it. A more comprehensive FAQs section was provided, seeking to address more site-specific queries that had been received over the last few months. This newsletter also aimed to provide clear, factual information from reputable sources, countering some of the misinformation that had cropped up in the local area and media. At least 62 households were directly spoken to, all within 1km of the proposal, with a further unrecorded number outside of the 1km range also directly engaged. This newsletter also introduced a dedicated email address to help direct project-specific queries. Any subsequent emails received provided evidence-based feedback that the newsletter had been received and read.
- The newsletter was forwarded to all TDs and Cllrs for the area (TDs: James O'Connor, Liam Quaide, Pat Buckley, Noel McCarthy – Cllrs: Eamonn Horgan, Rory Cocking, Michael Hegarty, Patrick Mulcahy, Annmarie Ahern, John Buckley) on 01/08/25 to inform them of the consultation days being held in Inch community centre. The only positive response received was from Rory Cocking, PA to Deputy Noel McCarthy, saying they couldn't make public meeting but would still like to meet (see below). Eamonn Horgan also replied just asking for dates and times which were included in original email. No other replies were received.
- Direct face-to-face consultations were held on August 5th and 8th in the community centre in Inch, to provide local people with additional opportunities to engage with a member of the project team, raise any concerns they may have or seek further information. These were held in the form of pre-booked appointments and allowed members of the public to sit down and discuss the project in an informal setting, without the fears associated with speaking up in front of a large group of people. It is an unfortunate reality with any large development proposal that there will always be some individuals who take a position of opposition for their own personal reasons. While engagement with these individuals can reduce the volume of concerns they have, it will not change their general position. Similarly, some individuals see the benefits associated with the proposed development and take a supportive position towards it. The aim of these consultations was to provide people who are neither supportive nor in opposition to the development with factual, evidence-based and reputable source information, that they could then form their own opinion. These consultations proved to be very successful in that regard, with interested parties attending throughout both days. 36 meetings were held face-to-face over the two days, with an additional 2 held virtually and 8 more arranged for a requested time and date over the subsequent 3 weeks.
- Following the success of the two days of direct consultations in the community centre, additional dates were organised, aiming to facilitate local people with as many opportunities as possible for them to engage with the team. A letter was posted on August 11th to the 334 houses within 1.5km that had address information available in the Eircode system. This letter outlined that three additional dates for face-to-face public consultation were available in Inch Community Centre: August 20th, August 27th and September 3rd. Contact details were again provided, and people were encouraged to reach out. Unfortunately, a number of these letters were returned to us undelivered by An Post. When we contacted them to find out why, we were told it was because those ones did not have a

property/resident name on them and that they do not use the Eircode system when delivering post. This was relayed to the wider team during a lessons-learned meeting so it could be prevented from happening in future consultation processes.

- A meeting was held on August 19th with Noel McCarthy TD and Rory Cocking, Councillor with Cork Co. Co., to discuss the project and our experience on the ground to date. This was a positive interaction, with learnings shared around the table, helping to better inform politicians as to what utility-scale solar does and how it is built. Deputy McCarthy and Cllr. Cocking were in turn able to relay concerns that they had heard from constituents, with the developer providing fact-based responses from reliable sources to help inform people.
- Further outreach to all TDs and Councillors was sent on 20th August, to inform them of the three additional dates, with an acknowledgement response back from Deputy Liam Quaide only.
- Additional face-to-face consultations were held in Inch community centre on August 20th and 27th. 19 people were met with, either at the community centre or in the homes later in the evening.
- A webpage was put together to present copies of the information that had been delivered to houses in the area or presented to individuals in the community centre meetings.

8. September 2025:

- Additional face-to-face consultations were held in Inch community centre on September 3rd. A total of 4 people were met with. The decrease in number over the 5 weeks of consultations at the community centre highlights that people were either satisfied with the information available or had no interest in engaging.
- A member of the team was interviewed on September 11th by John Phillips for the Drivetime Current Affairs show on Community Radio Youghal, to be aired later on in the month. The interview was in response to a similar one conducted in August with three local objectors and sought to present a fair and balanced perspective of the proposal. Concerns voiced by the objectors included topics such as the perceived impact on agriculture and a claimed lack of community consultation. It is noted that these same objectors had lodged submissions in July and again at a later date, objecting to a local farmers retention application for some existing farm infrastructure. It is also noted that these three objectors had been met in person throughout the community consultation process outlined to this point, and unfortunately were interpreting a refusal to cease all planning for the proposed development as a lack of consultation. Other concerns included BESS fire risk, impacts from construction and the cost of energy. Responses were provided where possible, with more detailed information to be available in the planning application pack once it is completed.
- A meeting was arranged between project representatives and a number of councillors with responsibility for east Cork (Cllr's Ann Marie Ahern, John Buckley, Rory Cocking, Michael Hegarty, Eamonn Horgan, Mary Linehan Foley and Patrick Mulcahy). The purposes of this meeting were to provide an overview of the proposed project and a summary of our community engagement to date, while also providing informed responses to queries and concerns that may have been relayed to Councillors present by members of the public. It was also intended as an informative session, to explain how solar farms are built and how they operate. Unfortunately, this meeting was cancelled by

a representative from the council, outside of the control of both Perigus and the councillors due to attend.

9. December 2025:

- A pre-application meeting was held with An Coimisiún Pleanála, to discuss the 220kV substation and grid connection elements of the project proposal, their potential status as Strategic Infrastructure Developments and any specific detail that would be required as a part of those associated deliberations.
- Newsletter 3 was issued door-to-door in the area surrounding the proposed development by the project CLO and team. This newsletter included a layout map, providing greater detail to residents in the areas around the proposed development ahead of the planning application. This layout was the result of months of survey work and community engagement and sought to present a fair middle-ground between maximising the energy capacity of the site and minimising any potential impacts on the locality. 350 newsletters in total were distributed. 104 individuals or households were directly engaged with and a total of 48 phone calls were received by the CLO following this. Feedback was generally in relation to the scale of the project, with many queries related to potential shading from it. Once it was explained to these individuals that a book of photomontages would be included with the planning application, they were happy to wait for that and see what they proposed development would look like from the various viewpoints. This newsletter was also issued to TD's (Noel McCarthy, Liam Quaide, James O'Connor and Pat Buckley) and Councillors (Rory Cocking, Michael Hegarty, Mary Linehan Foley, Patrick Mulcahy, Eamonn Horgan, AnnMarie Ahern and John Buckley), to ensure they were kept up to speed on the project proposal.

11 August 2025

Greenhills Solar - Community Engagement

Dear Resident,

As part of our ongoing efforts to engage directly with local residents in the area surrounding our Greenhills Solar project proposal, we recently held 2 days of pre-booked appointments in Inch Community Centre. These appointments proved to be very successful in providing a platform for people to sit down and ask their questions and so we have decided to continue to facilitate these meetings over the next few weeks.

The dates on which a member of the team will be available at Inch Community Centre for discussion are listed below and we would encourage you to reach out to book a day and time.

- Wednesday August 20th
- Wednesday August 27th
- Wednesday September 3rd

Yours sincerely
Ørsted

Aidan Stakelum – 086 1037437
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"Map produced by Ørsted Onshore Ireland MidCo Limited

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This map is digitally created based on information obtained from various authoritative sources. Every reasonable care has been taken to ensure the information is correct at the time of publication.

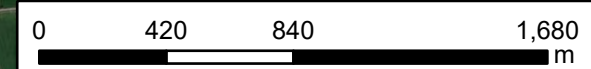
No responsibility can be accepted for any mishap or damages arising from any inaccuracies, omissions and new developments within the mapped area."

- Houses
- 1.5km Buffer
- 1km Buffer
- 500m Buffer
- Indicative Site Boundary



Map Title:
Greenhills Community Map
Overview

Map Scales:
1:25,000 @ A3



Greenhills Renewable Energy Development



About Ørsted

Ørsted is a world leading renewable energy company and our vision is a world that runs entirely on green energy.

In Ireland, Ørsted employs over 100 people in our Cork office and across our renewable energy projects nationwide. We have invested over €700m in Ireland to date and operate 21 wind farms, powering the equivalent of 250,000 homes and we have begun the construction of our first solar farm located in County Carlow. Our development pipeline is multi technology, including onshore and offshore wind, solar, hybrid, repower and storage.

Ørsted is recognised on the CDP Climate Change A-List as a global leader on climate action and was the first energy company in the world to have its science-based net-zero emissions target validated by the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi). Headquartered in Denmark, Ørsted employs approx. 8,000 people globally.





The Greenhills Project

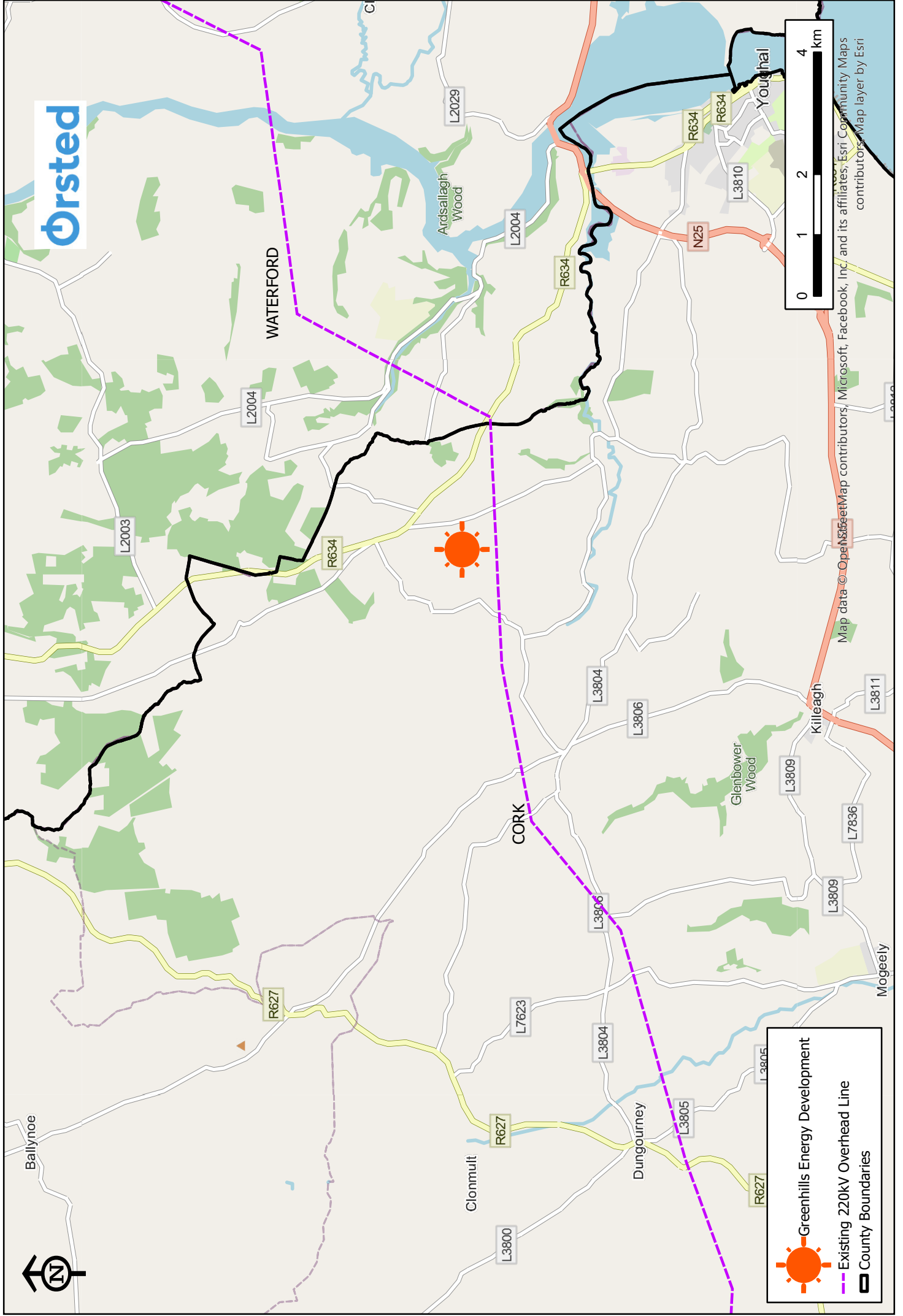
The Greenhills solar site is situated adjacent to the R364 road approx. 7km north-west of Youghal and 6.5km north-east of Killeagh, Co. Cork, within a number of local townlands, including Knocknagappagh, Barnaviddane, Ballyneague and Ballydaniel. There will be several elements proposed that will collectively form the Greenhills Renewable Energy Development.

Solar Farm: The solar farm will comprise an estimated 250MW export capacity of solar panels on ground-mounted frames. The frames are fixed to the ground using sheet piles, securing them in place and helping to minimise any impacts on the existing local ground conditions. The solar farm will include multiple inverters and transformers throughout the array, which are typically hidden from sight, with underground cabling connecting it all together. This part of the development will include significant native hedgerow planting around the periphery, to shield it from view and improve local biodiversity.

Energy Storage: The proposed development will also include some grid stability services, comprising of a battery energy storage system. This will be located beside the substation and provides an important service to the national grid, helping to prevent blackouts and ensure a more reliable, secure and consistent power supply. By charging at times of high supply/low demand and discharging at times of low supply/high demand, this storage system brings a whole range of stability benefits to the grid, helping to balance supply and demand.

It also allows for increased usage of renewable energy on the grid, which has been shown to decrease electricity prices for the consumer, while offsetting the use of coal, oil and gas. Reports have shown that wind and solar farms have collectively saved electricity customers €840million since 2000 ^[1].





Substation and Grid Connection:

The existing Knockraha-Cullenagh 220kV overhead line runs through the middle of the site and it is expected that this will facilitate connection to the grid via an on-site loop-in substation. This onsite 220kV substation will form an important part of the national electricity grid and would qualify as a Strategic Infrastructure Development under the planning regulations. Having a potential onsite connection like this removes the need for grid connection cabling within the local road network, helping to significantly reduce any potential traffic disruptions during construction.



The Planning Process

Surveys have commenced on site as a part of the pre-planning process. These surveys are undertaken by a range of specialists, looking at the existing site and ensuring that the development avoids harming any existing sensitive and valuable plants and animals, archaeological sites or protected views. The locations of houses are mapped, to ensure that the development is suitably set back from residences and that there are no noise impacts on people's daily lives. Once all the background information is collected, reports are drafted and designs are completed, before planning applications are finalised.

The current plan is for two separate planning applications for this development. One will cover the solar farm, grid stability services and all related supporting infrastructure and will be submitted to Cork County Council.

The second application will cover the substation and associated grid connection and will be made to An Bord Pleanála as a Strategic Infrastructure Development.



Community Engagement and the Community Benefit Fund

At Ørsted, we place a strong emphasis on community engagement. Local input is important at all stages of the project. We are keen to reach out and involve communities as much as possible. We hold regular open day events and we have also assisted local schools and students and have contributed to many community projects across Ireland. We also work alongside and consult local communities and welcome ideas on how our projects can benefit them.

If the project receives planning consent, Ørsted will apply for the government's Renewable Energy Support Scheme (RESS). This requires that a community benefit fund be put in place once the solar farm is operating.

The fund must comply with the government's Renewable Energy Support Scheme policy. Decision making on the fund will be the responsibility of the local residents who live in proximity to the project. A project of this size would result in a substantial community benefit fund being available, should it receive planning and qualify for RESS.



Sustainability and Biodiversity Net-Gain

At Ørsted, we support biodiversity initiatives in environments where we build and operate renewable energy projects, bringing together environmental organisations, local communities, research institutions, and the energy industry in taking action on the twin crises of biodiversity loss and climate change. Some of our key sustainability targets include:

- 40 % reduction in freshwater withdrawal intensity (m^3 per GWh) by the end of 2025.
- Net-positive biodiversity impact from all new renewable energy projects commissioned from 2030 at the latest
- Zero wind turbine blade waste directed to landfill
- Zero end-of-life solar PV modules directed to landfill

Our natural world is under increasing pressure. The consequences of human consumption, pollution, and climate change are taking a massive toll. If done right, the green energy build-out has huge potential to help unlock a lasting positive impact for nature. We're determined to leave nature in a better state than we found it. That's why we've committed to delivering a net-positive biodiversity impact from all new renewable energy projects we commission, including here at Greenhills.

How Solar Farms can help pollinators and biodiversity:

There are over 100 different types of bees and 180 hoverflies on the island of Ireland. Along with other creatures like moths, they provide important pollination services, helping fertilise many of our flowers, crops, and wild plants – playing an integral role in the health of our environment and production of our food. More than half of Ireland's bee species have undergone substantial declines in their numbers since 1980. The distribution of 42 bee species has declined by more than 50%, while 30% of Irish bee species are threatened with extinction.

The National Biodiversity Data Centre established the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan in 2015 in response to the significant declines in pollinator numbers. This valuable resource, which can be accessed at pollinators.ie, shares evidence-based recommendations to help pollinators, with the aim of guiding people to collectively take positive steps towards restoring pollinator populations to healthy levels. As a part of this good work, the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan published a series of guidelines in 2023, in conjunction with The Heritage Council, National Parks and Wildlife Service, Irish Solar Energy Association and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, specifically relevant to the pollinator-friendly management of solar farms. These guidelines align with Ørsted's commitments around providing biodiversity net-gain as a part of our developments.



Studies suggest that if solar farms are managed strategically, particularly on land that was previously managed intensively for agriculture, they can have positive impacts on local biodiversity. Furthermore, research has shown that managing vegetation on solar farms less intensively does not hinder the efficiency of energy production and can even increase local biodiversity. This management includes a number of measures, from avoiding the use of any pesticides and herbicides, to planting networks of native hedgerow and encouraging native wildflower meadow growth in field margins and between rows of panels. By strategically managing the Greenhills Solar site for pollinators, we can:

- Provide food and habitat for bees, hoverflies, moths, and other insects that provide important ecological and agricultural services such as crop pollination and natural pest control.

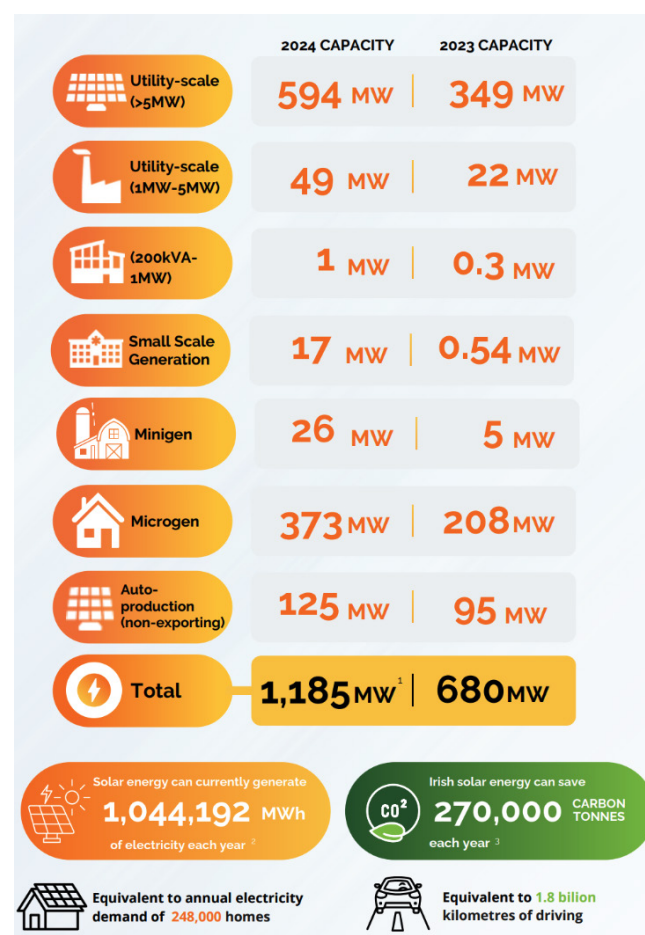
- Provide food, cover, and nesting habitat for some species of mammals, birds, reptiles, and amphibians.
- Significantly reduce wind and surface water erosion.
- Improve water quality by significantly reducing the use of fertilisers, herbicides, and pesticides.
- Reduce flooding by increasing organic matter and the water-holding capacity of soils.
- Improve the aesthetics of the solar farm. [3]

of wind and solar energy generation. To achieve the solar aspect of this, the government have set a target of 8000MW of solar to be installed by 2030, which is broken down as 5500MW of utility-scale solar (which would include Greenhills solar) and 2500MW of non-utility solar (which would include rooftop installations). This infographic from the Irish Solar Energy Association displays the current figures for solar generation installed in the country and highlights the substantial increase that needs to take place between now and 2030 to achieve the government targets [2][3][5].

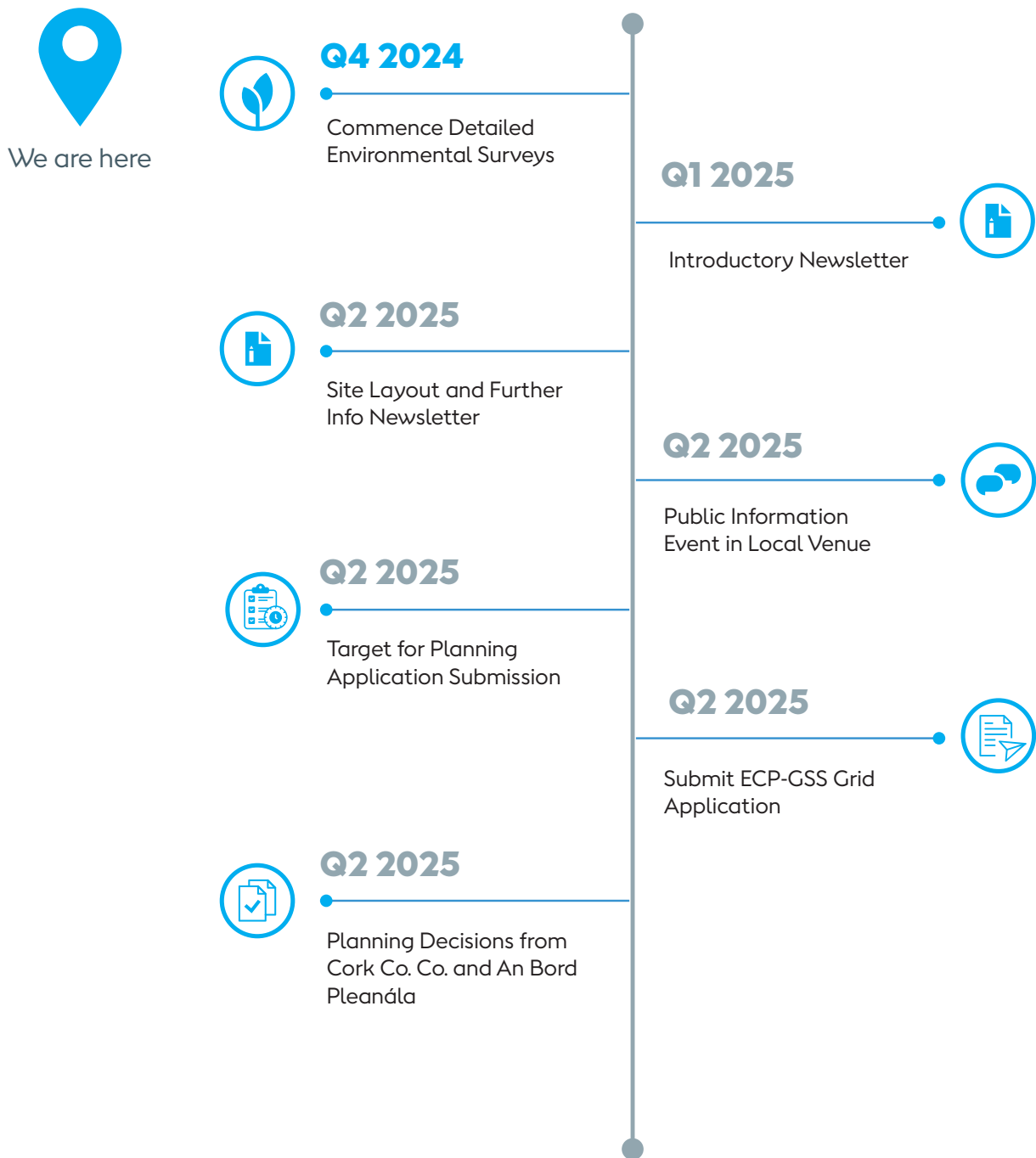
The Need For Solar

Ireland is committed to achieving climate neutrality no later than 2050, with a 51% reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2030. These legally binding objectives are set out in the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021, which establishes a framework with clear targets and commitments, to ensure the means are in place to deliver our national, EU and international climate goals and obligations in the near and long term. Failure to achieve these targets could result in fines being imposed on the Irish state estimated at over €8billion.

Climate Action Plan 2024 sets out the roadmap to deliver on Ireland's climate ambition and aligns with the legally-binding economy-wide 2030 GHG emission targets. One of the key relevant targets is the commitment to increase renewable electricity generation to supply 80% of demand by 2030, through the development



Current Project Timelines & Next Steps



Frequently asked questions

Why not install the solar panels on rooftops instead?

Small-scale rooftop solar and large-scale ground-mounted solar serve different purposes. Where rooftop solar is typically intended to supplement the electricity usage of the adjacent building, solar farms like the Greenhills project seek to export large quantities of electricity onto the national grid, helping Ireland to reach its legally binding renewable energy targets. Additionally, ground-mounted solar panels are typically more efficient than rooftop solar, as they can be positioned to capture the maximum amount of sunlight throughout the day, with optimal orientation and tilt angles.

Is there a danger to motorists or aircraft because of reflection from the panels?

No - solar panels are designed to absorb light rather than reflect it. However, a glint and glare study will be completed to ensure no significant nuisance or hazard reflectance effects will be experienced along surrounding roads.

Are solar farms noisy?

Solar is a passive technology, the panels produce electricity silently, so the majority of a solar farm is generally very peaceful. Any equipment that generates noise will be located away from residential properties to ensure there will not be a noise nuisance to local residents.

Will the solar farm cause traffic disruption?

Once the solar farm is in place it requires very little maintenance and the occasional visits in regular cars or 4x4s would cause no traffic disruption. There will be a temporary increase in traffic during construction and this will be subject to assessment to ensure the local road network can accommodate the increase. Traffic management during construction will be agreed with the local authority in a construction management plan.

Do solar farms generate harmful electromagnetic fields?

Electricity from solar panels and transmission to the power grid emits extremely weak electromagnetic fields. Exposure to low-level electromagnetic fields has been studied extensively, and there is no evidence that it is harmful to human health, according to the World Health Organization. The solar panels used for the project are similar to domestic panels which are placed on the roofs of houses.

Do solar farms have a negative impact on the local environment?

Solar farms generally have a neutral/positive impact on the local environment depending on the existing land uses. For this solar farm, by allowing the site to remain fallow for the duration of the lifetime, it gives the soil an opportunity to recover and improve. In addition, there will be no fertilisers or pesticides used during the lifetime of the

solar farm meaning less risk to water bodies than from standard agricultural activities. Vegetation will be controlled via sheep grazing or mowing. There will be significant additional planting of native hedgerows which will support local wildlife.

Is there any risk to local archaeology from this solar farm?

Archaeology will be safeguarded during the development and operation of this project. Archaeological surveys have been carried out across the site and areas of archaeological interest have been excluded from the proposed project.

References

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- [4]** National Biodiversity Data Centre. (2023). Pollinator-friendly management of solar farms. All-Ireland Pollinator Plan.
- [5]** Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland. (2025, 01 15). National Energy Projections 2024. Retrieved from seai.ie: <https://www.seai.ie/sites/default/files/publications/National-Energy-Projections-Report-2024.pdf>

Meet the Team

Aidan Stakelum

Community Engagement Lead

Aidan is the community liaison representatives for the project. He is responsible for developing community engagement strategies and stakeholder management plans to engage with communities on renewable energy projects. Aidan is available to discuss the proposed project with the local community.



Patrick McMorrough

Project Developer

Patrick is the project developer responsible for managing the Greenhills project from initial conception to the submission of the planning applications and throughout the subsequent planning process. Patrick manages a team of skilled specialists from a range of backgrounds in preparing the necessary reports and documents to inform the planning process.



Contact Us

You can contact us by email:

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or call a member of the project team on:

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Or write to us at:

**Orsted Onshore Ireland Midco Limited,
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Greenhills Renewable Energy Development



The Greenhills Solar Project

This newsletter is a part of our ongoing work to engage with people locally around the proposed Greenhills renewable energy development. In the following pages you will find our initial proposed solar site area. Additionally, you will also find a detailed Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) section, which seeks to respond to questions we are receiving from local people.

The responses in these FAQs and list of source material will help provide people with sufficient factual information to make informed decisions about the project. Should you have any queries, we are continuously open to engaging with members of the public and would encourage you to reach out.

The Proposed Greenhills Site

The proposed Greenhills solar site is situated adjacent to the R364 road approx. 7km north-west of Youghal and 6.5km north-east of Killeagh, Co. Cork, within a number of local townlands, including Knocknagappagh, Barnaviddane, Ballyneague and Ballydaniel. There will be several elements proposed that will collectively form the Greenhills Renewable Energy Development, namely the solar array, the 220kV substation and the BESS.



Pre-planning work has been progressing well and we are happy to be able to share our site study area with you. The site layout for planning, which is currently being drafted, will be contained within this area. Note that some further refinement of this is still likely before we apply for planning permission, however any changes are likely to be relatively minor and will not exceed the indicated study area. We encourage local residents to reach out with any feedback on this and welcome any additional questions.

As a part of our continuing community engagement efforts, we are available for one-on-one appointments at Inch Community Centre on the below dates to answer your questions.

- **Tuesday 5th August**
- **Friday 8th August**

Please contact ahead of time at the below details to arrange an appointment so that we can ensure a member of the team is on site to meet you.

Project Team: greenhills@orsted.com

Community - Aidan:

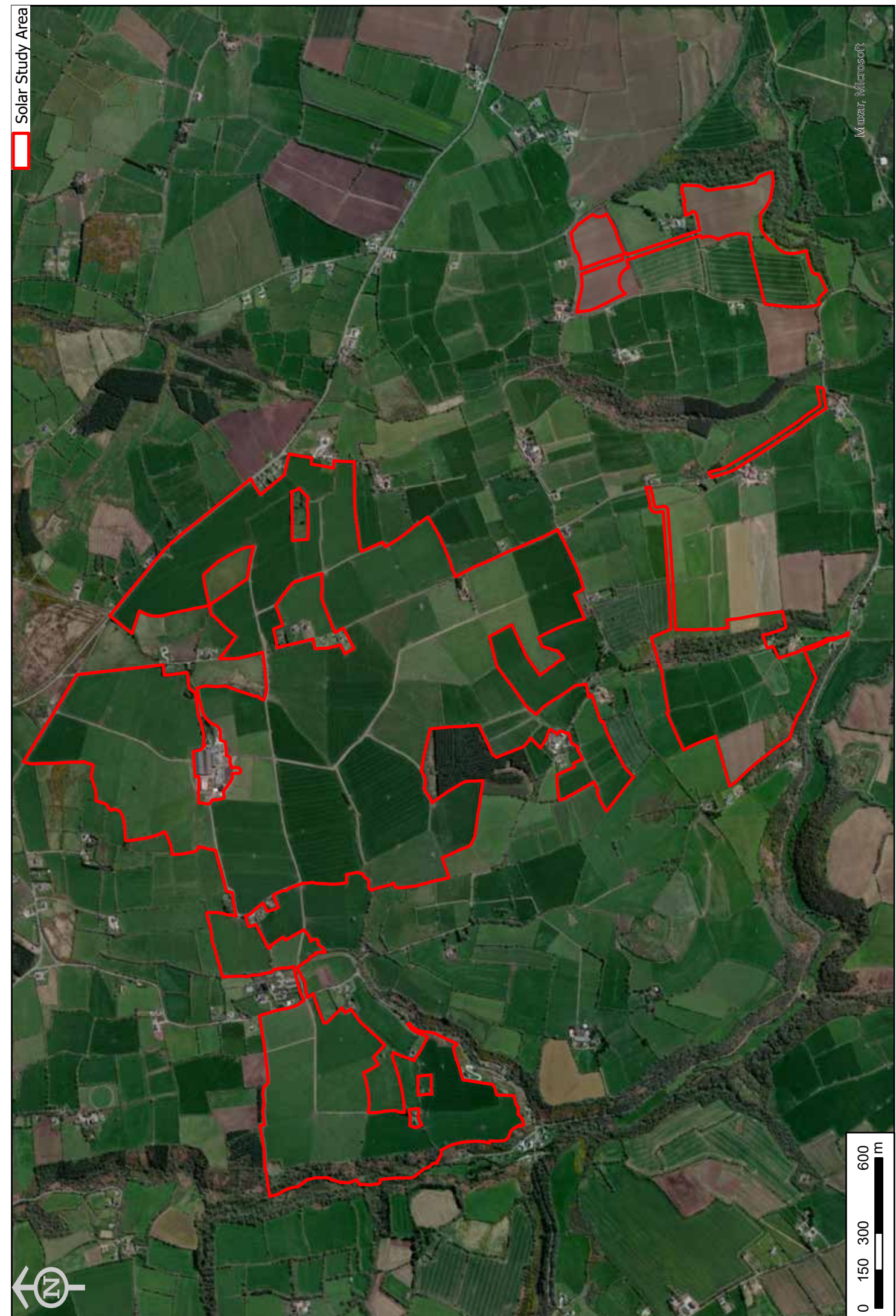
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Community – Edward:

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Frequently asked questions

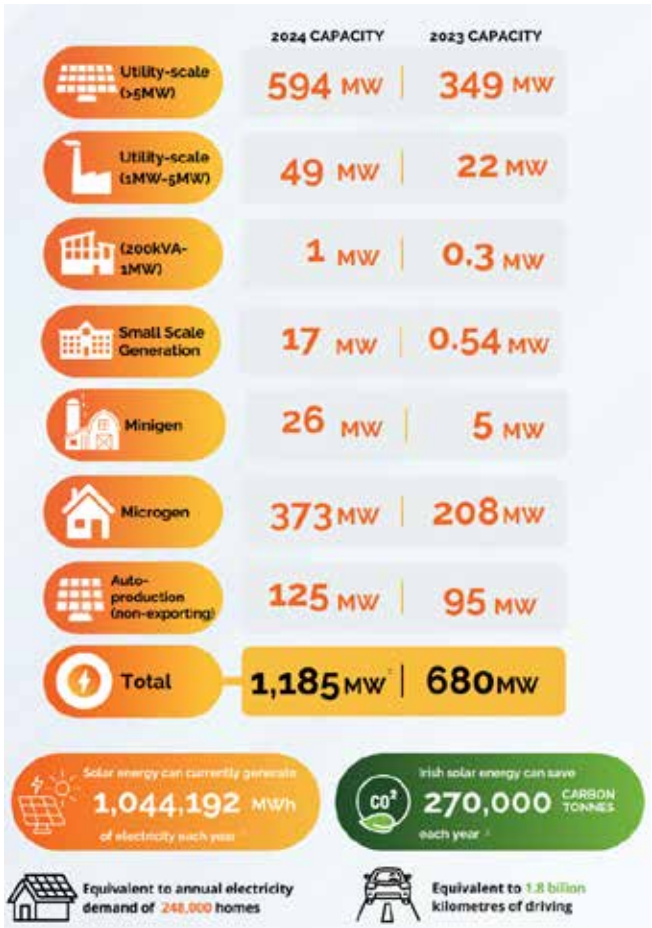
Why are solar developments of this scale needed?

It is increasingly essential for every country to have a competitive and secure indigenous energy system. In Ireland, our targets to develop such a generation system place a strong emphasis on renewable energy, based primarily on solar, onshore wind and offshore wind. We require significant volumes of each of these technologies working together to be able to provide a secure local energy source. While Ireland has a proud history of developing a global leading role in onshore wind, the solar and offshore wind journey is at an earlier stage.

Ireland is committed to achieving climate neutrality no later than 2050, with a 51% reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2030. These legally binding objectives are set out in the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021, which establishes a framework with clear targets and commitments, to ensure the means are in place to deliver our national, EU and international climate goals and obligations in the near and long term. Failure to achieve these targets will result in fines being imposed on the Irish state. As things currently stand, it is expected that Ireland will have to pay out a minimum of €8 billion in fines, which could rise as high as €26 billion if we do not actively work to narrow the gap to our targets. This directly impacts on all of us as Irish taxpayers.

Climate Action Plan 2025 sets out the roadmap to deliver on Ireland’s climate ambition and aligns with the legally-binding economy-wide 2030 GHG emission targets. One of the key relevant targets is

the commitment to increase renewable electricity generation to supply 80% of demand by 2030, through the development of wind and solar energy generation. To achieve the solar aspect of this, the government have set a target of 8000MW of solar to be installed by 2030, which is broken down as 5500MW of utility-scale solar (which would include Greenhills solar) and 2500MW of non-utility solar (which would include rooftop installations). This infograph from the Irish Solar Energy Association displays the current figures for solar generation installed in the country and highlights the substantial increase that needs to take place between now and 2030 to achieve the government energy targets.



Frequently asked questions cont.

As our population continues to grow, demand for electricity is increasing. A secure and stable electricity network is a central requirement for the construction of new, much needed housing, which in turn increases demand on the electricity network. As public transport and private cars continue to transition to electric motors, electricity demand increases. As fossil fuel heating systems continue to be replaced with modern electric alternatives, electricity demand increases. Every time you pay for something, browse the internet, use messaging apps, social media, watch video content, send an email, book a flight or hospital appointment etc, you produce and consume data, which is stored in data centres. These data centres, which are at the core of how we go about our modern life, increase electricity demand. Ireland's national grid operator (Eirgrid) forecasts that electricity demand is set to increase over 45% by 2034 from 2023 levels. [3][5][7][8][12]



Does the conversion of land from agriculture to solar energy impact on the overall availability of agricultural land in Ireland?

In 2023, the utilised agricultural area in Ireland comprised of 4.62 million hectares (ha), or 11.42 million acres (ac). For additional context, this equates to approx. 66% of the entire land area of the Republic of Ireland, or over 3.6 million Croke Park pitches. This utilised agricultural area increased by over 110,000 ha (approx. 272,000 ac) between 2020 and 2023 inclusive, which would give an average increase of 27,500ha per year.

Using Teagasc figures of 1.5ha per megawatt (MW) of solar, it can be estimated that the approx. 4900MW of additional utility-scale solar required to reach Ireland's 2030 targets would need 7350ha of land, or around 0.16% of the 2023 total utilised agricultural area. If we were to assume an unlikely scenario of all 7350ha being taken out of agriculture in 2025 (rather than spread between 2025-2030 and taken from a range of existing land-uses), there would still be a net increase of over 20,000ha in utilised agricultural area in 2025, assuming the 2020 to 2023 trend has continued. The proposed Greenhills solar development, at an estimated 250MW, would represent a loss of around 0.008% of Ireland's 2023 total utilised agricultural area. The Greenhills proposal represents a tiny fraction of an already insignificantly small theoretical solar land area, in the context of total agricultural land in Ireland. [2][13]



Will the use of agricultural land for solar development impact on Irish food supplies and/or food security?

No. Ireland is a net exporter of food products. In 2024 alone, Ireland exported over 8.1 million tonnes of agri-food products, including approx. 1.9 million tonnes of dairy products. Ireland produces more than enough food to feed itself many times over, particularly when considering temperate agricultural commodities like meat and dairy-based products. This level of food security can be suitably complemented with the achievement of a level of energy

security, through proposals like the Greenhills energy development, by providing a clean, indigenous source of renewable energy to the national grid. The development of solar energy at this site aligns with Mission 1 of the governments Food Vision 2030 plan, aiming for a climate-smart, environmentally sustainable agri-food sector by 2030. [6][14]

Frequently asked questions cont.

Do solar farms contribute to the circular economy?

Yes. Solar energy generation, as a form of renewable energy, is by its very nature a circular economy, converting energy from the sun into electricity without any emissions. Apart from the obvious provision of clean energy onto the national grid, solar also provides a significant range of additional benefits to local and regional economies in Ireland. KPMG conducted an investigation into the economic impacts of the solar energy industry in Ireland and found that there are significant benefits to be seen, both in the current day and forecasted out to 2030, if we meet our targets. Some of the relevant numbers for Ireland are given as follows:

- The Irish solar energy industry had a total 2024 economic output of up to €1.2billion across capital investment and operations, with up to €7.3billion in total economic output forecasted between 2025 and 2030.
- This represents a Gross Value Added figure of €514million in 2024 when costs of goods and services are subtracted. Up to €2.7billion is expected to be added to the economy between 2025 and 2030.
- PRSI and income taxes paid by the sector to the government amounted to €63million in 2024, with up to €344million expected between 2025 and 2030.

- Commercial rates of up to €5.4million were paid to city and county councils in 2024 from solar renewable energy alone, and this figure is expected to rise significantly to €51million in 2030, providing up to €193million cumulatively between 2025 and 2030. Rates are one of the main sources of income for county councils and renewable energy developments form a significant part of this. These funds are used to directly benefit the community through the development of roads, public transport, water services, recreation facilities and a wide range of social and community services.
- Community benefit funds from solar energy amounted to around €1.6million in 2024 across Ireland, and this figure is expected to rise to €15million in 2030, providing up to €58million cumulatively between 2025 and 2030. Historically, our community funding has contributed to a wide range of community causes, including things like the development of upgraded school, community centre and club facilities, energy upgrades, local volunteer health services, biodiversity initiatives, local recreational trail developments and community events.

The solar industry in Ireland is estimated to currently support approx. 6440 jobs in Ireland, of which around 5000 are directly supported and an additional 1440 are indirectly supported. Much of this employment is located outside of Dublin, in the regions surrounding utility-scale developments. With our head-office based in Cork City, most of our colleagues are locally resident in the surrounding towns, including a large number based in the East Cork electoral district where the Greenhills energy proposal is located. Over the 2025-2030 period, up to 7130 jobs are expected to be supported by the growth in solar energy. These jobs are in varied sectors, including construction, project management, civil and electrical engineering, planning, environmental science, ecology, legal and financial services. [8][10]

Does renewable energy lead to increased electricity costs for the consumer?

Detailed investigations into the costs and savings of renewables have revealed that the adoption of wind and solar generation in Ireland has displaced expensive gas-fired generation from the all-island power market, wiping a total of €3.1billion of wholesale power cost from Irish power bills between 2021 and 2023. This has contributed to a reduction in consumer power bills of almost €1.7billion since 2020, leading to overall savings on the electricity bills of all consumers. Continued investment in wind and solar generation could offer a further annual net saving of €610million in 2030, if our 80% renewable electricity target is achieved.

The displacement of fossil fuels has avoided the need to burn €7.4 billion worth of gas and coal between 2000 and 2023, including almost €4 billion since 2021. Renewables have reduced Ireland's exposure to volatile fuel prices by displacing 3 million tonnes of coal, and displacing enough gas to heat every home in Ireland for nine years. [1]



Is East Cork ‘ground-zero’ for solar farm development?

No. Ireland’s Revised National Planning Framework, which was only recently approved by the current Government in April 2025, allocates the national capacity targets for renewable electricity development across three regions in Ireland. The solar part of these capacity targets is outlined in the below table.

The higher percentage figures attributed to the southern, eastern and midland regions is directly correlated to the higher levels to solar irradiance in these regions, providing better conditions for energy generation versus the northern and western region. [4]

Region	Energised Capacity 2023 (MW)	Additional Renewable Power Capacity Allocations (MW)	Total % of National Share in 2030
Eastern and Midlands	306	3294	45%
Northern and Western	0.3	959	12%
Southern	138	3302	43%
Total	445	7555	

Do solar farms displace wildlife?

The construction of anything, be it a solar farm, creamery, industrial facility, house, school or road, will temporarily displace wildlife in the short-term. In the medium to long-term, however, assuming the solar farm is built, it is expected that people will see more wildlife in the surrounding area. The reality is that a well-managed solar farm provides for a more diverse habitat than the existing improved agricultural grassland. The planting of extensive native hedgerows and wildflowers provides important food and shelter resources to a wide range of species up along the food chain, from insects to birds and mammals. Security fencing is installed in a way that ensures mammals like badgers can pass through, while hedgerows provide for important sheltered pathways in which they can traverse the site. [9][11]

Will the solar farm be highly visible?

While some parts of the site will be visible from various locations, views will be limited by the natural screening provided by the rise and fall of the land. This will be significantly enhanced by extensive native hedgerow and tree planting at strategic locations, which has the added benefit of providing valuable food and shelter for a wide range of plants and animals to thrive where they previously did not.

Why don’t you cover rooftops and/or car parks with solar instead of fields?

Small-scale rooftop solar and large-scale ground-mounted solar serve different purposes. Where rooftop solar is typically intended to supplement the electricity usage of the adjacent building, solar farms like the Greenhills project seek to export

large quantities of electricity onto the national grid, helping Ireland to reach its legally binding renewable energy targets. Additionally, ground-mounted solar panels are typically more efficient than rooftop solar, as they can be positioned to capture the maximum amount of sunlight throughout the day, with optimal orientation

and tilt angles. While carparks might provide for larger areas than rooftops, the general principle is still the same – they are all necessary energy developments of varying scales, all of which are required in order to meet our growing energy needs.

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Meet the Team

Aidan Stakelum

Community Engagement Lead

Aidan is the community liaison representatives for the project. He is responsible for developing community engagement strategies and stakeholder management plans to engage with communities on renewable energy projects. Aidan is available to discuss the proposed project with the local community.



Patrick McMorrough

Project Developer

Patrick is the project developer responsible for managing the Greenhills project from initial conception to the submission of the planning applications and throughout the subsequent planning process. Patrick manages a team of skilled specialists from a range of backgrounds in preparing the necessary reports and documents to inform the planning process.



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**Floor 5, One Albert Quay,
T12 X8N6, Cork.**

Dear resident,

This is intended as a final project update ahead of submission of a planning application for the Greenhills Renewable Energy Park. We wish to thank you for your patience as we have been working to fine-tune the designs, adapting to a constantly evolving policy environment and ensuring we have addressed any reasonable concerns from the planning authorities and residents where possible. The work is ongoing, with comprehensive environmental reports currently being finalised across a range of specialisations, assessing the existing status of and potential impacts on varied topics, including ecology, flood-risk, landscape, traffic and cultural heritage. By understanding the existing situation and how our proposed development fits into that, we can ensure that through appropriate design and mitigation measures, we can avoid negative impacts and, in some cases, even improve on the baseline scenario, as is the case with the ecology and flood-risk side of our proposal. As we collate all the outputs from these specialists into a planning application, timelines are always evolving, with many moving pieces all collectively feeding into each other. Current projections have us on schedule to lodge a planning application to Cork County Council in December for the solar farm and BESS parts of the project, while the substation and grid connection will follow at a later date in 2026, as we await engagement with An Coimisiún Pleanála. Please note that all of our newsletters and updates provided to date can be found on the project webpage at <https://orsted.ie/greenhills>.

The Solar Farm

The Solar Farm part of the development proposal is estimated to have an maximum export capacity (MEC) in the region of 240MW. We have recently revised this figure down slightly in line with updated modelling based on our final proposed planning layout. Some setback distances have been increased throughout the site to reduce the potential for impacts where possible, following feedback from the local community. This MEC figure is likely to increase again over the coming months, as the reality is that solar panels are consistently improving their output and efficiency per sq m, leading to improved yields within the same area. Under a RESS contract, this MEC has a direct bearing on the potential annual community benefit fund available in the area, but current estimates would put the value of the fund at around €450,000 per year for the first 15 years of the project. Further information on the community benefit fund and the rules of how it is governed can be found on the SEAI website, or at the link to our own webpage provided above.

The BESS

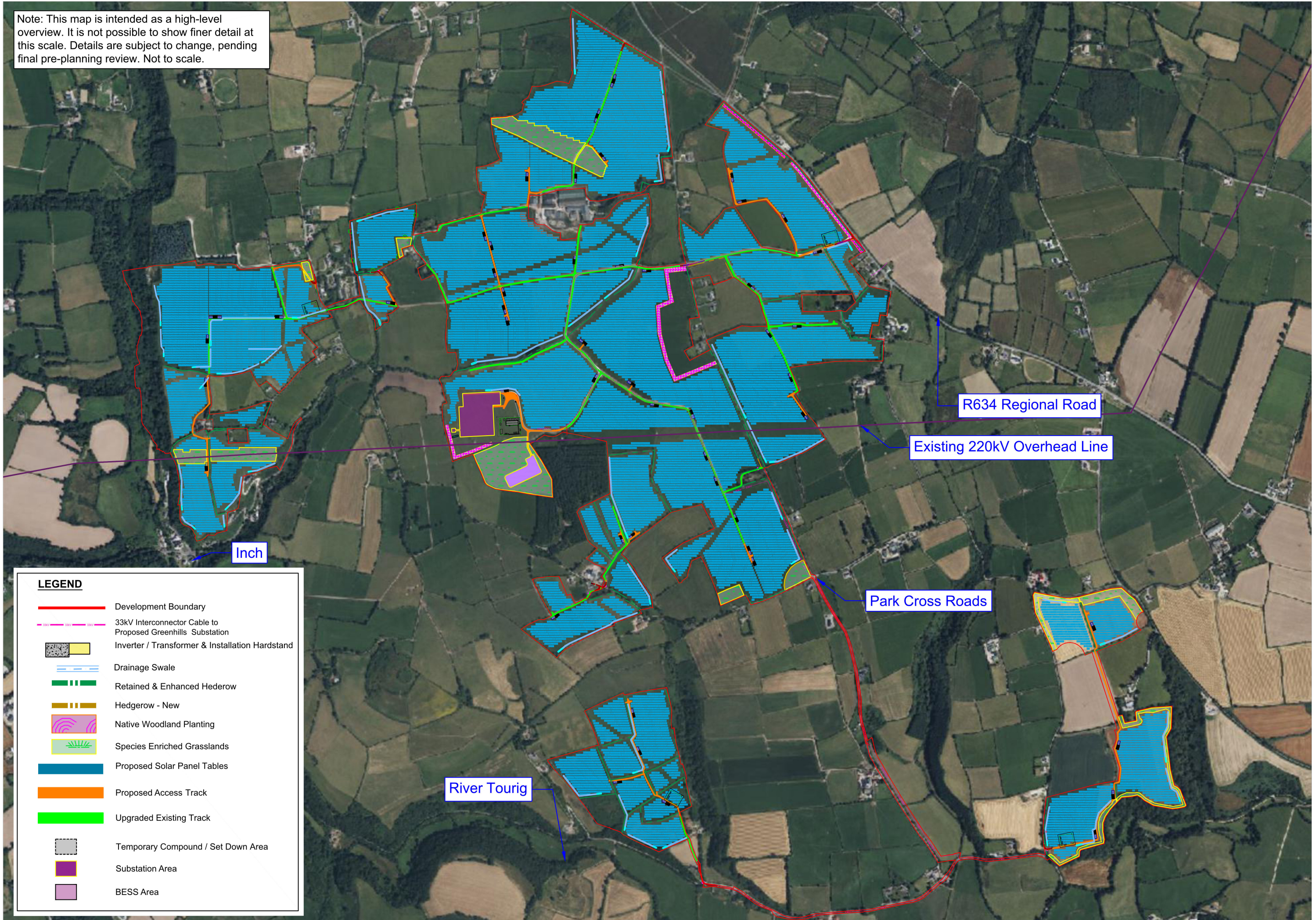
The BESS part of the development proposal provides an important service to the national grid, helping to prevent blackouts and ensure a more reliable, secure and consistent power supply. By charging at times of high supply/low demand and discharging at times of low

supply/high demand, this storage system brings a whole range of stability benefits to the grid, helping to balance supply and demand. It also allows for increased usage of renewable energy on the grid, which has been shown to decrease electricity prices for the consumer, while offsetting the use of coal, oil and gas. Our BESS layout has been designed to use the latest advances in the technology with the highest safety standards possible. These standards, combined with 24/7 monitoring, ensure that the BESS operates as intended, providing the benefits to both the national grid and to consumers, without any negative impacts on the surrounding area.

The Substation

The onsite substation part of the development proposal expects to connect into the existing Knockraha to Cullenagh 220kV overhead line. The use of an onsite proposed substation and existing onsite overhead line is the lowest impact grid connection method that it is possible to have here. The ownership of this electrical grid infrastructure, once constructed, will be permanently handed over to the national grid operators as a national asset. These sorts of assets provide a connection point for large energy users, something that is currently missing in this side of East Cork. This connection point then helps to facilitate the future sustainable development of industry and commerce in the region, for example on the outskirts of Youghal town.

Note: This map is intended as a high-level overview. It is not possible to show finer detail at this scale. Details are subject to change, pending final pre-planning review. Not to scale.



LEGEND

- Development Boundary
- 33kV Interconnector Cable to Proposed Greenhills Substation
- Inverter / Transformer & Installation Hardstand
- Drainage Swale
- Retained & Enhanced Hederow
- Hedgerow - New
- Native Woodland Planting
- Species Enriched Grasslands
- Proposed Solar Panel Tables
- Proposed Access Track
- Upgraded Existing Track
- Temporary Compound / Set Down Area
- Substation Area
- BESS Area

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3rd March 2025

Dear Deputy O'Connor,

I hope this letter finds you well and I hope you are settling into your new term as a TD. May I take this opportunity to congratulate you on your re-election, and wish you well in your work over the next five years.

A change in government provides an opportunity for members of the Oireachtas to look at policy and regulatory areas with renewed vigour, which in itself presents the natural chance for companies like Ørsted to connect and reconnect with politicians new and old, to share the work we are carrying out across Ireland and also to look at the challenges we face.

You may well be aware of Ørsted and the work we do but to by means of a brief introduction, Ørsted is a Danish multi-national renewable energy company. Across the island of Ireland, we power the equivalent of around 250,000 homes across 21 onshore wind farms. We have also begun developing solar power, with our first solar farms – Garreenleen in Co. Carlow and Ballinrea Solar Farm just outside Cork City. We have an exciting pipeline of projects in the works, and Cork is emerging as a strong renewable energy hub, leading the way in Ireland. To date, we have invested €800 million in Ireland, and we play a major role in helping Ireland to achieve its net zero targets.

Now that you are settled into the new Dáil term, I would like to take this opportunity to invite you to meet with us at a time of your convenience. We have recently moved into our new offices in One Albert Quay, in the heart of Cork City, and I would be delighted if you could join us for a tour of the office, to meet the staff and to have a discussion around the main policy priority areas for us – those being planning, grid, and route to market – as well as learning more about our work both in Cork and nationwide.

I look forward to hearing from you in due course.

With best wishes,



TJ Hunter

Senior Director, Ireland & UK

Ørsted