

Strategic Infrastructure Development Section
An Coimisiún Pleanála
64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1
D01 V902

28th September 2026

**Direct Application to An Coimisiún Pleanála in respect of a Strategic Infrastructure Development
Proposed Gathabawn Windfarm, County Kilkenny**

A chara,

Ecopower Developments Limited herein submits a Planning Application for the proposed Gathabawn Windfarm, to be located in North County Kilkenny.

SID Application Fee Payment €100,000 AIB Receipt is appended as Appendix D

The Planning Application is being made directly to An Coimisiún Pleanála following the Commission's decision that the Gathabawn Windfarm development would be strategic infrastructure within the meaning of section 37A of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended. Any application for permission for the proposed development must therefore be made directly to An Coimisiún Pleanála under section 37E of the Act. An Coimisiún Pleanála's letter of 20 October 2022 refers. (ABP ref. 312016-21). **A copy of the letter is appended to this Cover Letter – Appendix A**

The Gathabawn Windfarm site is located entirely in County Kilkenny. A copy of the Application will be sent to Kilkenny County Council.

1. RENEWABLE ENERGY DESIGNATION POLICY STATEMENT

The Proposed Development is a 'renewable energy project' and comprises 'renewable energy plant' for the purposes of the Renewable Energy Directive (Directive EU 2023/2413).

S.I. No. 274/2025 - European Union (Planning and Development) (Renewable Energy) Regulations 2025, which was subsequently followed by an amending regulation S.I No. 426 of 2025 – also applies to the proposal.



As a RED III development, this Planning Application is subject to a completeness check under section 37JA of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. When a notice issues in accordance with section 37JA(b), the provisions of article 216A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 to 2026 shall apply.

1.1 Purpose of the Proposal

Gathabawn Windfarm is a RED III development which purpose is to generate electricity without greenhouse gas emissions, and therefore it is a positive in the context of climate action. The windfarm will generate circa 150 million kilowatts every year of clean electricity from the power in the wind, enough to supply 33,237 houses. Along with the advantage of being renewable and sustainable, producing electricity in this way using a local source of fuel i.e. the wind, improves security of electricity supply in the country.

2. THE GATHABAWN WINDFARM PROPOSAL

Gathabawn Windfarm is being proposed by Ecopower Developments Limited, part of the Ecopower Group, an Irish windfarm and electricity supply company group, established in 1996 and managed from offices in Kilkenny. www.ecopower.ie

2.1 Locational Context

Gathabawn Windfarm is proposed for an agricultural area on the northern portion of the Slieveardagh Hills in North County Kilkenny. Cullahill Mountain is to further to the north and northwest in County Laois. The windfarm is being proposed for the townlands of Coolnacrutta, Glashare, Ballylehaun, Gorteennamuck, Rathlogan, Ballyring Upper, Ballyring Lower and Tentore. The proposed windfarm infrastructure is located in agricultural land.

The nearest settlements are Gathabawn village, located 1km southeast, Lisdowney located 3km northeast and Cullahill, Co. Laois 3km northwest, of the nearest turbines. Ballyragget is 6km northeast, Freshford is 4km to the south and Johnstown is 6km to the southwest, of the nearest turbine.

2.2 Summary Description

The proposed Gathabawn Windfarm development will comprise the following elements;

- Twelve (12) wind turbines with a rotor diameter of 136m. Two hub heights are proposed – 82m for Turbine T6, T7 & T9, and 102m for all other turbines, thus giving an uppermost tip



height of 150m for T6, T7 & T9, and 170m for all other turbines. Construction of 12 No. turbine foundations and adjacent hardstandings;

- Site roads of 8km in total length, comprising 6.7km in length of new roads and the upgrading and widening of 1.3km of existing private farm tracks;
- Two (2) electrical Control Buildings - one in the Ballylehaun area and one in the Ballyring area. The buildings measure 20m x 10m, with a height of 7m and contain electrical and communications equipment, along with a storage room, canteen and welfare facilities;
- Underground electrical cabling linking the wind turbines together into a turbine 'string' and ultimately connect these strings to the two Control Buildings;
- One (1) 30m lattice tower mast and one (1) LiDAR unit for measuring on-site meteorological conditions;
- Seven (7) site entrances from the public road, comprising both existing and newly created entrances;
- Temporary works to facilitate the transport of the large components to the turbine locations. These works comprise temporary access roads; some minor public road widening; temporary hardstanding areas; and temporary widening of existing field entrances off the public road;
- Installation of an integrated drainage system to manage surface water run-off during all phases of the proposed development;
- All associated infrastructure, services and ancillary site works including excavation, earthworks, temporary and permanent overburden storage berms; temporary and permanent fencing; and hedgerow and tree removal, reinstatement and enhancement;
- Two (2) temporary construction compounds and two (2) on-site temporary borrow pits;
- Creation of Biodiversity Areas for the protection, enhancement and creation of habitats to serve as a functioning high level biodiversity resource for local flora and fauna communities.

The Applicant is seeking a period of 10-years during which Gathabawn Windfarm can be constructed and an operational duration of 35-years from the date of commissioning of the windfarm.

2.3 Grid Connection Point

The grid connection point for the proposed Gathabawn Windfarm, has not yet being confirmed by Eirgrid but is likely to be the Eirgrid Ballyragget Substation, at Moatpark townland circa 7km to the east of the proposed windfarm site. The grid connection works are not included as part of this planning application but are assessed in the environmental documents submitted, so that the whole development impact and be understood.

2.4 Haul Route for Construction Traffic

The turbines will be delivered from the port of entry using the motorway network as far as Portlaoise. From the Portlaoise M7/N77 interchange, the turbines will be transported down the N77, straight through Abbeyleix and Durrow towns, onto the R639 and straight through Cullahill village before turning left off the R639, onto the L58141 at Coolnacrutta townland. No works or activities are



required in Abbeyleix, Durrow or Cullahill to facilitate the movement of the turbine components through these settlements.

2.5 Gathabawn Windfarm Community Benefit Fund, Community Website, CLO appointment

The Gathabawn Windfarm Community Benefit Fund which will be established once the windfarm is operational, is estimated to be circa €300,000 to be distributed annually, over the lifetime of the windfarm. The Fund will be managed locally and distributed to near neighbours and to local community organisations. The Fund will be distributed in line the Government's Renewable Energy Support Scheme (RESS) 'Community Benefit Fund Good Practice Principles Handbook'.

A community website was set up prior to submission of this planning application - www.ecopowergathabawn.ie

A Community Liaison Officer (CLO) has been appointed for the construction, operation and decommissioning phases of the windfarm. Email contact details for the CLO are on the community website contact@ecopowergathabawn.ie

3. SCHEDULE OF APPLICATION DOCUMENTS

3.1 Planning Documents Pack

1 No. hard copy and 9 No. electronic (USB) copies of the complete Planning Application comprising; Planning Documents pack

- This Cover Letter to An Coimisiún Pleanála which includes RED III Designation Statement. The Applicants Completeness Checklist to facilitate the checks being undertaken by An Coimisiún Pleanála
- Completed Application Form (incl. Landowner Consent Letters)
- Newspaper Notice Kilkenny People dated 25th September 2026
- Newspaper Notice Irish Independent dated 24th September 2026
- Site Notice and Site Notices placement location Map (12 No. locations)
- EIA Portal Confirmation Notice. EIA Portal Identification Number 2026147
- Copy of Notification Letter to Kilkenny County Council
- Copy of Notification Letters to prescribed bodies and Notification Schedule
- Community Report
- Planning Statement (Policy Context)

3.1.1 Site Notices

Ten site notices have been erected in respect of the Gathabawn Windfarm Application at appropriate locations, including on or near the site entrances, on the public road near the two Control Buildings and at other conspicuous locations along the public road so as to be easily visible and legible by *Cover Letter to An Coimisiún Pleanála on submission of SID Planning Application for Gathabawn Windfarm County Kilkenny*



persons outside the lands using the public road. Two additional Site Notices have been placed at Parksgrove and Moatpark townland in relation to the Candidate Gathabawn Grid Connection for public information only.

Although, the Candidate Gathabawn Grid Connection is not within the Red Line Boundary (development area) for the purposes of the Application, it is evaluated as part of the whole Gathabawn Windfarm project in the EIA Report and the AA Report. Therefore Site Notices have been erected at the proposed location of a new Substation in Parksgrove townland and at the existing Eirgrid Ballyragget Substation, so that the public will be aware of the likely future plans for connecting Gathabawn Windfarm to the National Grid. See [Drawing GWF-01 Site Location Map and Location of Site Notices \(Wider Area\)](#) and [Drawing GWF-02 Location of Site Notices and Site Entrances](#).

The Applicant will monitor these Site Notices regularly, to ensure they remain in place and are not defaced or rendered illegible. Should any notices be removed or damaged, the Applicant will promptly replace them to maintain visibility and compliance and notify the Commission by email.

3.1.2 Notification to Kilkenny County Council and Prescribed Bodies

As instructed by the Commission, a letter serving notice of the Planning Application has been issued to the Chief Executive of Kilkenny County Council, along with copies of the Application. Two (2) hard copies and five (5) electronic copies of the application were delivered– as agreed by phone with Helen Doheny Kilkenny County Council on 23rd September 2026.

The letter also alerts Kilkenny County Council to the Commission's requirement that the application documentation be made available for public inspection/purchase at their offices in accordance with the terms of the newspaper notice, which was provided with the letter. It was also stated in the letter that it is the Commission's intention that all of the application documentation will remain available for public inspection during the currency of the application. [Copy of Notification Letter to Kilkenny County Council in Planning Documents Pack](#).

Notification was also sent to the Prescribed Bodies as instructed by An Coimisiún Pleanála in the SID decision letter. [Copy of Notification Letter to Prescribed Bodies and Schedule of Prescribed Bodies in the Planning Documents Pack](#).

3.1.3 Community Report

A Community Report has been prepared. The Report details the community engagement plan for the Gathabawn Windfarm development, as information for the Local Community, Kilkenny County Council and An Coimisiún Pleanála. It also provides an overview to the local community of the context of Gathabawn Windfarm as a new renewable electricity development in the area and the benefits that will accrue to the local community through the Community Benefit Fund and to wider society through the development of a new renewable electricity generator, should planning be granted for



the proposal. **The Community Report is attached as a separate document in the Planning Documents Pack.**

3.2 Drawings Pack

1 No. hard copy and 9 No. electronic (USB) copies of the Planning Drawings Pack including Schedule of Drawings includes

- Schedule of Drawings
- Site Location Maps
- Site Layout Maps
- Plans, Elevations, sections and cross sections

Note: Drawing Scales as agreed with sids@pleanala.ie by email dated 23/09/2026 to philk@ecopower.ie – Appendix B to this letter

3.3 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report

1 No. hard copy and 9 No. electronic (USB) copies of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) including

- EIAR for Gathabawn Windfarm comprising 21 No. chapters with relevant Figures and Appendices at the end of each Chapter
- Non-Technical Summary of the EIAR
- LVIA Photomontage Books 1 - 3
- Environmental Management Plan for the Construction Phase (CEMP)

The EIAR comprises 21 Chapters covering the following

- C.1 Introduction
- C.2 EIAR Process and Presentation
- C.3 Consultations
- C.4 Alternatives Considered
- C.5 Description of the Development
- C.6 Land
- C.7 Soils
- C.8 Water
- C.9 Air Quality
- C.10 Noise & Vibration
- C.11 Shadow Flicker
- C.12 Climate
- C.13 Biodiversity
- C.14 Landscape (and Photomontage Packs)
- C.15 Cultural Heritage
- C.16 Material Assets
- C.17 Population
- C.18 Human Health
- C.19 Vulnerability to Major Accidents, Natural Disasters & Climate Change
- C.20 Compendium of Mitigation and Monitoring Arrangements
- C.21 Interaction of the Foregoing



The CEMP includes the following management plans

- Site Drainage Drawings
- Mitigation & Monitoring Arrangements
- Emergency Response Procedure
- Surface Water Management Plan
- Traffic Management Plan, including Road Safety and Courtesy Protocol
- Waste Management Plan
- Invasive Species Management Plan
- Emergency Response Plan

3.4 Appropriate Assessment Report

1 No. hard copy and 9 No. electronic (USB) copies of the Appropriate Assessment Report including Figures and Appendices (Stage Two Natura Impact Statement)

3.5 Site Boundary DWG File

Site Boundary DWG file on the USB with the Planning Application

Note: Number of copies as agreed with [An Coimisiún Pleanála](#) by email dated 15/09/2026 to philk@ecopower.ie – Appendix C to this letter

3.6 Standalone Website - www.gathabawnwindfarmplanning.ie

A standalone planning website has been created, which will contain all of the Planning Application documents as submitted to An Coimisiún Pleanála. The website address has been included on the Public Notices (Site Notice and Newspaper Notice). www.gathabawnwindfarmplanning.ie

4. **POLICY CONTEXT OVERVIEW**

Kilkenny City and County Development Plan 2021-2027 is supportive of climate action and development of renewable resources including wind energy, in suitable locations in the County. The proposed development location is identified as a suitable location for wind energy development in the Wind Energy Development Strategy for the County. The developer has also identified the site as suitable for the development of a windfarm due to elevation and scale, absence of EU Designated Sites, prospect of achieving an adequate separation distance from the nearest houses and national grid connection possibilities.

The proposed Gathabawn Windfarm of 54MW installed capacity, will contribute positively to the increasing imperative to ameliorate climate change by generating electricity without polluting greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The proposed development is compatible with European and National Policy on the de-carbonisation of the electricity sector as part of Climate Action imperatives. The proposal is also compatible with European and National policy to develop indigenous, renewable sources of electricity generation in the context of security of supply independent of gas supply, particularly from Russia and other fossil fuel suppliers outside of the EU area.



The full Policy Context of the Gathabawn Windfarm Application is set out in EIAR Chapter 1: Introduction & Policy Context.

Also, the Policy Context compiled as a separate document in the Planning Statement in the Planning Documents Pack.

5. CONCLUSION

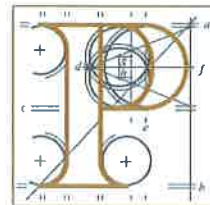
I trust that the documentation provided is in order and is sufficient for your consideration of the proposed Gathabawn Windfarm SID development. The Applicants Completeness Checklist to facilitate the checks being undertaken by An Coimisiún Pleanála is appended to this letter.

Should you have any queries in relation to any of the information enclosed or require additional copies, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned at philk@ecopower.ie.

Yours sincerely

Philomena Kenealy, Director Ecopower Developments Limited
Gathabawn Windfarm Planning Manager

Our Case Number: ABP-313780-22



**An
Bord
Pleanála**

Ecopower Developments
Zetec House
Purcellsich IDA Busniess Park
Dublin Road
Co. Kilkenny

Date: 20 October 2022

Re: Windfarm development comprising between 13 and 18 wind turbines
Townlands of Glashare, Coolnacrutta, Ballylehaun, Gorteennamuck, Ballygowney, Ballyring Upper,
Ballyring Lower and Tentore, Co. Kilkenny

Dear Sir / Madam,

Please be advised that following consultations under section 37B of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 as amended, the Board hereby serves notice under section 37B(4)(a) that it is of the opinion that the proposed development falls within the scope of paragraphs 37A(2)(a) and (b) of the Act.

Accordingly, the Board has decided that the proposed development would be strategic infrastructure within the meaning of section 37A of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended. Any application for permission for the proposed development must therefore be made directly to An Bord Pleanála under section 37E of the Act.

Please also be informed that the Board considers that the pre-application consultation process in respect of this proposed development is now closed.

Attached is a list of prescribed bodies to be notified of the application for the proposed development.

In accordance with section 146(5) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 as amended, the Board will make available for inspection and purchase at its offices the documents relating to the decision within 3 working days following its decision. This information is normally made available on the list of decided cases on the website on the Wednesday following the week in which the decision is made.

In accordance with the fees payable to the Board and where not more than one Pre-application meeting is held in the determination of a case, a refund of € 3,500 will be sent to you in due course.

Teil	Tel	(01) 858 8100
Glaó Áitiúil	LoCall	1890 275 175
Facs	Fax	(01) 872 2684
Láithreán Gréasáin	Website	www.pleanala.ie
Ríomhphost	Email	bord@pleanala.ie

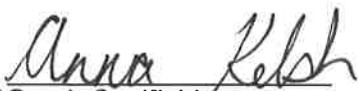
64 Sráid Maoilbhríde Baile Átha Cliath 1 D01 V902	64 Marlborough Street Dublin 1 D01 V902
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The attachment contains information in relation to challenges to the validity of a decision of An Bord Pleanála under the provisions of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended.

If you have any queries in relation to the matter please contact the undersigned officer of the Board.

Please quote the above mentioned An Bord Pleanála reference number in any correspondence or telephone contact with the Board.

Yours faithfully,


p.p. Sarah Caulfield
Executive Officer
Direct Line: 01-8737287

PC09

Teil
Glao Áitiúil
Facs
Láithreán Gréasáin
Ríomhphost

Tel
LoCall
Fax
Website
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(01) 858 8100
1890 275 175
(01) 872 2684
www.pleanala.ie
bord@pleanala.ie

64 Sráid Maoilbhríde 64 Marlborough Street
Baile Átha Cliath 1 Dublin 1
D01 V902 D01 V902

APPENDIX

The following prescribed bodies are considered relevant for the purpose of s37E(3)(c) of the Act:

- Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage
- Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media
- Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine
- Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications
- Minister for Rural and Community Development
- Kilkenny County Council
- Laois County Council
- Southern Regional Assembly
- EirGrid
- Transport Infrastructure Ireland
- Inland Fisheries Ireland
- Irish Water
- Irish Aviation Authority
- Commission for Regulation of Utilities
- An Taisce
- An Chomhairle Ealaíón
- Fáilte Ireland
- The Heritage Council
- Office of Public Works

Further notifications should also be made, where deemed appropriate.

Phil Kenealy

From: SIDS <sids@pleanala.ie>
Sent: Tuesday 15 September 2026 12:19
To: Phil Kenealy
Subject: RE: Upcoming SID Application pre-application ref. Number 313780-22

Hi Phil,

This format is acceptable.

Kind regards,

Honor

From: Phil Kenealy <philk@ecopower.ie>
Sent: Monday 14 September 2026 16:10
To: SIDS <sids@pleanala.ie>
Subject: Upcoming SID Application pre-application ref. Number 313780-22

Caution: This is an **External Email** and may have malicious content. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments. When in doubt, contact the ICT Helpdesk.

Thank you for the sample public notice. Also in our pre-application closing letter (attached) we did not receive instruction on the number of copies of the application required. I proposed to submit

- 1 hard copy and 9 electronic copies on USB of the Application, to An Coimisiún Pleanála
- 1 hard copy and 1 electronic copy on USB of the Application, to Kilkenny County Council

Please confirm that the format is acceptable.

Mise, le meas
Phil

From: Phil Kenealy <philk@ecopower.ie>
Sent: Friday, September 11, 2026 15:53
To: SIDS <sids@pleanala.ie>
Subject: Upcoming SID Application

A chara

I am preparing a new SID Application (pre-application ref. Number 313780-22 - proposed windfarm at Gathabawn County Kilkenny). I would be obliged if you would forward me a sample public notice as is advised on the Commission's website.

Mise, le meas

Philomena Kenealy

Ecopower Developments Limited

Zetec House - Purcellsinch IDA Business Park

Dublin Road - Kilkenny - R95 PX5X

www.ecopower.ie

M: 086-8399193

ecopower 

Phil Kenealy

From: SIDS <sids@pleanala.ie>
Sent: Wednesday 23 September 2026 16:13
To: Phil Kenealy
Subject: RE: Upcoming SID Application
Follow Up Flag: Flag for follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Hi Philomena,

Further to your query regarding the subject matter, we can advise the following.

Given the nature of the subject proposals, covering an expansive area, we are satisfied that it would be impractical for the prospective applicant in these circumstances to provide all drawings at the scales normally required (i.e. for a standard planning application), and that it is reasonable for the drawing scales to be agreed in advance of lodging an application to An Coimisiún Pleanála.

The scales proposed for your drawings, as detailed in your email correspondence below, would appear reasonable in these circumstances. The stated approach in providing drawings illustrating detailed elements of the proposals at a metric scale of 1:500 would appear reasonable. This should also apply with respect to locations of joint bays, watercourse crossings and major junctions along the subject proposed grid-connection route, as well as other specific features of the proposed development.

The onus is on the prospective applicant to ensure that all of their application drawings are prepared at scales sufficient to allow An Coimisiún Pleanála and other parties to the application to understand and assess the siting, layout and other substantive elements of the subject development.

Kind regards,

Honor

From: Phil Kenealy <philk@ecopower.ie>
Sent: Tuesday 22 September 2026 11:09
To: SIDS <sids@pleanala.ie>
Subject: Upcoming SID Application

Caution: This is an **External Email** and may have malicious content. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments. When in doubt, contact the ICT Helpdesk.

A chara

I am preparing a new SID Application (pre-application ref. Number 313780-22 - proposed windfarm at Gathabawn County Kilkenny). I would be obliged if you would approve the attached Drawing Scales for the Application, if appropriate.

Mise, le meas

Philomena Kenealy

Ecopower Developments Limited

Zetec House - Purcellsinch IDA Business Park

Dublin Road - Kilkenny - R95 PX5X

www.ecopower.ie

M: 086-8399193





Payment Confirmation

Payment details

Amount	EUR 100,000.00
My statement message	AN COIMISIUN PLEAN
Payee message	GATHABAWN WINDFARM CO KILKENNY
Additional information for payee	ECOPOWER DEVELOPMENTS LTD SID APPLICATION FOR GATHABAWN WINDFARM COUNTY KILKENNY
Payment option	Standard
AIB reference no	0N82HAGKCRNKHHJ1
Payment status	Completed
Date	28/09/2026
Fee CCY	EUR
AIB fee	0.00
AIB fees paid by	You
Other fees paid by	Payee

Payer details

Name	ECOPOWER DEVELOPMENTS
Currency	EUR
Account	IE75AIBK93319868155011

Payee details

Name	AN COIMISIUN PLEANALA
Account	IE70AIBK93105500316067
Payee address	64 MARLBOROUGH STREET, DUBLIN, Ireland
Payee bank details	IE70AIBK93105500316067 AIBKIE2DXXX Ireland
