

Proposed Gathabawn Windfarm

Environmental Impact Assessment Report

Chapter 3: Consultation

September 2026

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ElAR 3. Consultation

ElAR 3.1 Consultation with An Coimisiún Pleanála (SID)

An Coimisiún Pleanála Case Number: ABP-313780-22. On 10th June 2022, Ecopower Developments Limited (EDL) formally asked An Coimisiún Pleanála, through the pre-application process, if the Gathabawn Windfarm proposal in County Kilkenny, would be considered strategic infrastructure development.

ElAR 3.1.1 Pre-Application Meeting

A pre-application consultation meeting was held on 17th August 2022 between the Commission's representatives and EDL. A summary of the EDL presentation is provided below.

EDL introduced the proposal to construct a windfarm (to be called Gathabawn Windfarm) consisting of c.15 wind turbines with an approximate tip height of 160 to 170 metres and an overall output capacity of between 65-75MW. The proposed development also included an 110kV electrical substation. Grid connection cabling mainly along the public road corridor, crossing the River Nore and connecting to the existing Eirgrid Substation at Moatpark outside Ballyragget. The proposed development is situated in North Kilkenny and the nearest settlements are Gathabawn and Lisdowney villages and the nearest town is Ballyragget. Two access routes for the turbine deliveries are described and EDL submitted that no major works are required along these transport routes to facilitate deliveries.

The site land-use is primarily agricultural grassland with a low population density surrounding. There is no forestry on site.

The site is designated as acceptable in principle for windfarms within the Kilkenny City and County Development Plan 2021-2027.

EDL stated that no bird or mammal species of particular concern were identified at the windfarm site and that the site has low levels of bat activity. The turbine locations will be greater than 500 metres from involved landowners' residences and 600 metres from third-party residences. Two Biodiversity Enhancement and Protected areas are proposed as part of the scheme.

EDL stated that a community benefit fund has been developed and it will involve community organisations in the immediate proximity and a near neighbour payment.

The nearest designated site is the Cullahill Mountain SAC which adjoins part of the windfarm site. No works are proposed within the SAC boundary. The River Barrow & River Nore SAC and the River Nore SPA are also located within the wider area and would be crossed by the grid connection cabling. EDL stated that there are a number of cultural heritage sites in the general area and there are Record of Monument & Places (RMP) sites within the windfarm site.

EDL stated that all other existing and proposed windfarms/grid connections in the area will be fully assessed within the ElAR.

EDL confirmed that consultations have already been held with Inland Fisheries Ireland, National Parks & Wildlife Service and Kilkenny County Council and no items of concern were raised. Engagement is ongoing with local landowners, approximately 17 in total, and with community representatives.

Following the EDL presentation, the following matters were discussed and the Board's representatives made a number of recommendations, including:

- A general discussion was had around the Kilkenny City & County Development Plan 2021-2027 and the Ministerial Direction that has issued in relation to wind strategy areas. EDL confirmed that this Direction focused on areas in south Kilkenny.
- If the turbine type is not specified in the planning application, the methodology for applying for different turbine types was outlined by the Commission.
- The Commission's representatives highlighted that the grid connection route proposed for the Farranrory windfarm in Tipperary with the grid connection mostly in County Kilkenny connecting to Ballyragget Substation, follows a similar route to the proposed development and they queried whether it would be possible to create one crossing over the River Nore and the N77 for both grid connections to Ballyragget. The applicant said this may be possible but said it would need to be examined further. The Commission's representatives said if this approach is not brought forward, it still needs to be assessed within the alternatives.
- The Commission's representatives said it would strongly recommend consultations with Transport Infrastructure Ireland and Irish Water in relation to the crossing of the N77.
- The Commission's representatives said the GSI Landslide Susceptibility Map classifies sections of the Ballylehaun site in the western part of the site, as moderately high and they reminded EDL to fully consider and address ground stability, particularly in this area.
- In relation to turbines T4 and T6 which are positioned along the boundary of the Cullahill Mountain SAC] the Commission's representatives advised addressing this within the planning application.
- In response to a query on the matter, the prospective applicant said the location of the access road to the substation has not yet been finalised but said it will either link into the internal windfarm road network or directly onto the public road. The final route will be submitted with the planning application. The Board's representatives noted that the internal windfarm road network may avoid construction of a new entrance onto the public road.
- Finally, the Board's representatives advised EDL to provide a comprehensive set of photomontages from several viewpoints, including from the scenic viewpoint at Creenkill Beg, Gathabawn village and the M8/R639.

The meeting concluded, after which it was a matter for EDL whether to revert to the Commission requesting a further meeting.

See [Appendix 3.1 Pre-Application Consultation with An Coimisiún Pleanála](#) for the Applicant's Presentation; the Commission's Minutes, Determination and the Inspector's Report, at the end of this chapter.

EIAR 3.1.2 Request from Prospective Applicant to Issue a Declaration

EDL formally requested closure of the pre-application consultation process in a letter dated 13th September 2022. The request included mapping of the updated Site Layout developed as a result of discussions at the pre-application meeting and on-going site investigations.

EIAR 3.1.3 Determination from An Coimisiún Pleanála

The pre-application process was closed out by letter from An Coimisiún Pleanála on 20th October 2022. The letter formally served notice that the proposed development would be strategic infrastructure and that any application for permission for the proposed development must therefore be made directly to An Coimisiún Pleanála under section 37E of the Act.

A list of Prescribed Bodies to be notified of the Application for the proposed development was attached to the Commission's determination.

See [Appendix 3.1: Pre-Application Consultation with An Coimisiún Pleanála](#) for the Applicant's Presentation; the Commission's Minutes, Determination and the Inspector's Report (end of this chapter).

EIAR 3.1.4 EDL response to ABP Pre-Application Consultation

Following the consultation and having regard to environmental considerations, and the available land holdings, the following particulars for this planning application were drafted;

- The Gathabawn Windfarm planning application will be made directly to An Coimisiún Pleanála having been determined to be Strategic Infrastructure Development.
- The application will be made for 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. The windfarm will have an output capacity of 54MW. A turbine range will not be included as part of the application.
- The grid connection point for the proposed Gathabawn Windfarm, has not yet been confirmed by Eirgrid but is likely to be the Eirgrid Ballyragget Substation, circa 7km to the east of the proposed windfarm site. The grid connection will require the construction of a new 110kV electrical substation. A location has been identified proximate to the Eirgrid Ballyragget Substation. The Grid Connection is not included as part of the 2026 Planning Application but is considered in the EIA Report and AA Report in order to facilitate the cumulative evaluation of the whole project.
- The possibility of sharing the part of the grid connection route, in particular where it crosses the River Nore and the N77 at Ballyragget, with Farranrory Windfarm is examined as an alternative grid connection method in [Chapter 4 Alternatives Considered; Section 2.4 Alternative for sharing grid connection route](#).
- Transport Infrastructure Ireland (Tii) and Irish Water were consulted specifically in relation to crossing the N77. [See Appendix 3.2: Consultation and Replies from the Prescribed Bodies](#).
- Specific attention was paid to the issue of the ground stability, particularly in the western portion of the site. [See Chapter 7 Soil](#).
- The preliminary position of T4 & T6 alongside the boundary of the Cullahill Mountain SAC was reconsidered. [See Chapter 4 Alternatives Considered; Section 2.6 Alternative Windfarm Layout](#).
- A grid connection cable mainly along the public road to Eirgrid Ballyragget Substation was reconsidered [See Chapter 4 Alternatives Considered](#).
- The number of entrances to the windfarm was considered. [See Chapter 4 Alternatives Considered](#).
- The photomontage set will include photomontages from the scenic viewpoint at Creenkill Beg, Gathabawn village and the M8/R639.

EIAR 3.2 Consultations with Kilkenny County Council

A pre-planning consultation on the proposed Gathabawn Windfarm development, was held by Teams between Deirdre Breen Executive Planner Kilkenny County Council and Julie Brett EIA Report coordinator EDL, on 15th June 2022.

EDL confirmed that pre-application consultation with An Coimisiún Pleanála had commenced under Section 37B(1) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), in order to establish if the proposal is a Strategic Infrastructure Development. As the Proposed Gathabawn Windfarm falls within the Seventh Schedule, having a total output greater than 50 megawatts and includes an 110kV grid connection, EDL is of the opinion that it does satisfy the criteria for Strategic Infrastructure Development.

EDL requested the consultation with Kilkenny County Council to appraise the Area Planner of the proposal at that stage and to ascertain if there are any matters in particular that are of concern or that the Planner wants particularly examined in the project EIA Report and Appropriate Assessment (AA) Report.

Mapping was provided on proximate European Sites; location in the context of the County's Wind Energy Strategy and the project Layout and proposed grid connection route to the Eirgrid Ballyragget Substation.

The project details were discussed and no specific additional details to be examined in the EIA Report and AA Report were requested by the Planner. Kilkenny County Council awaits the final application and will comment at that stage.

At the time of lodgement of the application with the Commission, the Chief Executive Officer of Kilkenny County Council will be served Notice of the lodgement of the application. Copies of the application will accompany the Notice. The Notice will also alert Kilkenny County Council to the Commission's requirement that the application documentation be made available for public inspection/purchase by the planning authority in accordance with the terms of the newspaper notices and the Board's intention that all of the application documentation will remain available for public inspection during the currency of the application.

EIAR 3.3 Consultation with Laois County Council

January 2024: In January 2024 EDL consulted with Laois County Council (LCC) about the Gathabawn Windfarm proposal. Laois County Council responded with comments on;

- Site Location in relation to Laois County Wind Energy Strategy Appendix V: LCC note that the area adjacent to the proposed windfarm, within County Laois is identified as Areas Not Open for Consideration for windfarms.
- Turbine Design: It is Laois County Council's preference that the turbine design has a ratio of hub height to rotor diameter in the order of 1:1 and that considering the rotor diameter proposed exceeds the hub height by a significant margin then the turbine design should be considered against all other reasonable alternatives, to ensure that it does not give rise to unacceptable significant impacts on the landscape.
- Landscape Visual Impact Assessment: The Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027 includes a Landscape Character Assessment (LCA). LCC requests that the Zone of Theoretically Visible study area (in the LVIA) should include areas within Laois.
- Road Network: LCC would advise that the EIAR should include an assessment of the likely significant effects on transport and access resulting from the construction, operation and decommissioning of the proposed development. Suggestions are included for the content of the construction phase Traffic Management Plan to include; a map showing a detailed proposal of the haulage route for the construction phase; road survey in the vicinity of the site to identify the conditions of the public roadway and all structures (bridges, culverts etc); details how the existing road network will be maintained during the construction phase of the development.

These comments from Laois County Council are noted and informed the subjects for examination in the EIA Report.

August 2026: A 2nd Consultation was conducted in August 2026 to appraise Laois County Council of the most recent design proposal. Mapping was supplied.

See [Appendix 3.2: Consultation and Replies from the Prescribed Bodies](#) (end of this chapter) for the full text and mapping supplied.

No reply was received to this 2nd consultation.

Also, at the time of lodgement of the Application with An Coimisiún Pleanála, Laois County Council will be notified of the lodgement of the application. A copy of the Application will be included with the notification.

ElAR 3.4 Consultation with DAU (NMS)

Consultations with Department of Housing Local Government and Heritage; Development Applications Unit (DAU).

ElAR 3.4.1 Consultation by AMS with NMS in November 2022

Commissioned by EDL, Archaeological Management Solutions (AMS) consulted with Teresa Bolger DAU (NMS) on 11 November 2022. An overview of the development and a Master Geopkg.gpkg file was sent by AMS to the DAU, prior to the meeting. AMS File Ref. G Pre00231/2022 – Ballylehaun Windfarm - Gathabawn Windfarm Project Kilkenny.

The meeting of 11 November 2022 was summarised by Breana McCulloch AMS as follows;

- **DAU (NMS)** site surveys to inform the CHIA. More complete survey of field boundaries on hilltop is required. **Response EDL:** Geophysics Surveys and LIDAR surveys of the site have informed the Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment (CHIA). LiDAR survey captured entire hill at Ballylehaun
- **DAU (NMS)** Alternative Layouts to be considered to avoid impact on CH. **Response EDL** – See Chapter 4: Alternatives Considered.
- **DAU (NMS)** Grangefertagh monastic site to west (Gathabawn) to be considered. **Response EDL:** Site is taken into consideration in CHIA and there is also a photomontage from Grangefertagh.
- **DAU (NMS)** Landscape setting is important sites such as mottes and ringforts. **Response EDL:** Setting of cultural heritage sites has been taken into consideration in the CHIA.
- **DAU (NMS)** Is hilltop topographical survey possible? Relict landscape to be presented clearly in the CHIA. Early medieval and possible prehistoric remains on hilltop. Possible micro-siting needs to be identified before post-planning. **Response EDL:** Ecopower has carried out geophysics and LIDAR surveys of the whole site which have recorded pre-famine and prehistoric field boundaries. These are identified in the CHIA. these surveys have also informed micro siting – See Chapter 4: Alternatives Considered.
 - **DAU (NMS)** to be notified in advanced of testing and geophysical licencing. **Response EDL:** Geophysical licence applied for in 2022 and carried out in 2023. DAU notified in advance.
 - **DAU (NMS)** regarding KK008-031: Ringfort suggest that geophysics are carried out here instead of testing. **Response EDL:** AMS carried out geophysics testing on this Ringfort site as recommended.
 - **DAU (NMS)** Possibility of a positive outcome by defining new cultural features, doing presentations or information sessions to the public. **Response EDL:** An interactive database is proposed. Presentations can be offered to the public.
 - **DAU (NMS)** Hazelwood (west of SAC) is noted. **Response EDL:** This hazel wood is now a Nature Reserve and not part of the site. The hazel wood to the south will be protected as part of a newly created Biodiversity Area as part of the windfarm scheme. Trees still delineate field boundaries. The number of solitary veteran hawthorn trees that need to be felled on the Ballylehaun hill has been minimised to 8 trees altogether out of a total of c. 400 solitary trees. this will benefit CH and Biodiversity.
- **DAU (NMS)** Wade surveys to be carried out for any watercourse that may be impacted. **Response EDL:** This will form part of our mitigation measures at all instream works locations, prior to works being carried out. There are only 2 watercourses at the proposed windfarm site (W1 & W2) – along the Ballylehaun-Ballyring cable route. W1 which will be crossed under the existing culvert under the public

road, and W2 will be crossed by horizontal directional drilling technique – no instream works at either of these watercourses.

- Along the Candidate Gathabawn Grid Connection there are three stream crossings (all instream works) – Lismaine Stream (W3), Lisdowney Stream (W4), Ballyconra Stream (W5), and a HDD under the River Nore (W6).

EIAR 3.4.2 Consultation by EDL with DAU in January 2024.

EDL consulted with DAU by letter on 24th January 2024.

- Response by letter from the NMS (dated 19th February 2024) under DAU Ref. KK-CON-A240126-0001.
- Response by letter from the DAU (dated 20th February 2024) under DAU Ref. G Pre00033/2024.

Both letters are similar and relate to Heritage observations/recommendations. they can be summarised as follows:

The Department has reviewed the initial site mapping for the proposed windfarm and determined that it lacks the detail required for a full archaeological assessment. Consequently, the Department will withhold further comments until the developer submits a complete Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment (CHIA) and a Planning and Environmental Considerations Report. The developer must hire a Consultant Archaeologist to complete an Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) to be integrated into these final documents.

The proposed development site is situated within a broader, documented landscape of historical settlement and activity. All recorded monuments in the surrounding area are legally protected under Section 12 of the National Monuments Act. Because of this, the CHIA study area must be large enough to evaluate the potential impacts of the wind farm on the wider archaeological landscape, rather than just the immediate site footprint.

To achieve this, the CHIA must combine a robust desk study, comprehensive field inspections, and a targeted Visual Impact Assessment (VIA). The AIA must also incorporate layout drawings, historical research, and potential geophysical surveys. A major focus must be placed on how the windfarm's physical form and permanence might visually disrupt or alter the settings, viewpoints, and original functions of prehistoric monuments like standing stones and megalithic tombs.

Notwithstanding the above, the Department awaits the submission of this assessment before commenting further."

These comments from NMS are noted and informed the subjects for examination in the EIA Report and the final design of the windfarm infrastructure.

See [Appendix 3.2: Consultation and Replies from the Prescribed Bodies](#) (end of this chapter) for the full text and mapping supplied.

Also, at the time of lodgement of the application with An Coimisiún Pleanála, the DAU will be notified of the lodgement of the application. A copy of the application will be included with the notification.

The CHIA section of the EIA Report is being prepared by SLR consultants. They contacted the DAU in 2026 but received no reply.

EIAR 3.5 Consultation with IFI

Consultation June 2022 and 2nd consultation in December 2025

Inis Environmental Consultants who are preparing the Biodiversity aspects of the EIA Report consulted with IFI by letter in June 2022 and in December 2025. Aerial mapping of the area was included.

IFI South-Eastern River Basin District responded by letter dated 15th June 2022 and again in a similar but more detailed letter of 22nd December 2025. In summary:

IFI confirmed that the proposed development is located in the Nore catchment, in particular in the catchment areas of the following surface water bodies. All are part of or feeding directly to the Barrow – Nore SAC.

Surface Water Body	WFD Status	Risk Status
Gorteenahilla_010	Poor	
Lisdowney_010	Good	At Risk
Goul_050	Moderate	At Risk
Erkina_050	Moderate	At Risk
Nore_150	Good	Not At Risk

IFI make the following observations in respect of the statutory ecological surveys proposed:

- The proposed surveys / reports must demonstrate how this project would be consistent with the maintenance / restoration of each of the above surface water bodies to Good Ecological Status
- Baseline ecological assessments of water courses potentially affected, including fish species as well as other biological and physico-chemical surveys are required
- Mapping of all aquatic habitats potentially affected: all drainage channels (temporary and permanent) should be mapped and where these channels transect the proposed road network
- An assessment of the potential adverse effects of the proposed works on all relevant aquatic receptors, including fish. Assessments should cover the site of the proposed wind development and the proposed grid connection route
- Cumulative effects along with other existing or approved projects should be considered
- Examination of effects should include an assessment of the impact on the conservation objectives of species listed as qualifying interests in the Barrow – Nore SAC, which include Lamprey species and Atlantic Salmon.
- The proposed mitigation measures to prevent erosion from soil disturbance in excavation areas and areas where there is significant movement of plant and machinery
- Web access details are provided for fish ecological status and data and data request forms, if required
- During the construction and operational phases, the applicant should adhere to the recommendations and guidelines outlined in *IFI's Guidelines on Protection of Fisheries during Construction Works in and adjacent to Waters 2016*
- Instream works may only take place during the period 1 July to 30 September. There should be no interference with the bed, gradient, profile or alignment of watercourses without prior notification and the agreement of Inland Fisheries Ireland.
- The storage, management and conveyance of materials on site must not permit any deleterious matter to reach surface water systems either directly or indirectly, either during construction or post-

construction. There must be no run-off of fuels, oils, concrete or from stockpiles of materials or general run-off to surface waters from the works.

- There should be no interference with the bed, gradient, profile or alignment of any watercourse on or adjacent to the site without the prior notification and the written agreement of Inland Fisheries Ireland. Watercourses on or bordering the site must be maintained in their original state, their bankside vegetation preserved, and the existing line of the watercourse left unaltered, unless explicitly agreed otherwise.
- The number of water crossings, whether on-site or for the proposed grid connection route, should be minimised, and existing crossings utilised where possible. Method statements for new water crossings, or for alterations to existing crossings must be provided.
- Proposed instream works must be accompanied by a site-specific method statement provided to IFI. Method statements for proposed works on new water crossings, or for alterations to existing crossings must also be provided. Written approval from IFI should be obtained before works proceed. Where existing crossings must undergo alteration, IFI request that these are upgraded in the interests of habitat improvement and biodiversity enhancement. Crossings should be designed to meet IFI's *Fisheries Construction Guidelines* referred to above. IFI also recommends that the applicant refer to the *OPW's Design Guidance for Fish Passage on Small Barriers (2021)*. IFI should be consulted at the design stage for any new crossings or alterations to existing crossings.
- With regard to the siting of turbines these should be located on suitable ground and set back from any watercourses so as to minimise the risk for contamination or impact. IFI recommends that minimum buffer zones of 50m be provided from turbine bases to any waters as defined in Section 1 of the Local Government (Water Pollution) Act, 1977 (as amended). IFI also requests that these are located outside the 0.1% AEP flooding zone.
- Site compounds and personal welfare facilities, and the maintenance, cleaning, refuelling and repair work of vehicles and machinery must take place in dedicated areas which are bunded or protected to prevent discharge of materials into any surface waters. IFI requests that these are located at least 50m from any surface watercourses and outside the 1% AEP flooding zone.
- SuDS principles should be incorporated into surface water management plans to attenuate any run-off of suspended solids or other deleterious matter. Natural flow paths should not be interrupted or diverted in a manner that would increase the risk of erosion. Drainage infrastructure should be installed during dry ground conditions.
- Routes of roads and tracks and the location of turning areas should be planned to minimise environmental disturbance. The use of heavy plant and machinery on site should not result in soil erosion or nutrient losses. Mitigation measures for suspended solids must comply with an upper limit of 25mg per litre for Total Suspended Solids [TSS] as specified in the Salmonid Waters Regulations, SI 293 of 1988.
- The use of borrow pits as a source of aggregate/hardstanding material should have regard for the sensitivity of the soils /subsoils to erosion and the potential for the generation of suspended solids pollution from excavations linked to a borrow pit.
- The Planning Application should include a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and a Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP). Before works commence the applicant or the appointed contractor should provide contact details for the Ecological Clerk of Works to Inland Fisheries Ireland. In the event of any non-compliant discharge or incident which threatens an aquatic zone, IFI must be informed immediately (contact details provided).
- Following the commencement of works, field testing and laboratory analysis of parameters should be undertaken at agreed sites. The reports should include locations, timing and frequency of the proposed

monitoring of biological and physico-chemical parameters. A full list of parameters should also be provided.

- At all times the precautionary principle should be applied throughout the development.
- Records should be kept of biological and chemical monitoring of undertaken before and during the construction phase and after the works, and during the operational phase for the development. Records should also be kept of inspections of surface water mitigation measures. These records should be made available upon request to any authorised person as defined under the Local Government (Water Pollution) Acts.

See **Appendix 3.2: Consultation and Replies from the Prescribed Bodies** (end of this chapter) for the full text.

Response: Inis Environmental Consultancy had regard to IFI's observations during the preparation of Chapter 13: Biodiversity of the EIAR including mapping and sensitive aspects of the receiving environment and also the preparation of the Appropriate Assessment Report including assessment of the impact on the conservation objectives of species listed as qualifying interests in the Barrow – Nore SAC, the development Project Design Protection Measures (PDs) and the Environmental Management Plan for the Project.

This consultation response from IFI was also shared with the project hydrogeologist experts who prepared Chapter 8: Water of this EIAR and the Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP).

The project design and mitigation measures for the protection of water were informed by IFI observations.

Also, at the time of lodgement of the application with An Coimisiún Pleanála, IFI will be notified of the lodgement of the application. A copy of the application will be included with the notification.

EIAR 3.6 Consultation with Transport Infrastructure Ireland

February 2024: Consultation was carried out by EDL with Tii in February 2024, in relation to the Gathabawn Windfarm proposal and in particular the proposed haul route for the turbine components.

The consultation described the haul route using the motorways and National Road network and it was confirmed by EDL that no public road works will be required on Tii assets as far as Durrow. Thereafter the transportation from Durrow to the turn-off the N77 to the L1807, will require matting overlay and street furniture removal at 4 No. locations. It was confirmed by EDL that all street furniture predicted to act as an obstacle to the haul route, will be upgraded to socket foundations. Upgrade works will take place outside of peak hours, well in advance of the transportation of the turbine components. The socket foundation design will facilitate the removal and immediate reinstatement of street furniture as turbine components are transported. The matting overlay will be lifted at the same time.

Tii replied to confirm that

“None of the four locations where you will need to remove street furniture or lay matting to transport the wind turbines are within the network directly maintained/managed by TII. They are within the local authority managed network. Therefore you should agree details directly with the relevant local authorities; Kilkenny and Laois”.

EDL notes Tii's reply. Also, the turbine components haul route has been redesigned since the 2024 consultation and it is no longer proposed to use this route through Durrow to the N77 for wind turbine component transportation. All turbine component transportation will travel through Durrow on the Johnstown Road.

See **Appendix 3.2: Consultation and Replies from the Prescribed Bodies** (end of this chapter) for the full text and mapping supplied.

August 2026: A 2nd Consultation was conducted in August 2026 to appraise Tii of the proposal to cross the proposed grid connection cabling under the N77 national secondary route just north of Ballyragget Substation. Mapping was supplied. This is part of the Candidate Gathabawn Grid Connection which is not subject of this planning application but nevertheless is the likely and preferred grid connection route and therefore any input from Tii will inform the final design.

A reply was received to this 2nd consultation on 4th September 2026. See **Appendix 3.2: Consultation and Replies from the Prescribed Bodies** for the consultation letter and reply.

In summary, Tii recommended the DoECLG Guidelines, ‘Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities’ (2012), and relevant TII Publications to be found at www.TII.ie. With respect to EIAR scoping issues, the Tii recommendations provide general guidance for the preparation of an EIAR on topics which may affect the national roads, such as the haul routes utilising the National Road Network and the treatment of ‘abnormal’ loads which may be required for wind turbine components. Tii notes that their preferred method of any necessary National Road network crossings is by horizontal directional drilling and all national road structures, including bridges, culverts, etc should be avoided. All of Tii comments about the design of the cabling and necessary road crossings have been considered in the preparation of the EIA Report. When the grid connection point is confirmed by Eirgrid, the cable route design will take into account the issues raised and recommendations in this consultation.

Tii makes specific comment on the cable route along the N77 Ballyragget to Durrow Road for the Candidate Gathabawn Grid Connection, which is not part of the planning application but is included in the EIA Report assessments. Tii recommend that proposed Road Schemes should be taken into account when planning the cable routing and that the optimal solution should ultimately be proposed bearing in mind the requirement to maintain the strategic capacity and safety of the Network. Tii further notes that the EDL consultation map indicates a grid connection proposal to the Ballyragget 110kV Substation and states that Tii is aware of a number of other grid connection proposals similarly proposing connection to the Ballyragget Substation, and therefore Tii recommend that a co-ordinated approach to grid connection routing in this area is achieved, to avoid risk to the effective delivery of renewable energy projects in the area.

EDL notes all of the issues raised by Tii in relation to the National road network, and when the grid connection point is confirmed by Eirgrid, the cable route design will take these into account. EDL will have regard to other windfarms proposing to connect to the Eirgrid Ballyragget Substation namely Briskalagh Windfarm (KK Ref. 2560003 and ACP Ref. 322154: Permitted) and Seskin Windfarm (KK Ref. 2560418 and ACP Ref. 323759 and Laois Ref. 2560414 and ACP Ref. 323775: Appealed). EDL will seek to co-ordinate with these developers when the planning application for the Candidate Grid Connection is being prepared.

At the time of lodgement of this Planning Application with An Coimisiún Pleanála, Tii will be notified of the lodgement and a copy of the Application will be included with the notification.

EIAR 3.7 Consultation with Uisce Éireann

February 2024: Following a request, EDL received data from the Uisce Éireann Data Request Team on 22nd June, 2022, including the Water distribution and Sewer Network drawings. There are just two points of interaction between the proposed Gathabawn Windfarm works and Uisce Éireann's assets.

- 1) at a project cable crossing of the R432 (Ballyragget to Ballinakill Road) beside the existing Eirgrid Ballyragget Substation where there is an Uisce Éireann mains water pipe and
- 2) alongside an Uisce Éireann lateral line down the Local Road L-58442 which serves some roadside properties.

EDL asked if Uisce Éireann would confirm that the locations at 1 & 2 above are currently the only interaction possible between Uisce Éireann assets and the Gathabawn grid cabling.

In reply, Uisce Éireann (UE) outlined issues that the applicant is requested to address, prior to the lodgement of a planning application. These included;

- UE response Appendix 1: The EIAR must include and consider all direct, indirect and cumulative effects on the existing UE extraction point in Freshford.
- UE response Appendix 2: Aspects of Water Services to be considered in the scope of the EIA where relevant, are listed.

These comments are noted by EDL and informed the subjects for examination in the EIA Report particularly in EIAR Chapter 16: Material Assets when built services are mapped and the impact of the proposal evaluated. The impact on water quality is evaluated in EIAR Chapter 6: Water, which is relevant to the water quality at the UE extraction point in Freshford.

See [Appendix 3.2: Consultation and Replies from the Prescribed Bodies](#) (end of this chapter) for the full text and mapping supplied to Uisce Éireann.

August 2026: A 2nd Consultation was conducted in August 2026 to appraise Uisce Éireann of the most recent design proposal. It was confirmed that the drawings received from Data Requests (UE) in June 2026 identify two interactions between the proposed Gathabawn Windfarm works and Uisce Éireann's assets – a Water Mains and a Lateral Line adjacent to the L1807. Mapping was supplied.

A reply was received on 3rd September, 2026 by email. See [Appendix 3.2: Consultation and Replies from the Prescribed Bodies](#) (end of this chapter) for the full text and mapping supplied to Uisce Éireann and the reply in September 2026.

Uisce Éireann replied that *"The previous advice provided still stands. You will need to lodge diversion enquiry with Uisce Éireann's Diversions team for the proposed build under of UE assets. This will assess the feasibility of the proposal. The UE Diversions team will then issue a Confirmation of Feasibility (COF) to build under and this COF must be submitted to the ACP on lodgement of the SID application"*

EDL confirms that the placement of the proposed grid connection cabling under Uisce Éireann's assets is part of the Candidate Gathabawn Grid Connection, which is not subject of this planning application. Nevertheless, this route is the likely and preferred grid connection route and therefore the recommendation will inform pre-application consultation with Uisce Éireann for the Candidate Gathabawn Grid Connection Planning Application, which will be lodged once the grid connection point is confirmed by Eirgrid. According to Eirgrid's rules a planning application for the windfarm must first be made before an application can be made to Eirgrid for the project's grid connection.

Also, at the time of lodgement of the Application with An Coimisiún Pleanála, Uisce Eireann will be notified of the lodgement. A copy of the Application will be included with the notification.

EIAR 3.8 Consultation with Irish Aviation Authority

IAA was consulted in August 2026, once the most likely turbine positions and results of the telecoms assessment were available. Turbine co-ordinates and the ground base elevation and blade tip heights for each of the 12 No. turbines were provided. IAA was asked for the aviation requirements and to provide details of any aeronautical telecommunications networks in the vicinity of the proposed windfarm. A site location map was also included in the consultation.

IAA replied on 17th September, 2026 and recommended that the developer engages directly with the air navigation service provider (ANSP) AirNav Ireland and the Property Management Branch of Department of Defence to make them aware of proposal and ensure appropriate screening from an aviation safety perspective.

IAA also stated that it is likely that the following general observations would be proffered by the Authority during a formal planning process:

In the event of planning consent being granted, the applicant should be conditioned to contact the Irish Aviation Authority to:

- (1) agree an aeronautical obstacle warning light scheme for the wind farm development,*
- (2) provide as-constructed coordinates in WGS84 format together with ground and blade tip height elevations at each wind turbine location and*
- (3) notify the Authority of intention to commence crane operations with at least 30 days prior notification of their erection in accordance with S.I 215 of 2005 Obstacles to Aircraft in Flight (Order). Relevant contact details were provided.*

See [Appendix 3.2: Consultation and Replies from the Prescribed Bodies](#) (end of this chapter) for the full text and mapping supplied.

The consultant who prepared the Aviation Review Statement (Appendix 16.4 of Chapter 16: Material Assets) will consult with AirNav and Department of Defence prior to construction for up-to-date requirements. Also, EDL confirms that Gathabawn Windfarm if granted planning permission, can comply with the post planning actions suggested by IAA.

In addition, at the time of lodgement of the Application with An Coimisiún Pleanála, IAA will be notified of the lodgement of the application. A copy of the Application will be included with the notification.

EIAR 3.9 Consultation with Office of Public Works (OPW)

EDL consulted with the OPW in January 2024, about the Gathabawn Windfarm proposal.

OPW replied in February 2024 with general information in relation to consents from the Commissioners of Public Works, under the Arterial Drainage Act of 1945 as amended, which would be required for certain works including;

- Section 50 consents for the construction of a new bridge (or other structure such as a culvert or pipework etc.) or alter, reconstruct, or restore any existing bridge (or other structure such as a culvert or pipework etc.) over any watercourse as part of the development
- Where there is the potential for watercourse damming with flume pipes and/or diversion channels to facilitate the construction works, that damming of a watercourse may be subject to consent under Section 47, and the temporary pipes, culverts, and/or bridges required to cross or divert a watercourse during the construction phase will also require Section 50 consent. Further consultation is required with the OPW when the construction methodologies for the proposed works are finalised.
- In the context of seeking consent under Section 50, the current required design standard for bridges or culverts is based on the flood with an annual exceedance probability of 1% (often referred to as the 1 in 100 year flood), increased by 20% to cater for the effects of climate change. Bridges or culverts are required to be able to convey this design flood without significantly altering the hydraulic characteristics of the watercourse.

These comments from OPW are noted and informed the EDL design of the windfarm layout. The requirement for certain consents from the Commissioners of Public Works are noted.

A further consultation letter was sent in August 2026 when the final design was established. Mapping of the EPA watercourses and the land drain at the windfarm site, in the context of the windfarm infrastructure was included. A reply was received on 7th September 2026 with the following Observation

The OPW notes that this planning application is currently at the 2nd consultation phase. The OPW notes the following national monuments and their approximated distance from the proposed windfarm:

- NM 74 Grangefertagh Round Tower & Church, Grangefertagh, Co. Kilkenny – 5.35 km
- NM 282 Ballylarkin Church, Ballylarkin Upper, Co. Kilkenny – 5.50 km
- NM 376 Rathealy, Ringfort, Rathealy, Co. Kilkenny – 8.67 km

The OPW requests that the applicant generate verifiable visual impact assessments, including cumulative impact, screening as appropriate at ZTV stage, on National Monument in State Care heritage receptors, as listed above. This will enable An Coimisiún Pleanála, the OPW and others to understand the potential visual impact on the cultural heritage significance of these nationally important protected sites.

Ecopower Developments confirms that NM74 (LVIA Viewpoint VP14) and NM282 (LVIA Viewpoint VP35) have been assessed for visual impact, including cumulative impact in the LVIA (Landscape Chapter 14).

All three sites - NM74, NM282 and NM376, have been assessed for potential cultural heritage significance in the Cultural Heritage Chapter 15. The Viewpoint references are

- VP14 Fertagh Round Tower (NM 74 Grangefertagh Round Tower & Church)
- VP35 Ballylarkin Church (NM282 Ballylarkin Church)

- Wireframe visualisation of the proposal from Rathealy Ringfort (*NM Rathealy Ringfort*). The Ringfort is on private lands and there was no access available to take photos from the Ringfort. Photos are required for a Viewpoint photomontage. A wireframe was produced for Rathealy Ringfort instead, which allowed for a verifiable visualisation with which to inform the cultural heritage assessment of impact.

See [Appendix 3.2: Consultation and Replies from the Prescribed Bodies](#) (end of this chapter) for the full text and mapping supplied.

Also, at the time of lodgement of the Application with An Coimisiún Pleanála, OPW will be notified of the lodgement of the application. A copy of the Application will be included with the notification.

ElAR 3.10 Other Prescribed and Statutory Bodies

In addition to the Prescribed Bodies detailed above from whom replies were, the Bodies listed below were also consulted by letter or email on 24th January, 2024 and with a follow up with the latest details on 10th August 2026. No reply to the consultation requests was received from these Prescribed Bodies.

Table 3-1: Prescribed / Statutory Bodies and Other Parties (no replies)

Consultee	Response
Department of Tourism, Culture Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media	Consulted in January 2024 and August 2026 (mapping of tourism, sporting, and community services in the locality provided)
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine	Consulted in January 2024 and August 2026 (Corine mapping of lands on and surrounding the proposed site provided)
Department of Environment, Climate and Communications	Consulted in January 2024 and August 2026
Department of Rural & Community Development	Consulted in January 2024 and August 2026 (mapping provided of the settlements in the area)
Southern Regional Assembly	Consulted in January 2024 and August 2026
Eirgrid	Consulted in January 2024 and August 2026 (mapping showing the proposal in a locational context and a close up of the area of the new windfarm 110kV substation and the connection to the Eirgrid Ballyragget Substation provided)
Commission for Regulation of Utilities	Consulted in January 2024 and August 2026
An Taisce	Consulted in January 2024 and August 2026 (mapping of the built and natural heritage of the receiving environment provided)
An Chomhairle Ealaíonn	Consulted in January 2024 and August 2026
Faite Ireland	Consulted in January 2024 and August 2026 (mapping provided showing the tourism services in the area). Replied with recommendation that Faite Ireland's ElAR Guidelines for the Consideration of Tourism and Tourism Related Projects be consulted.
The Heritage Council	Consulted in January 2024 and August 2026 (mapping provided of the built and natural heritage of the receiving environment)

See [Appendix 3.2: Consultation and Replies from the Prescribed Bodies](#) (end of this chapter) for the full text and mapping supplied.

Also, at the time of lodgement of the Application with An Coimisiún Pleanála, these bodies will be notified of the lodgement of the application. A copy of the Application will be included with the notification.

EIAR 3.11 Community Engagement for Gathabawn Windfarm

EIAR 3.11.1 Identification of the Local Community for direct engagement pre-planning

The Wind Energy Development Guidelines 2006 and the Draft Revised Wind Energy Development Guidelines 2019 were taken into consideration in the Applicant's approach to identifying the appropriate community for engagement.

Ecopower Developments studied a 10km area around the proposed windfarm and identified the local community stakeholders based on the following criteria;

- houses within 2km of the nearest turbine – based on the Study Area for noise impact
- the population geography in the surrounding rural area, including local settlements and visibility of the windfarm from these areas
- the location of key services and facilities in the surrounding rural area, including local schools, sports and voluntary groups who provide services to the community
- the likely distribution of the Gathabawn Windfarm Community Benefit Fund

The following local community within 10km of the windfarm, were identified for consultation

- Residences within 2km of a proposed turbine
- Community Groups including rural development groups; community centres; residential care facility; community café; childcare facilities and community councils; local churches
- Sporting Groups – GAA; Soccer; Handball; Boxing; Squash
- Elderly facilities –Meals on Wheels service
- Local County Councillors - Members of Kilkenny County Council for the Municipal District of Castlecomer and Members of Laois County Council for the Borris-in-Ossory-Mountmellick area.
- National Schools and Post-Primary Schools in the area

Despite extensive research we recognize that this is not an exhaustive list. The research was limited by the lack of publicly available contact details for individual group or lack of visibility of these groups on social media. The broad range of ages and interests should allow for dissemination of information on the proposal within 10km of the windfarm.

The list can be extended over the lifetime of the project, if appropriate.

EIAR 3.11.2 Community Engagement prior to Planning Submission

EIAR 3.11.2.1 Project Newsletter

A Project Newsletter was posted to all houses within 2km of a Gathabawn Windfarm turbine in September 2026.

All houses within 2km of the nearest proposed turbine received a newsletter with the distance of the nearest turbine to their residence noted and an invitation to seek more information from Ecopower through the CLO, on areas of concern. This distance was chosen because these houses are within the study area for noise (study area 2km) and shadow flicker (study area 1360m). This area includes Gathabawn village. Prominent on the Newsletter front page –

Your Eircode is XXX XXXX
Your house would be XXXXm from the nearest turbine

The information in the newsletter includes;

1. Introduction to the Promoter - Ecopower
2. The reason for the Gathabawn Windfarm site selection
3. Introduction to the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIA Report) that has been prepared and what topics were studied
4. The appointed CLO Community Liaison Officer's email and post address details
5. Introduction to the Gathabawn Windfarm dedicated community website www.ecopowergathabawn.ie
6. Description of the windfarm proposal
7. Description of the windfarm location
8. Location of the likely grid connection
9. Details on the Planning Application and the Strategic Infrastructure Development status; where the Planning Application can be viewed in person or online; how to make a submission and the final date for those submissions; reminder that the public will be notified by newspaper notice and site notice of Ecopower's intention to make the Planning Application. Invitation to contact the CLO with any queries or feedback.
10. Timelines for the Gathabawn Windfarm development
11. The Construction phase haul route for construction materials and turbine components
12. The methodology for assessing operating turbine noise and the results of the assessment, are summarised
13. Shadow Flicker is explained, the possibility of occurrence and the mitigation available should it occur, is summarised.
14. The benefits of Gathabawn Windfarm should it be constructed, are summarised under the headings Climate Action; Security of Supply and Community Gain i.e. the Community Benefit Fund
15. A Site Layout map is included showing the turbines in relation to the local roads in the vicinity so that residents can find their houses in relation to the proposal.
16. Contact Details are listed again.

The Project Newsletter was designed as a non-digital method of providing a proposal summary and as a compliment to the community website, where more detailed information on windfarms in general is also available.

See [Appendix 3.3: Consultation with the Local Community](#) at the end of this Chapter

EIAR 3.11.2.2 Email to Community Groups

The email newsletter was sent to community groups active in the Gathabawn and wider area. The email included a summary of the proposal and a location map; details of the website where more information can be found; the CLO email address and the amount of the Community Benefit Fund. Community Groups contacted included Community Development and Service Groups, Sport Groups, Youth and Elderly services, Public Representatives, Local Schools and Churches.

A list of the community contacts, who received information on the proposed Gathabawn Windfarm by post or by email prior to the submission of the planning application, is included in **Appendix 3.3: Consultation with the Local Community**

Advertisements in the Local Newspaper

An advertisement was placed in the local newspaper – Kilkenny People publication date 18th September 2026, providing summary information on the forthcoming planning application and including contact details and the community website address.

See **Appendix 3.3: Consultation with the Local Community**

EIAR 3.11.2.3 Community Engagement www.ecopowergathabawn.ie website

A dedicated community website www.ecopowergathabawn.ie was set up prior to submission of the planning application. This website set out

- a description of the proposal
- a description of the need for the project in the context of Climate Mitigation
- the estimated community benefit accruing from the development including the community benefit fund and commercial rates payable
- the policy context of the development – International, National and Local policy
- details on participating in the planning process for the development
- summary of the topics covered in the EIA Report attaching to the planning application
- link to the non-technical summary of the EIA Report
- general resources and facts about wind energy in general.

Contact details for getting in touch directly with the Community Liaison Officer for the development, are prominently displayed on the website.

EIAR 3.11.3 Engagement with the Community Website and Community Email

The community website www.ecopowergathabawn.ie went live on 11th September 2026. The following week the proposed Gathabawn Windfarm, was introduced by advertisement in the Kilkenny People. The Project Newsletter was posted to all households within 2km and emailed to the community groups identified, in the same week. The community email has been active since the newsletter and emails were sent. The CLO aims to respond on the same day.

EIAR 3.11.4 Community engagement Post Application

Gathabawn Windfarm is committed to engagement with the local community and interested groups post-application, during all phases of the life cycle of the windfarm i.e. construction, operation and decommissioning. The dedicated Community Liaison Officer (CLO) for the development has been appointed for the full life cycle of Gathabawn Windfarm. The CLO's contact details are published on the community website www.ecopowergathabawn.ie

The post application process is described below;

Post-Application, during the public submissions period: Provision of information on the community website www.ecopowergathabawn.ie and in the Planning Notice (Newspaper and Site Notice). Information on how

to make submissions during the planning process and the method, timeline and cost of making those submissions is provided.

Post-Planning if planning is granted - Construction: Information about the construction schedule will be provided on the community website www.ecopowergathabawn.ie. The CLO will contact neighbouring residents, that may be affected by increased traffic and turbine component deliveries.

Post-Planning – Operation, Community Benefit Fund: The CLO will be a contact point for complaints or queries relating to the operation of the windfarm.

There will be advertising placed on the community website and local newspapers of the opening of the Community Benefit Fund and an invitation to get involved in the administration of the fund. Meetings will be held with interested local groups in a timely manner prior to the operation of the fund, to explain the whole fund process and to support the administration of the fund.

Gathabawn Windfarm will prepare an Annual Report which will outline the various methods which were used to keep the local community updated, any issues which arose and how these were dealt with. The annual report will be published on the community website and a copy will be made available to the local community and local authority, if requested.

EIAR 3.11.5 Community Report for Gathabawn Windfarm

The Gathabawn Windfarm Community Report has been submitted to the Planning Authority as a stand-alone report as part of the Application. It is intended as a resource to be read by the local community to understand the context of developing a windfarm in their area and also provide information on the consultation that has taken place with their community.

Read in conjunction with the Non-technical Summary, it should provide enough information to the Local Community to bring about an understanding of the policy context and need for the development of windfarms in Ireland and provide clear information on the Gathabawn Windfarm proposal and the expected local and environmental impacts and benefits that will accrue. The intention is that this information will facilitate constructive engagement during the planning process.

The Community Report has been submitted as part of the Planning Application documents Pack. A link to the Community report will be included on the community website www.ecopowergathabawn.ie

EIAR 3.12 Public Consultation via the Planning System

An Coimisiún Pleanála Website

Prior to the submission of a Strategic Infrastructure Development Planning Application, the Applicant is required to enter into Pre-Application consultation with the An Coimisiún Pleanála to confirm if the proposal qualifies as a Strategic Infrastructure Development. Once decided, the Commission publishes the decision in weekly lists of new Strategic Infrastructure Development cases, on their website. The Gathabawn Windfarm Pre-Application Decision Notice can be found at <https://www.pleanala.ie/en-ie/case/313780>

When the Planning Application is submitted to An Coimisiún Pleanála, the full application documents are accessible on the Commission's website at www.pleanala.ie and can be viewed at their offices in 64 Marlborough St, Rotunda, Dublin 1. The full Planning Application is also available on a dedicated planning website www.gathabawnwindfarplanning.ie

Any submission/observation on the application must be made to An Coimisiún Pleanála within the period specified. The Coimisiún Pleanála website provides information on how the public can make a submission/observation, either online or in writing about the application. An Coimisiún Pleanála is obliged to take the public's views into account when deciding on an application.

Kilkenny County Council

A copy of the Planning Application will also be available to view at the offices of Kilkenny County Council.

EIA Portal

Because the Gathabawn Windfarm application is accompanied by an EIA Report, the public must be notified on the EIA Portal hosted by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, prior to the lodging of the application. The EIA Portal is an online map-based website that provides users with information on current/pending applications for development consent which are accompanied by an EIA Report. Notice was provided to the public through the EIA Portal on the Gathabawn Windfarm application. The web link for the EIA Portal is <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/a1a85d92623147b191dd25a14b2571da>.

Public Notices

The public was also notified of the intention to apply for planning permission by

17. the erection of Site Notices in the vicinity of the proposed development
18. publication of a newspaper notice in the Kilkenny People and the Irish Independent

Information on how to make a submission to An Coimisiún Pleanála on the planning application is provided on the newspaper and site notices.

The public was also notified of the planning permission on the dedicated community website www.ecopowergathabawn.ie. The Non-technical Summary for the proposal is also available on the community website. Information on how to make a submission to An Coimisiún Pleanála on the planning application is provided on the community website along with the contact email for the Community Liaison Officer for the development.

EIAR 3.13 Glossary, List of Abbreviations**List of Abbreviations**

Abbreviation	Full Term
Gathabawn Windfarm	Twelve wind turbines are proposed for two areas – seven turbines in the Ballylehaun area and five turbines in the Ballyring area. In addition to the turbines and their hardstanding areas, the windfarm also includes site access roads, two Control Buildings; a met mast, underground cabling, temporary works to facilitate turbine deliveries, and other associated and ancillary works.
Candidate Gathabawn Grid Connection	Underground cabling between the Ballylehaun and Ballyring Areas (Ballylehaun-Ballyring UGC), underground cabling from the Ballyring Area (from Ballyring Control Building) to a new substation at Parksgrove (Ballyring-Parksgrove UGC), the Parksgrove Substation, and underground cabling from the substation to the existing Eirgrid Ballyragget Substation in Moatpark (Parksgrove-Moatpark UGC). The Candidate Gathabawn Grid Connection is not included as part of this Planning Application, it will be subject of a separate Planning Application, at a future date. The Candidate Gathabawn Grid Connection is considered in this EIA Report in order to facilitate the cumulative evaluation of the Whole Project.

EIAR 3.14 List of Appendices**Appendices (overleaf)**

Appendix No.	Appendix Title
Appendix 3.1	Pre-Application Consultation with An Coimisiún Pleanála
Appendix 3.2	Consultations and Replies from Prescribed Bodies
Appendix 3.3	Consultation with the Local Community

App. 3.1 Pre-Application Consultation with An Coimisiún Pleanála (Previously An Bord Pleanála)

Table of Contents

1. The proposed Gathabawn Windfarm presentation by Ecopower Developments Limited (EDL) to An Bord Pleanála on 17/08/2022
2. An Bord Pleanála Record of pre-application consultation meeting with EDL, dated 18/08/2022
3. An Bord Pleanála's Inspectors Report dated 21/09/2022
4. The Board Direction ABP-313780-22, dated 12/10/2022
5. Notification letter issued to EDL stating that the proposed development is SID, issued on 20/10/2022. List of prescribed bodies considered relevant for the purpose of s37E(3)(c) of the Act, attached
6. An Bord Pleanála letter to Kilkenny County Council stating that the proposed development is SID, dated 20/10/2022

An Bord Pleanála
Strategic Infrastructure Development

Gathabawn Windfarm Project

Pre-application Consultation
17th August 2022

Applicant: Ecopower Developments Limited



Overview

- Overview of the Gathabawn Windfarm Project
- Local Community
- Designated Sites
- Land and Soils
- Water
- Biodiversity
- Cultural Heritage and The Landscape
- Material Assets
- Consideration Of Cumulative Effects
- Consideration of Alternatives
- Consultation & Local Engagement
- Target Planning Application Date
- Applicant's Opinion On SID Status

Overview of the Gathabawn Windfarm Project

➤ **Gathabawn Windfarm** will comprise:

- 15 turbines, approximately 160m to 170m tip height, capacity range c.4.3MW to 5MW
- 110kV electrical substation at the windfarm
- Other Site Works – site entrances, site access roads, internal windfarm cabling, control building, met masts, borrow pits, construction compound, and ancillary site works.

➤ **Gathabawn Grid Connection** - 110kV connection

- 110kV underground cabling – mainly along public road corridor
- Crossing of River Nore – overhead line/directional drilling
- Connecting into existing Eirgrid station at Moatpark, north of Ballyragget town

➤ **Haul Route:** From port to site via Portlaoise (M7 motorway), Abbeylax and Durrow (N77)

- Ballynahaun turbines from Durrow, through Cullahill village (N671), and then via local road to the site entrance at Glashare
- Ballyring turbines via Durrow towards Ballyragget (N77), and then via Lisdowney to the site entrance at Ballyring.
- No major works needed along transport route to accommodate oversized loads.

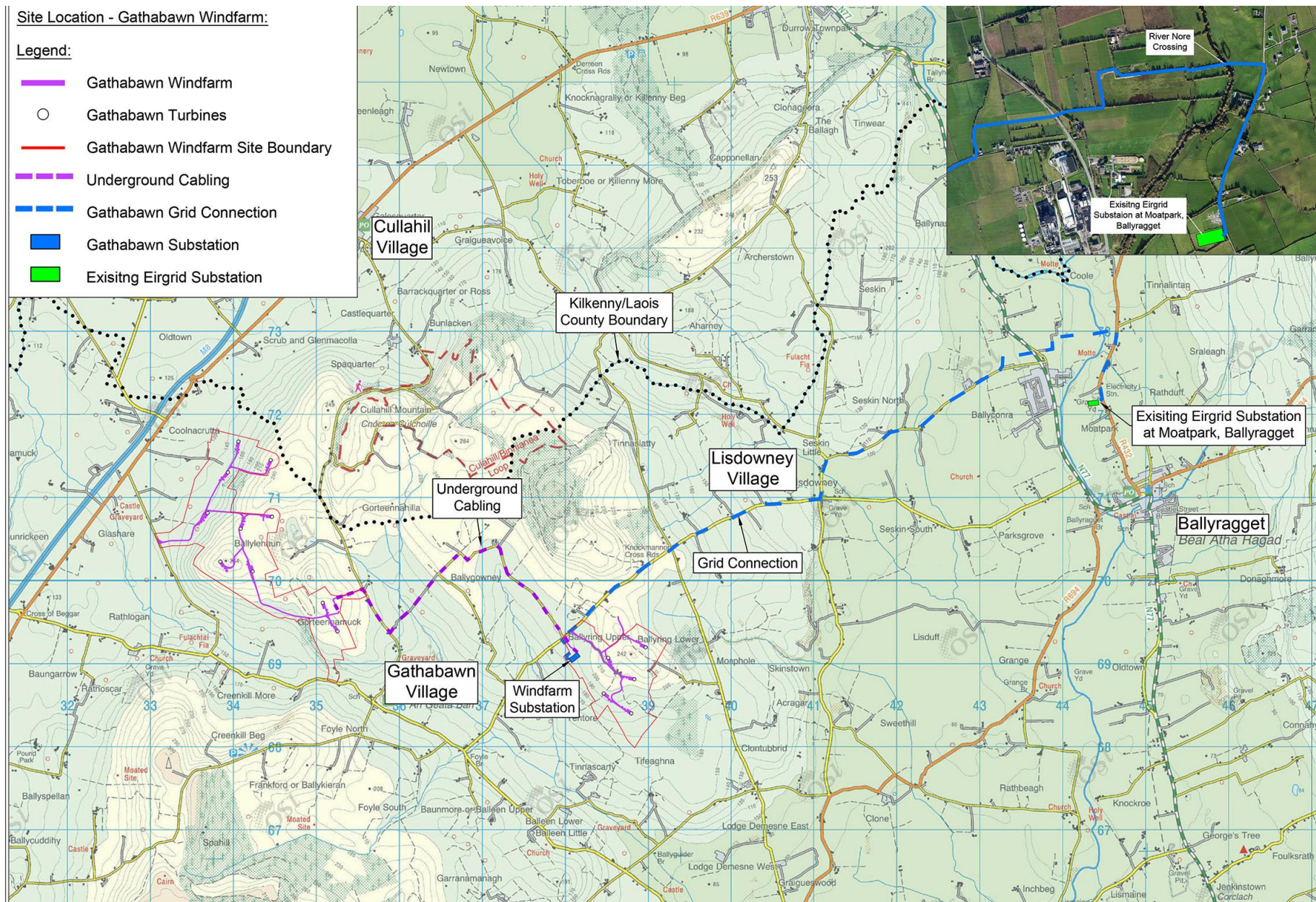
➤ **Kilkenny County Council Wind Strategy** - 'Acceptable in Principle' area

➤ **Climate Action** – c.70MW renewable energy/200 million kWhrs, offsetting c.59,000 tonnes CO₂e each year.

Site Location - Gathabawn Windfarm:

Legend:

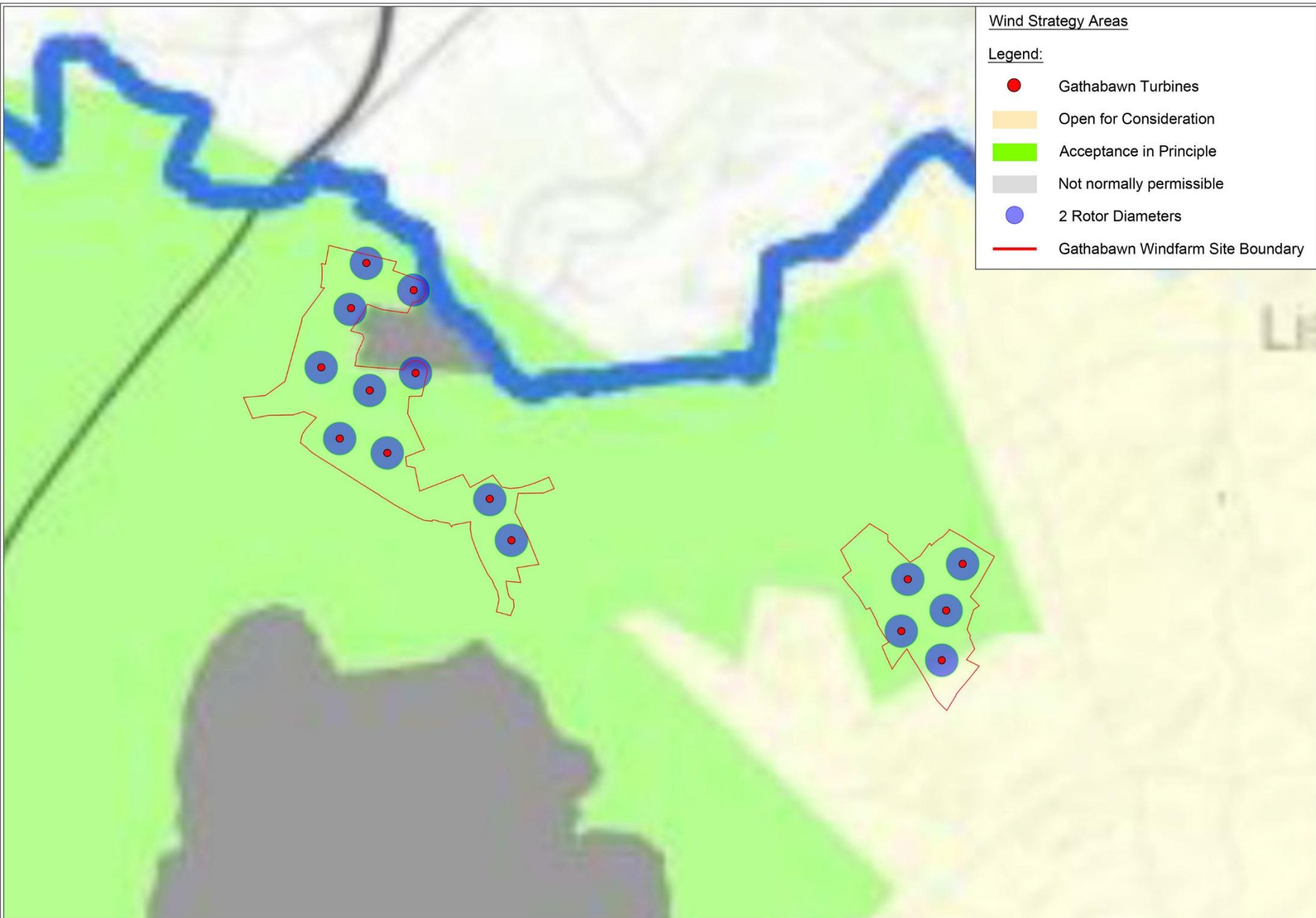
- Gathabawn Windfarm
- Gathabawn Turbines
- Gathabawn Windfarm Site Boundary
- Underground Cabling
- Gathabawn Grid Connection
- Gathabawn Substation
- Existing Eirgrid Substation



Wind Strategy Areas

Legend:

-  Gathabawn Turbines
-  Open for Consideration
-  Acceptance in Principle
-  Not normally permissible
-  2 Rotor Diameters
-  Gathabawn Windfarm Site Boundary



Local Community

➤ **Local Residents:**

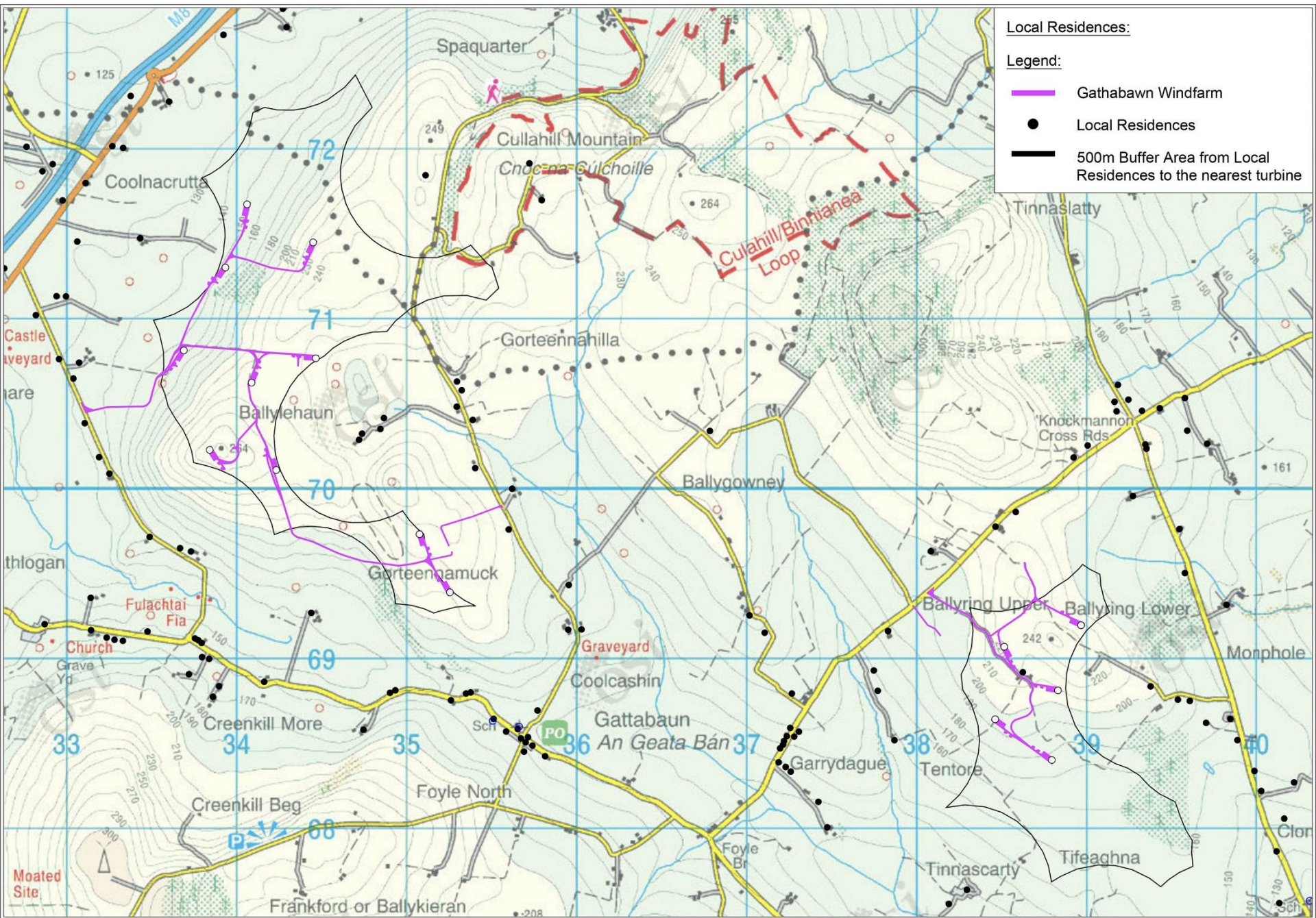
- Separation distance to local residents: landowners >500m, 3rd party >600m
- Low population density surrounding site,
- Nearest settlements are Gathabawn village (2km), Lisdowney village (3km), Cullahill village (4km), Freshford village (4km), Johnstown (5km), and Ballyragget town (6km)
- Background noise measurements are scheduled to commence this month

➤ **Community Benefit Fund c.€400,000 per annum):**

- Near neighbour payment
- Fund for Community Organisations in the immediate vicinity (Gathabawn, Lisdowney), and wider areas (Cullahill, Freshford, Johnstown)

➤ **Community Engagement:**

- Information Day/Webinar
- Dedicated website for the project



Designated Sites

➤ **European Sites:**

- Cullahill Mountain SAC adjoining windfarm site in the Ballylehaun area
 - Overlap of site boundary due to oversail of turbine blades,
 - no works within the SAC
- River Barrow & River Nore SAC along grid connection route at River Nore crossing
- River Nore SPA (Kingfisher) coincides with the SAC boundary at River Nore crossing

➤ **Cultural Heritage Sites:**

- RMP sites within the windfarm site, no works within Area of Notification of RMPs
- Previously unrecorded field boundaries (Ballylehaun area)
- No NIAH sites at windfarm site or within close proximity to grid works

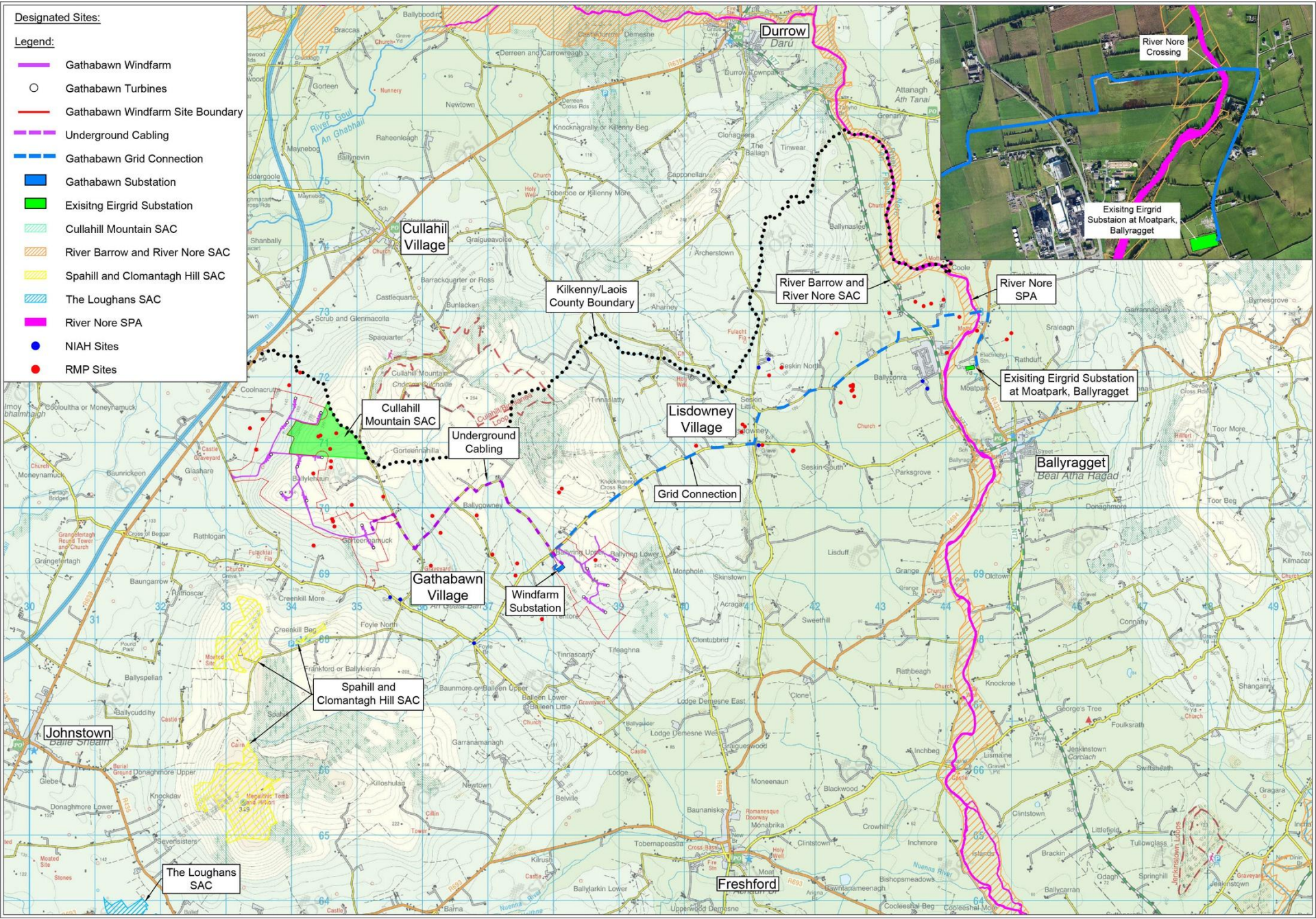
➤ **Geological Heritage Sites:**

- No sites at the windfarm or along grid connection route options

Designated Sites:

Legend:

- Gathabawn Windfarm
- Gathabawn Turbines
- Gathabawn Windfarm Site Boundary
- Underground Cabling
- Gathabawn Grid Connection
- Gathabawn Substation
- Existing Eirgrid Substation
- Cullahill Mountain SAC
- River Barrow and River Nore SAC
- Spahill and Clomontagh Hill SAC
- The Loughans SAC
- River Nore SPA
- NIAH Sites
- RMP Sites



Land and Soils

➤ Landuse:

- Locally owned and managed agricultural grassland
- Mainly dairy and dry stock cattle farming at the windfarm site
- No forestry within windfarm site boundary, and low level of forestry in area
- Small areas of Hazel woodland in Ballylehaun area

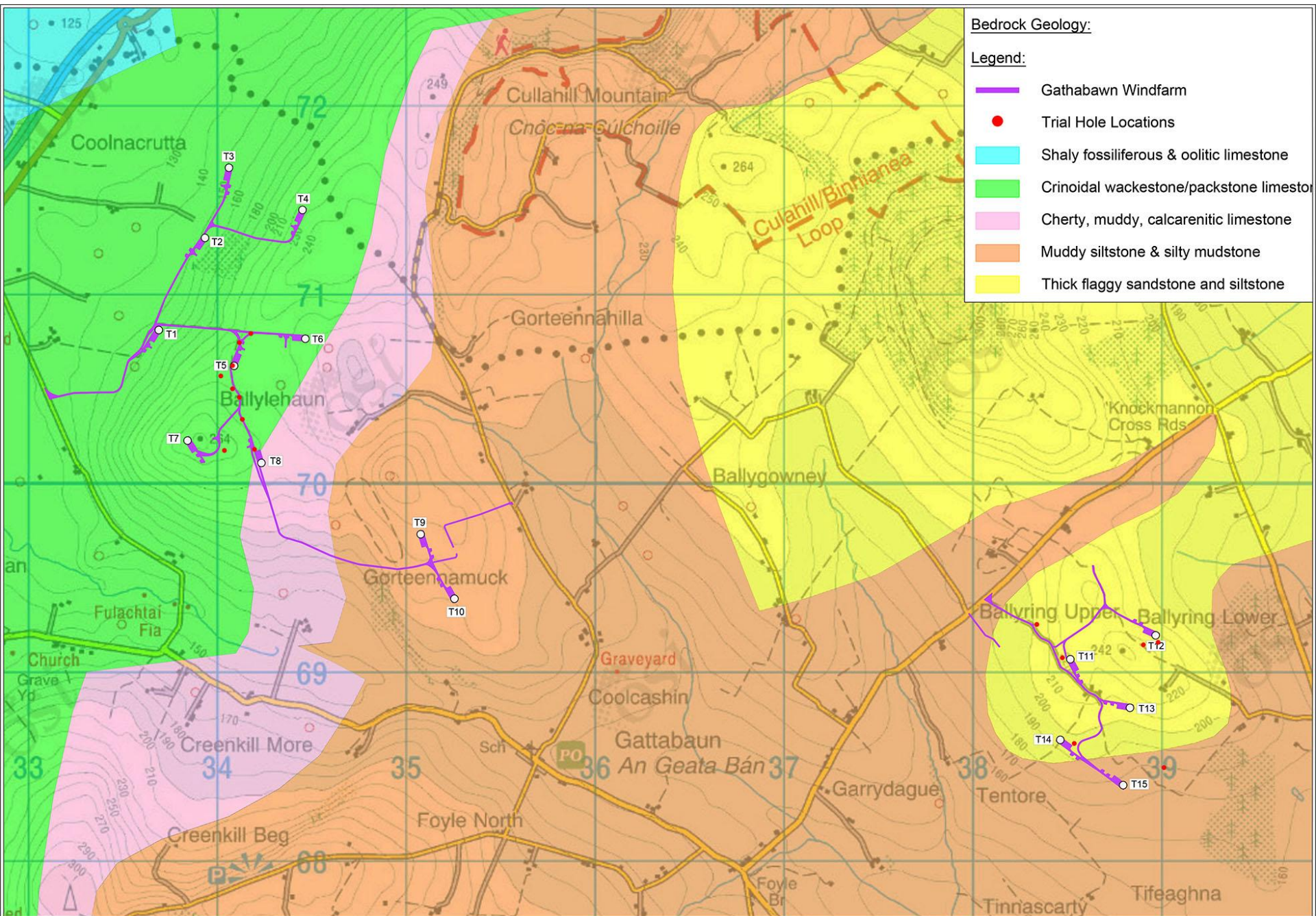
➤ Soils & Bedrock:

- Bedrock - Mixture of Limestone, Siltstone and Flagstone
- Shallow mineral soils
- Boreholes and Trial Pit Investigations carried out
 - Bedrock at shallow depths
 - No peat within the windfarm site area









Bedrock Geology:

Legend:

-  Gathabawn Windfarm
-  Trial Hole Locations
-  Shaly fossiliferous & oolitic limestone
-  Crinoidal wackestone/packstone limestone
-  Cherty, muddy, calcarenitic limestone
-  Muddy siltstone & silty mudstone
-  Thick flaggy sandstone and siltstone



Trial Pit at Ballylehaun



Trial Pit at Ballyring

Water

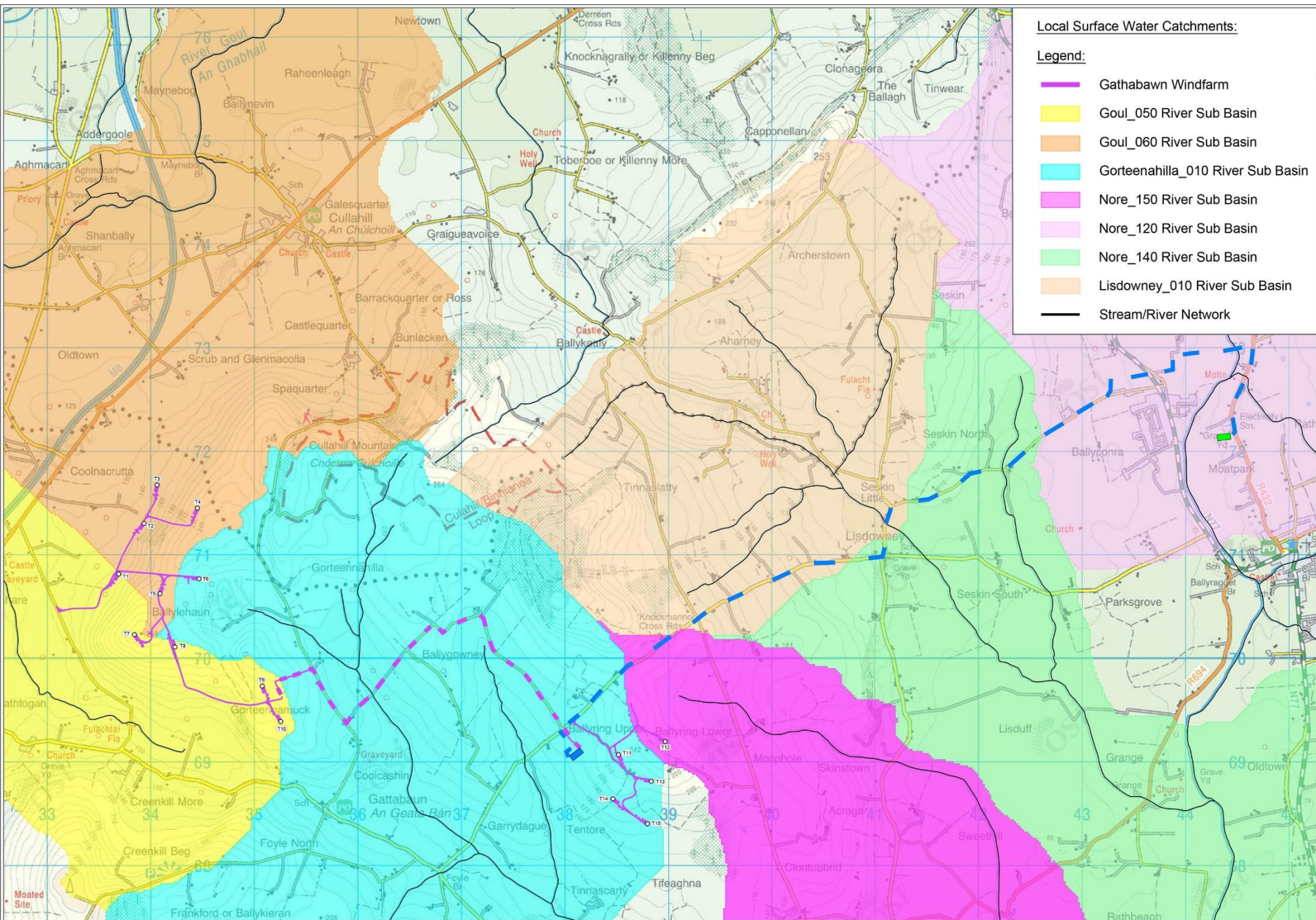
- Gathabawn Windfarm and Grid Connection within the River Nore catchment:

- **Windfarm Area:**

- Goul_050
- Goul_060
- Gorteenahilla_010
- Nore_150

- **Grid Connection:**

- Nore_150
- Lisdowney_010
- Nore_140
- Nore_120



Biodiversity

- **Habitats:** no Annex habitats associated with Cullahill Mountain SAC within the footprint of the windfarm – due to the intensive agricultural management of lands
- **Pollinators:** surveys completed – Marsh Fritillary butterfly recorded in Devils Bit Scabious along windfarm access road. Alignment of access road redesigned to avoid DBS areas.
- **Birds, Mammals:** No bird or mammal species of particular concern at windfarm site.
 - Kestral recorded – Collision Risk Modelling to be completed for this species
 - Kingfisher surveys being carried out at River Nore
- **Bats:** low levels of bat activity
- **Biodiversity Enhancement & Protection:** two disconnected parcels of Hazel woodland in Ballylehaun area - retention and enhanced connection of these two areas for lifetime of windfarm.

Cultural Heritage, Landscape

Cultural Heritage

- Field walking of windfarm areas completed, grid connection route underway
- RMPs within the windfarm site and close to Grid Connection route
- Previously unrecorded cultural heritage sites at the windfarm site – field boundaries
- Visual impact assessment currently being carried out

Landscape

- Photography captured
- Other windfarms taking into account in Viewpoint selection
- Coordination with Cultural Heritage expert & evaluation of visual impact on Cultural Heritage sites

Material Assets

- Telecommunications – small broadband masts at windfarm site
- Public Road (cable routes)
 - Surveys underway for services within public road
 - And for bridges and culverts along cable routes
 - Crossing of the N77 (Ballyragget – Durrow Rd) required, north of Glanbia factory
- Traffic
 - Low in the vicinity of the windfarm sites

Consideration of Cumulative Effects

- Other projects being considered:
 - Other windfarms
 - Lisdowney (existing, adjacent to Ballyring area), and
 - existing windfarms in the wider surrounding area (Grange, Lisheen etc),
 - Ballynalacken Windfarm (pre-application SID)
 - Other grid connections in public road
 - Lisdowney area – underground windfarm cabling for Lisdowney (existing) and Farranrory (currently in planning)
 - Moatpark area – underground windfarm cabling for Ballynalacken Windfarm (pre-SID)
- Other large projects – EirGrid Kilkenny Laois Reinforcement Project
- Research of planning applications, EPA license applications, roads projects.

Consideration of Alternatives

- Turbine locations
- Turbine numbers and turbine size
- Access Road layout
- Windfarm substation location
- Grid connection point
- Grid connection layout
- Grid connection methods
- Haulage Routes

Consultation & Local Engagement

- Completed:

- IFI
- NPWS
- Kilkenny County Council
- Local landowners
- Developer preliminary engagement with Community representatives

- In Progress:

- Prescribed bodies and other parties
- Telecoms Operators
- Appointment of Community Liaison Officer, engagement with Near Neighbours & Community
- Development of project website
- Public Information day at a local venue /webinar

Target Planning Application Date

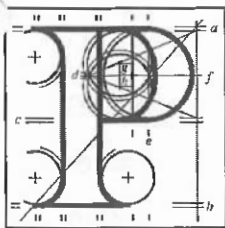
- Preparation of planning & environmental reports underway
 - EIA Report
 - AA Report (Natura Impact Statement)
- Target application date December 2022

Applicant's Opinion on SID Status

We respectfully submit that Gathabawn Windfarm development
is Strategic Infrastructure Development

- The Gathabawn Windfarm satisfies the criteria of Part 1 of the Seventh Schedule of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (Act), as amended, being a wind farm with a total output greater than 50 megawatts. Gathabawn Windfarm will have an output capacity of 65 to 75MW
- The grid connection element of the Gathabawn Windfarm falls within the scope of Section 182A of the Act being an electricity transmission line of 110kilovolts,
- With an output capacity of 65 – 75 MW and a 110kV grid connection, it is considered that the Gathabawn Windfarm will be of strategic economic importance to the State and to the Southern Region:
 - Significant contribution to Ireland's targets and plans for renewable energy under the Climate Action Plan 2021.
 - Substantial contribution to the fulfilment of objectives in the National Planning Framework (Project Ireland 2040) such as National Policy Objective 54 (*Reduce carbon footprint through integration of climate policy into planning system*) and National Policy Objective 55 (*Promote renewable energy*).

Thank You



An
Bord
Pleanála

Record of Meeting ABP-313780-22 1st meeting

Description	ABP-313780-22 - Proposed Windfarm development comprising between 13 and 18 wind turbines, in the townlands of Glashare, Coolnacrutta, Ballylehaun, Gorteennamuck, Ballygowney, Ballyring Upper, Ballyring Lower and Tentore, Co. Kilkenny		
Case Type	Pre-application Consultation.		
1st / 2nd / 3rd Meeting	1 st Meeting		
Venue	Virtually by Microsoft Teams		
Date	17/08/2022	Time	11:00am -12:00pm

Representing An Bord Pleanála

Ciara Kellett, Assistant Director of Planning (Chair)

Anthony Kelly, Planning Inspector

Sarah Caulfield, Executive Officer s.caulfield@pleanala.ie 01-8737287

Representing the Prospective Applicant

Julie Brett - Ecopower Developments Limited

Pat Brett - Ecopower Developments Limited

Introduction:

The Board referred to the letter received from the prospective applicant on the 10th June 2022, requesting pre-application consultations and advised the prospective applicant that the instant meeting essentially constituted an information-gathering exercise for the Board; it also invited the prospective applicant to outline the nature of the proposed development and to highlight any matters that it wished to receive advice on from the Board. The Board mentioned the following general procedures in relation to the pre-application consultation process:

- The Board will keep a record of this meeting and any other meetings, if held. Such records will form part of the file which will be made available publicly at the conclusion of the process. The record of the meeting will not be amended by the Board once finalised, but the prospective applicant may submit comments on the record which will form part of the case file.
- The Board will serve notice at the conclusion of the process as to the strategic infrastructure status of the proposed development. It may form a preliminary view at an early stage in the process on the matter.
- A further meeting or meetings may be held in respect of the proposed development.
- Further information may be requested by the Board and public consultations may also be directed by the Board.
- The Board may hold consultations in respect of the proposed development with other bodies.
- The holding of consultations does not prejudice the Board in any way and cannot be relied upon in the formal planning process or in any legal proceedings.

Presentation by the prospective applicant:

The proposed development, known as Gathabawn Windfarm consists of 15 wind turbines with an approximate tip height of 160 to 170 metres and an overall output capacity of between 65-75MW. The proposed development also includes the construction of a 110kV electrical substation.

The proposed development is situated in North Kilkenny and the nearest settlements are Gathabawn village (2 kilometres), Lisdowney village (3 kilometres), Cullahill village (4 kilometres), Freshford village (4 kilometres), Johnstown (5 kilometres), and Ballyragget town (6 kilometres).

The prospective applicant said the proposed development is divided into two land parcels, one to the west consisting of 10 turbines (Ballylehaun area) and one to the east, consisting of 5 turbines (Ballyring area). Both areas are to be joined via an underground cable within the public road network.

The proposed grid connection consists of a 110kV underground cable running mainly along the public road, through Lisdowney windfarm (4 wind turbines), along local roads towards the N77. There is a requirement to cross the River Nore via either an overhead line or Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD), before connecting into the existing Eirgrid station at Moatpark, north of Ballyragget town.

The prospective applicant said the haul route proposed is via the M7 Motorway, onto the Abbeyleix and Durrow Road (N77), before accessing the site. It was submitted that no major works are required along transport routes to facilitate delivery.

The prospective applicant said the site is designated as acceptable in principle within the Kilkenny City and County Development Plan 2021-2027.

It was submitted that the land use is primarily agricultural grassland with a low population density surrounding the site. There is no presence of forestry within the windfarm site boundary but there are small areas of hazel woodland in the Ballylehaun area. The prospective applicant said the bedrock is a mixture of limestone, siltstone and flagstone and said there is no presence of peat within the site.

In relation to water, the prospective applicant said there are several sub-basins in the area and a map was presented to highlight these.

It was submitted that Marsh Fritillary butterfly was recorded in Devils Bit Scabious along the windfarm access road. Alignment of the access road was redesigned to avoid this habitat.

The prospective applicant said no bird or mammal species of particular concern were identified at the windfarm site and said the site has low levels of bat activity.

It is proposed to have a setback distance of approximately 500 metres from involved landowners and no less than 600 metres from other third-party lands. The prospective applicant said background noise measurements are anticipated to commence in late August 2022.

The prospective applicant said a community benefit fund has been developed and will include community organisations in the immediate proximity and a near neighbour payment. It is the prospective applicant's intention to hold an information day in a local venue prior to the submission of the planning application. A dedicated website is also currently being developed.

The nearest designated site is the Cullahill Mountain Special Area of Conservation (SAC), which is designated for orchid rich grassland and this SAC adjoins the windfarm site in the Ballylehaun area. It was submitted that two turbines over sail the SAC but that no works are proposed within the SAC boundary. The River Barrow & River Nore SAC and the River Nore SPA are also located within the wider area and would be crossed by the grid connection.

The prospective applicant said there are a number of cultural heritage sites in the general area and there are Record of Monument & Places (RMP) sites within the windfarm site. There are no National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) sites within the windfarm boundary or within close proximity to the grid works.

The prospective applicant provided a summary of topics to be assessed within the EIAR. It noted other permitted or proposed windfarms in the locality including the proposed development of Castlebanny windfarm, which is currently awaiting a decision from the Board, Ballynalacken windfarm, which is at pre-application consultation stage with the Board and the development of Farranrory windfarm. Farranrory wind farm itself has been permitted but the grid connection element in

Kilkenny is awaiting a decision (PA Reg. Ref. 21/627). The prospective applicant said all existing and proposed windfarms/grid connections will be fully assessed within the EIAR.

Consultations have been held with Inland Fisheries Ireland, National Parks & Wildlife Service and Kilkenny County Council and no items of concern were raised.

Engagement is ongoing with local landowners (approximately 17 in total) and community representatives. The prospective applicant said it is their intention to circulate information to other prescribed bodies in the coming weeks for feedback. Consultations are anticipated in the near future with telecommunication providers and a community liaison officer is expected to be appointed shortly.

It is the prospective applicant's current intention to submit a planning application for the proposed development in December 2022.

The prospective applicant is of the opinion that the proposed development falls within the scope of Part 1 of the Seventh Schedule of the Planning and Development (Strategic Infrastructure) Act 2006, being a wind farm with an output greater than 50MW. Additionally, it submitted that the grid connection element falls within the scope of section 182A of the Act, being an electricity transmission line of 110kV.

Discussion

The following matters were discussed:

- A general discussion was had around the Kilkenny City & County Development Plan 2021-2027 and the Ministerial Direction that previously issued in relation to wind strategy areas. The prospective applicant said this has no significant effect on the proposed development and said this direction focused on areas in south Kilkenny.
- In relation to providing specific turbine dimensions as part of the planning application, the Board's representatives advised that if a specific tip height is not finalised and that ranges are instead brought forward, these configurations within the ranges should be specific and the specific configurations should be

examined in the EIAR to allow the Board to also examine and evaluate the likely impacts.

- The Board's representatives highlighted that the grid connection route proposed for the Farranrory development follows a similar route to the proposed development and they queried whether it would be possible to create one crossing over the River Nore and N77 for both grid connections to Ballyragget, rather than two. The prospective applicant said this may be possible but said it would need to be examined and discussed further. The Board's representatives said if this approach is not brought forward, it still needs to be assessed within the alternatives.
- The Board's representatives said it would strongly recommend consultations with Transport Infrastructure Ireland and Irish Water in relation to the crossing of the N77.
- The Board's representatives said the GSI Landslide Susceptibility Map classifies sections of the Ballylehaun site as moderately high and they reminded the prospective applicant to fully consider and address ground stability, particularly in relation to the Ballylehaun site.
- In relation to turbines T4 and T6 which are positioned along the boundary of the SAC, the Board's representatives advised addressing this within the planning application.
- In response to a query on the matter, the prospective applicant said the location of the access road to the substation has not yet been finalised but said it will either link into the internal windfarm road network or directly onto the public road. The final route will be submitted with the planning application. The Board's representatives noted that the internal windfarm road network may avoid construction of a new entrance onto the public road.
- The Board's representatives advised the prospective applicant to provide a comprehensive set of photomontages from several viewpoints, including from the scenic viewpoint at Creenkill Beg, Gathabawn village, and the M8/R639.

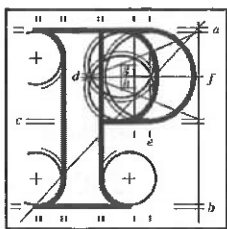
Conclusion

The record of the meeting will issue to the prospective applicant, and it will then be a matter for the prospective applicant to submit any comments on this if it wishes to do so. It will be a matter for the prospective applicant to revert to the Board if it requires a further meeting or if it wishes to close the pre-application consultation process.

 18/8/22

Ciara Kellett

Assistant Director of Planning



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Inspector's Report ABP-313780-22

Development

Wind farm development comprising 15 no. wind turbines and a total output between 65MW-75MW, meteorological masts, site entrance and access roads, 110kV electrical substation, control building, borrow pits, grid connection to Ballyragget substation, and related ancillary works

Location

Townlands of Glashare, Coolnacrutta, Ballylehaun, Gorteennamuck, Ballygowney, Ballyring Upper, Ballyring Lower and Tentore, Co. Kilkenny

Planning Authority

Kilkenny County Council

Prospective Applicant

Ecopower Developments Ltd.

Type of Application

Pre-application consultation under s37B of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 (as amended)

Date of Site Inspection

11th August 2022

Inspector

Anthony Kelly

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1. The Board received a written request on 10th June 2022 to enter into pre-application consultation under section 37B of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 (as amended), in relation to a proposed wind farm development in Co. Kilkenny. The request was submitted by Ecopower Developments Ltd.
- 1.2. A consultation meeting was held on 17th August 2022 between the Board and the prospective applicant. The primary purpose of the meeting was to address the issue of whether or not the proposed development constitutes strategic infrastructure for the purposes of the Act and to consider matters relating to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area or the environment, which may have a bearing on the Board's decision, and outline the procedures involved in making the application. The prospective applicant formally requested closure of the pre-application consultation process in a letter dated 13th September 2022.
- 1.3. This report provides an overview of the proposed project, a summary of the meeting and the advice provided by the Board's representatives, and the legislative provisions. It discusses whether the proposed development would satisfy the conditions contained in s37A(2) (a), (b), and (c) of the Act. It provides a recommendation that the Board determine that the proposed development does constitute strategic infrastructure within the meaning of the Act and recommends a list of prescribed bodies that should be forwarded copies of any application. This report should be read in conjunction with the meeting record that is on the Board's file.

2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1. The proposed development (Gathabawn Wind Farm) is set out by the applicant as comprising:
 - 15 no. turbines, approx. 160 metres - 170 metres tip height, and with a capacity of approx. 4.3MW - 5MW each.
 - a 110kV substation.

- site entrances and access roads, internal windfarm cabling, a control building, meteorological masts, borrow pits, construction compound, and ancillary site works.
- a 110kV underground grid connection connecting into the existing EirGrid station at Moatpark, Ballyragget.

3.0 Site Location and Description

- 3.1. The proposed site comprises two separate land parcels in north west Co. Kilkenny, in very close proximity to the boundary with Co. Laois. The 'Ballylehaun' parcel would contain 10 no. turbines and is located approx. 1km north west of the rural node of Gattabaun. The 'Ballyring' parcel would contain five turbines and is located approx. 2.5km east of Gattabaun.
- 3.2. The two separate land parcels are located in upland areas of the county. The western and southern edges of the Ballylehaun parcel are quite steep, whereas the ground levels of the Ballyring parcel are more gradual. Land use is agricultural grassland. The applicant states that there is no forestry or peat/bogland within the site boundary. There is an existing four turbine wind farm (Lisdowney) located approx. 1km north of the Ballyring parcel.
- 3.3. It is proposed to construct a new access road to service the Ballylehaun parcel. An existing access track at Ballyring would be utilised and extended. The proposed substation is located within the Ballyring parcel. The 'internal' underground cabling from Ballylehaun to Ballyring follows narrow public roads. The proposed grid connection from the proposed substation to the existing Ballyragget substation follows public roads except north of the Glanbia facility, across the N77, and across the River Nore, where it largely crosses agricultural land before following the R432 south for approx. 900 metres to the Ballyragget substation.
- 3.4. The site area has not been provided.

4.0 Legislative Provisions

4.1. The Board is asked to decide if the proposal as outlined is or is not strategic infrastructure development. Section 37A (2) of the Act provides that an application for permission for any development specified in the Seventh Schedule shall be made directly to the Board if the proposed development would fall within one or more of the following paragraphs:

- (a) the development would be of strategic economic or social importance to the State or the region in which it would be situate,
- (b) the development would contribute substantially to the fulfilment of any of the objectives in the National Planning Framework or in any regional spatial and economic strategy in force in respect of the area or areas in which it would be situate,
- (c) the development would have a significant effect on the area of more than one planning authority.

4.2. Class 1 of the Seventh Schedule relates to energy infrastructure and includes the following category of development.

‘An installation for the harnessing of wind power for energy production (a wind farm) with more than 25 turbines or having a total output greater than 50 megawatts’.

5.0 Policy Context

5.1. There is substantial legislative and policy support for development of renewable energy, including wind energy, at international, national, regional, and local levels. The relevant supporting framework includes:

5.2. Climate Action Plan 2021 - Securing our Future

5.2.1. The Climate Action Plan 2021 provides a detailed plan for taking decisive action to achieve a 51% reduction in overall greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and setting Ireland on a path to reach net-zero emissions by no later than 2050, as committed to in the Programme for Government and set out in the Climate Act 2021. Among the

most important measures in the plan is to increase the proportion of renewable electricity to up to 80% by 2030.

5.3. Project Ireland 2040 National Planning Framework (NPF)

5.3.1. The NPF is a high level strategic plan to shape the future growth and development of the country to 2040. It will be focused on delivering 10 National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs). NSO 8 is 'Transition to a Low Carbon and Climate Resilient Society' and it is expanded upon on page 147 of the NPF. There is a national objective of achieving transition to a competitive, low carbon, climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050. 'This objective will shape investment choices over the coming decades in line with the National Mitigation Plan and the National Adaptation Framework. New energy systems and transmission grids will be necessary for a more distributed, renewables-focused energy generation system, harnessing both the considerable on-shore and off-shore potential from energy sources such as wind, wave and solar and connecting the richest sources of that energy to the major sources of demand'.

5.3.2. National Policy Objective (NPO) 55 states 'Promote renewable energy use and generation at appropriate locations within the built and natural environment to meet national objectives towards achieving a low carbon economy by 2050'.

5.4. Southern Regional Assembly Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region (RSES)

5.4.1. The strategy states, inter alia, 'The Regional Assembly is committed to implement regional policy consistent with the Climate Action Plan 2019. Comprehensive policies are set out in this section across the three priority areas identified in the Strategy in Chapter 2 - decarbonisation, climate resilience and resource efficiency'. The strategy also states 'The RSES recognises and supports the many opportunities for wind as a major source of renewable energy. Opportunities for both commercial and community wind energy projects should be harnessed, having regard to the requirements of DoHPLG Guidelines on Wind Energy. Wind Energy technology has an important role in delivering value and clean electricity for Ireland'. Regional policy objective (RPO) 99 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'.

5.5. Kilkenny City and County Development Plan 2021-2027

- 5.5.1. The content of the Plan is supportive of wind energy in general. The Kilkenny Wind Energy Development Strategy 2021 comprises appendix K of the Plan.
- 5.5.2. However, on 15th October 2021, the Minister of State at the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, consequent to a recommendation made to him by the Office of the Planning Regulator notified Kilkenny County Council of his intention to issue a Direction to the Kilkenny City and County Development Plan 2021-2027.
- 5.5.3. The website states '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 Plan [sic] referred to in the notice shall be taken not to have come into effect, been made or amended; namely: Chapter 11, Renewable Energy Section 11.4 Kilkenny Targets, Section 11.5.1 Current status and targets and Figure 11.4 Wind Strategy areas'.

6.0 Prospective Applicant's Case

- 6.1. The prospective applicant considers that, in terms of climate action, the proposed development would provide an output of approx. 70MW of renewable energy, offsetting approx. 59,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide each year.
- 6.2. The prospective applicant considers the proposed development would comprise strategic infrastructure development and makes the following points:
 - It would satisfy the criteria of Part 1 of the Seventh Schedule of the Act, being a wind farm with an output capacity of 65MW-75MW i.e. greater than 50MW.
 - The grid connection element would fall within the scope of s182A of the Act, being an electricity transmission line of 110kV.
 - Given the output capacity and nature of the grid connection the proposed wind farm would:
 - o be of strategic economic importance to the State and to the southern region.

- o Significantly contribute to Ireland's targets and plans for renewable energy under the Climate Action Plan 2021.
- o Substantially contribute to the fulfilment of objectives in the NPF such as NPO 54 (reduce carbon footprint through integration of climate policy into the planning system) and NPO 55 (promote renewable energy).

7.0 Pre-Application Consultation

- 7.1. One online consultation meeting was held on 17th August 2022. Full detail of the meeting and matters raised are contained in the Board's Record.
- 7.2. The meeting's Chair outlined the general procedures in relation to the pre-application consultation process. The prospective applicant provided, inter alia, an overview of the proposed development such as a site description, proposed haul routes, the grid connection route, potential community benefits, European sites in the area, geology and hydrology, biodiversity, plans and projects to be considered for cumulative effects, consideration of alternatives, and detail of public engagement (approx. 16 local landowners are involved in the proposed development). The prospective applicant submitted the proposed wind farm development and grid connection qualifies as strategic infrastructure.
- 7.3. Some matters discussed after the presentation included:
- how the ministerial direction issued on 15th October 2021 in relation to certain wind energy related parts of the City and County Development Plan 2021-2027 would affect the proposed development.
 - the requirement for exact turbine specifications to be identified in the application or, if a range of options is sought, that the details of all such options are clearly indicated with confirmation that each option has been fully assessed in the application.
 - the grid connection route and the possibility that the proposed grid connection could connect to other grid connection routes in the area to reduce road opening etc.

- a recommendation that Transport Infrastructure Ireland is contacted in relation to the grid connection route across the N77. In addition, it was recommended that the proposed substation should be accessed via the internal track network rather than by a new entrance onto the public road.
- potential ground stability concern in the Ballylehaun parcel given the relatively steep gradient and the moderately high landslide susceptibility risk on Geological Survey of Ireland mapping.
- visual impact/photomontages should include views from Gattabaun, the M8/R639, and scenic views in development plans, among others.
- relocating turbine rotor sweeps to outside Cullahill Mountain SAC.

8.0 Assessment

8.1. Section 37A (1) - Is the proposed development specified in the Seventh Schedule of the Act?

- 8.1.1. Based on the information submitted by the prospective applicant the proposed development would include 15 no. wind turbines with a total power output in the range of 65MW-75MW. Consequently the proposed development would exceed the 50MW threshold for wind farms set out in Class 1 (Energy Infrastructure) of the Seventh Schedule of the Act. The proposed development would therefore satisfy section 37A (1) of the Act.

8.2. Section 37A (2) - Does the proposed development fail within one or more of sections 37A (2) (a), (b), or (c)?

(a) The development would be of strategic economic or social importance to the State or the region in which it would be situate

- 8.2.1. The prospective applicant's case is that the proposed development would be of strategic economic importance to the State and the southern region given its output capacity of 65MW-75MW and the 110kV grid connection that would be constructed. It is considered by the applicant that the proposed development would significantly

contribute to Ireland's targets and plans for renewable energy under the Climate Action Plan 2021.

8.2.2. I note the Board has decided that other wind farm proposals with similar power outputs satisfied subsection (a), e.g. ABP-312224-21 (50.4MW), and ABP-310369-21 (72MW). Having regard to the national and regional policy context and the nature and scale of the proposed development, I consider that it would be of strategic economic importance to the State and the southern region and would therefore satisfy the condition set out in s37A (2) (a) of the Act.

(b) The development would contribute substantially to the fulfilment of any of the objectives in the NPF or in any RSES in force in respect of the area or areas in which it would be situated

8.2.3. It is submitted by the prospective applicant that the proposed development would contribute to the objectives of the NPF. NPOs 54 and 55 are specifically referenced. These state as follows:

NPO 54 - 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.

NPO 55 - Promote renewable energy use and generation at appropriate locations within the built and natural environment to meet national objectives towards achieving a low carbon economy by 2050.

8.2.4. Though no RSES objectives were referenced by the prospective applicant, I consider that RPO 99, as set out in section 5.4.1 of this inspector's report, is applicable.

8.2.5. The proposal to generate between 65MW and 75MW of renewable wind energy would assist in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and would contribute significantly towards the achievement of a low carbon economy. I am satisfied that the development would meet the relevant NPOs of the NPF and would serve to fulfil RPO 99 of the RSES for the Southern Region. The proposed development would therefore satisfy the requirement set out in s37A (2) (b) of the Act.

(c) The development would have a significant effect on the area of more than one planning authority

8.2.6. The site is fully contained within the area of one planning authority, Kilkenny Co. Co. While the site is located in very close proximity to the area of Laois Co. Co., and the haul route would traverse parts of other counties for a temporary period during construction, I am of the opinion that the proposed development would not have any significant effect on any other planning authority area outside Kilkenny. Accordingly, I am of the opinion that the proposed development would not fall within the scope of subsection (c).

9.0 Conclusion

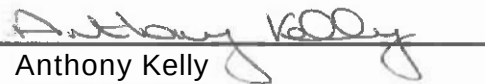
9.1. Based on the above assessment, it can be concluded that the proposed development would exceed the threshold set out in the Seventh Schedule of the Act and therefore satisfies the requirements of section 37A (1) of the Act. It can also be determined that the proposed development is of strategic importance by reference to the requirements of sections 37A(2)(a) and (b) of the Act. Accordingly, the proposed development constitutes strategic infrastructure.

10.0 Recommendation

10.1. I recommend that the Board serve a notice on the prospective applicant, pursuant to section 37B (4) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), stating that it is of the opinion that the proposed development constitutes a strategic infrastructure development within the meaning of section 37A of the Act for the reasons and considerations set out below.

11.0 Reasons and Considerations

- 11.1. Having regard to the anticipated energy output of the proposed wind farm it is considered that the proposed development constitutes development that falls within the relevant definition of energy infrastructure in the Seventh Schedule of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), thereby satisfying the requirements set out in section 37A(1) of the Act.
- 11.2. The proposed development is also considered to be of strategic importance by reference to the requirements of sections 37A(2)(a) and (b) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended). An application for permission for the proposed development must therefore be made directly to An Bord Pleanála under section 37E of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended).



Anthony Kelly

Planning Inspector

21st September 2022

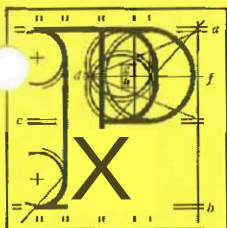


APPENDIX

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 Ealaíon
- Fáilte Ireland
- The Heritage Council
- Office of Public Works

Further notifications should also be made, where deemed appropriate.



An
Bord
Pleanála

Board Direction
BD-011364-22
ABP-313780-22

At a meeting held on 11/10/2022, the Board considered the report of the Inspector and the documents and submissions on file generally, in respect of a proposed wind farm development comprising 15 wind turbines with an approximate generation capacity of between 65MW-75MW in the townlands of Glashare, Coolnacrutta, Ballylehaun, Gorteennamuck, Ballygowney, Ballyring Upper, Ballyring Lower and Tentore, Co. Kilkenny.

The Board decided that the proposed development would exceed the threshold of generation capacity set out in the Seventh Schedule of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, thereby satisfying the requirements of Section 37A(1) of the Act. It can also be determined that the development is of strategic importance by reference to the requirements of Section 37A(2)(a) and Section 37A(2)(b) of the Act. An application for permission for the proposed development must, therefore, be made directly to An Bord Pleanála under Section 37E of the Act.

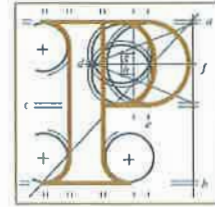
Board Member:

Maria FitzGerald

Maria FitzGerald

Date: 12/10/2022

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.

Tei	Tel	(01)858 8100
Gla	LoCall	1890 275 175
Facs	Fax	(01)872 2684
Laithrean Greasain	Website	www.pleanala.ie
Riomhphost	Email	bord@pleanala.ie

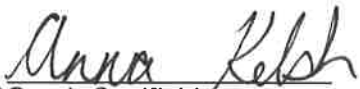
64 Sr id Maoilbhrfde	64 Marlborough Street
Baile Atha Cliath 1	Dublin 1
D01 V902	D01 V902

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 Aitiuil
Facs
Ldithredn Gr6as£in
Riomhphost

Tel
LoCall
Fax
Website
Email
(01)858 8100
1890 275175
(01)872 2684
bord@pleanala.ie

64 Sr£id Mao ilbh ride
Baile Atha Cliath 1
D01 V902

64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1
D01 V902

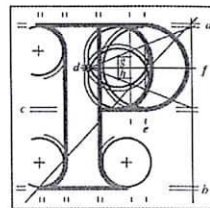
APPENDIX

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 Ealaíon
- Fáilte Ireland
- The Heritage Council
- Office of Public Works

Further notifications should also be made, where deemed appropriate.

Our Case Number: ABP-313780-22



**An
Bord
Pleanála**

Kilkenny County Council
County Hall
John Street
Kilkenny
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,

I have been asked by An Bord Pleanála to refer further to the above-mentioned pre-application consultation. Please be advised that following consideration of the issues raised during the consultation process the Board is of the opinion that the proposed development falls within the scope of paragraphs 37A(2)(a) and (b) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 as amended. Accordingly, the Board decided that the proposed development would be strategic infrastructure within the meaning of section 37A of the Act. Any application for permission for the proposed development must therefore be made directly to An Bord Pleanála under section 37E of the Act.

A copy of the documentation relating to the Board's pre-application file is enclosed for your information including a copy of the written record of the pre-application consultation meetings between An Bord Pleanála and the prospective applicant. A copy of the pre-application consultation file can be made available for public inspection at this stage and must be associated with any application file documentation when such an application is made. In this regard please note that the Board has directed the prospective applicant to include a statement in the public notices of any planning application indicating that the application will be made available for public inspection at the offices of the local authority (as well as the offices of the Board) and on a stand alone website. The Board would therefore be obliged if you could make the necessary arrangements in this regard following receipt of the copies of any application documentation from the prospective applicant. Please note that the public will have the right to make submissions/observations on the application only to An Bord Pleanála and within a time limit which will be specified in the public notices (copies of same will accompany the application documentation) and the public should be alerted to this fact when inspecting the file. It is the Board's intention that all of the application documentation will remain available for public inspection during the currency of the application.

The Board will also separately communicate with you when any application is lodged indicating the date by which the planning authority may lodge its report on the application under section 37(E)(4) of the Act.

Tel	Tel	(01)858 8100
Glaos Aitiuil	LoCall	1890 275 175
Facs	Fax	(01)872 2684
Laithrean GreasSin	Website	www.pleanala.ie
Riomhphost	Email	bord@pleanala.ie

64 Sraid Maoilbhríde	64 Marlborough Street
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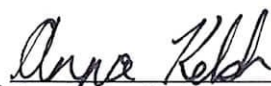
Thank you for your co-operation in this matter.

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,



pp Sarah Caulfield
Executive Officer
Direct Line: 01-8737287

PC10

Tel	Tel	(01)858 8100
Glaio Áitiúil	LoCall	1890 275 175
Facs	Fax	(01)872 2684
Laithean Greasain	Website	www.abp.ie
Riomhphost	Email	board@pleanala.ie

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

App. 3.2 Consultations with Prescribed Bodies (January 2024 & August 2026)

Table of Contents

- Laois County Council (Consultation and reply)
- Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DAU – NMS) (Consultation and reply)
- Inland Fisheries Ireland (Consultation and reply)
- Transport Infrastructure Ireland (Consultation and reply)
- Uisce Éireann (Consultation and reply)
- Irish Aviation Authority (Consultation, no reply)
- Office of Public Works (Consultation and reply)
- Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media (Consultation, no reply)
- Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (Consultation, no reply)
- Department of Environment, Climate & Communications (Consultation, no reply)
- Department of Rural & Community Affairs (Consultation, no reply)
- Southern Regional Assembly (Consultation, no reply)
- EirGrid (Consultation, no reply)
- Commission for Regulation of Utilities (Consultation, no reply)
- An Taisce (Consultation, no reply)
- Arts Council of Ireland (Consultation, no reply)
- Fáilte Ireland (Consultation, no reply)
- The Heritage Council (Consultation, no reply)

Laois County Council
Áras an Chontae, JFL Ave.,
Portlaoise,
Co. Laois
R32 EHP9

24th January, 2024

Re: Scoping for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report for proposed Gathabawn Windfarm, County Kilkenny

FAO Planning Section

Ecopower Developments Limited (EDL) is planning to develop a windfarm at Gathabawn, County Kilkenny, on elevated agricultural grassland between Johnstown and Ballyragget (see attached map). The EIA Report and Appropriate Assessment (AA) Report are being prepared for the forthcoming planning application at present.

Gathabawn Windfarm is proposed for an area designated as “acceptable in principle” for windfarm development, in Kilkenny County Development Plan 2021-2027: Appendix K: Wind Energy Development Strategy.

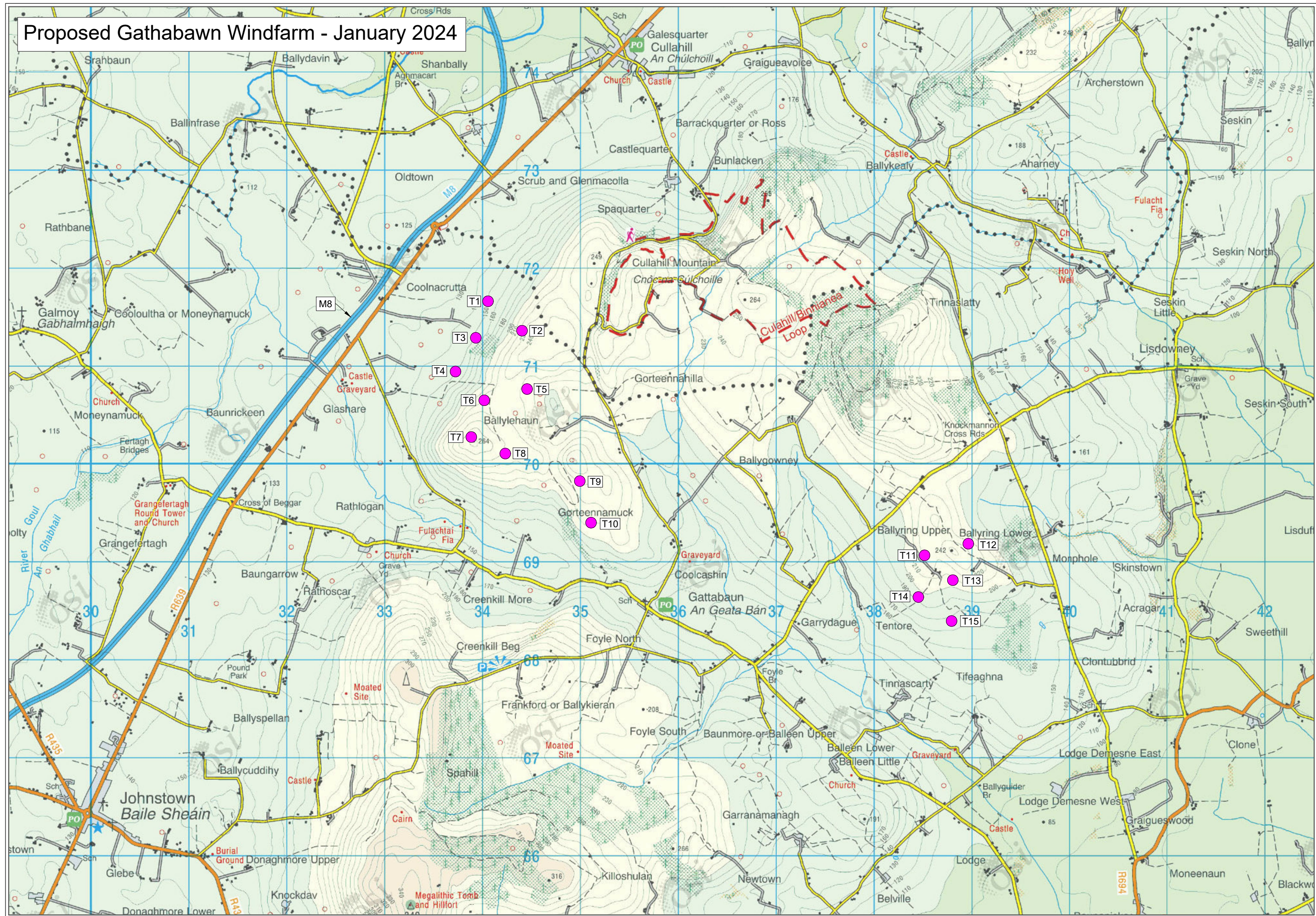
The proposed windfarm will comprise c.15 wind turbines of c.163m to tip height and with a total installed capacity of c.67MW. Also included in the project are meteorological masts; an electrical control building; electrical substation; internal underground cabling; and c.7km of grid connection cabling to EirGrid Ballyragget Substation. The grid connection cabling will be laid predominately under the public road and will cross under the River Nore, c.1km north of the Eirgrid substation.

The Gathabawn Windfarm Project by its very nature, will meet all the National Climate Policies and Objectives set out in Ireland’s Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021 (the Climate Act), because the windfarm will contribute positively to the imperative to ameliorate climate change by generating electricity without polluting greenhouse gas emissions. The windfarm will offset c.38,850 tonnes of CO₂e per annum that would otherwise be emitted if the predicted 150 million kWh of electricity generated, was instead generated by gas, coal and oil. The windfarm will produce enough renewable electricity for over 33,237 households per annum.

I would be obliged if you would advise me of any particular concerns or of matters you would like examined in the EIAR or AA Report. The consultation period is open for 4 weeks i.e. until **22nd February, 2024**. Please reply to me, Phil Kenealy at pk@ecopower.ie or at the address above.

Regards,
Phil Kenealy (Project Manager, Gathabawn Windfarm)

Proposed Gathabawn Windfarm - January 2024





COMHAIRLE CHONTAE LAOISE LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL

22nd February 2024

Comhairle Chontae
Laoise
Áras an Chontae
Port Laoise
Contae Laoise
R32 EHP9

Laois County Council
Áras an Chontae
Portlaoise
County Laois
R32 EHP9

T: (057) 8664000
F: (057) 8622313
corpaffairs@laoiscoco.ie
www.laois.ie

Ecopower Developments Limited
Zetec House
Purcellsinnch IDA Business Park
Kilkenny
Ireland

Re: Scoping for Environmental Impact Assessment (E1A) Report for proposed Gathabawn Windfarm, County Kilkenny

A Chara,

Further to receipt of correspondence regarding the above development on the 24th January 2024, Laois County Council's (LCC) response is as follows.

Site Location and Laois County Wind Energy Strategy

The windfarm is located within County Kilkenny, in close proximity to the boundary of County Laois and c 2.5km to the south west of Cullahill. The Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027 includes the Wind Energy Strategy in Appendix V. Of note is Map 3.2 (Wind Energy) which includes those areas identified as Preferred Areas, Areas Open for Consideration and Areas Not Open for Consideration.

It is noted that the area adjacent to the proposed windfarm, within County Laois are identified as Areas Not Open for Consideration.

Turbine Design

LCC understands that the development will comprise 15no. wind turbines of c. 163m to tip height and with a total installed capacity of c. 67MW.

LCC notes that a ratio in the order of 1:1 gives rise to the typical tall, slender and proportional appearance of the machines. However, LCC also notes that when the rotor diameter exceeds the hub height by a significant margin, the entire structure may become dominant in views.

Therefore the preferred wind turbine design should be considered against all other reasonable alternatives, to ensure that it does not give rise to unacceptable significant impacts on the landscape.

Landscape Visual Impact Assessment

The Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027 includes a Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) at Appendix 6.

LCC notes that given the height of the proposed development the Zone of Theoretically Visible study area should include a robust assessment including, where necessary areas within Laois. LCC would also advise the applicant to take into consideration the LCA and matters arising from the proposed development.

Ta Fáilte Romhat
Gno a Dheanamh
as Gaeilge

COD
MidlandsIreland

‘I bpdirt leis cm bpobal’

Ama phriontdil ar phdipear ata IOOSi athchursdilte - Do Chomhshaoil a chotlui





COMHAIRLE CHONTAE LAOISE LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL

Comhairle Chontae
Laoise
Áras an Chontae
Port Laoise
Contae Laoise
R32 EHP9

Laois County Council
Áras an Chontae
Portlaoise
County Laois
R32 EHP9

T: (057) 8664000
F: (057) 8622313
corpaffairs@laoiscoco.ie
www.laois.ie

Road Network

LCC would advise that the EIAR should include an assessment of the likely significant effects on transport and access resulting from the construction, operation and decommissioning of the proposed development.

The applicant should provide information:

- a). A map showing a detailed proposal of the haulage route for the construction phase i.e. construction of materials, transporting of materials transport of machinery as part of the site preparation works on how they proposed to address heavy vehicles meeting on the narrow roadway i.e. passing bays etc.
- b). The applicant shall survey roadways in the vicinity of the site, including all bridges and culverts. This survey shall identify the conditions of the public roadway and all structures (bridges, culverts etc).
- c). The applicant shall address and submit details how they will maintain the existing road network during the construction phase of the development.
- d). A construction stage Traffic Management Plan.

Is mise le meas,

Nafhan Smith,
Senior Executive Planner

Ta Fáilte Romhat
Gno a Dheanamh
as Gaeilge

COO
MidlandsIreland.ie

7 bpdirt leis an bpobal'

Arna phriontáil ar pckáipéir atá 100% athchuirsdilte Do Chomhshaoil a chothú



Laois County Council
Áras an Chontae, JFL Ave.,
Portlaoise,
Co. Laois
R32 EHP9

10.08.2026

Re: 2nd Consultation on proposed Gathabawn Windfarm, County Kilkenny

Ecopower Developments Limited (EDL) is planning to develop a windfarm on high ground in the vicinity of the **villages of Gathabawn and Lisdowney, in North County Kilkenny**. The site is just south of Cullahill Mountain and the Kilkenny/Laois County Boundary. Cullahill village is circa 3km to the north of the site at the closest point and Durrow is circa 7km to the northeast of the site. ***See Map showing the windfarm layout in the context of these settlements.***

The proposal is to build **12-wind turbines** with a rotor diameter of 136m. Two tip heights are proposed – 3- turbines will be 150m to tip height and 9- turbines will be 170m to tip height. The proposal will be located in farmland. The windfarm development includes site roads; underground electrical cabling; 2-control buildings and haul route works in the vicinity. The grid connection method proposed is an underground cable from the windfarm to a new electrical substation near the proposed grid connection point at the Eirgrid Substation in Moatpark, Ballyragget, which is circa 7km east of the windfarm site. The grid connection will require a cable crossing under the River Nore and the N77 National Route, c.1km north of Ballyragget.

An Coimisiún Pleanála have deemed the proposal to be a Strategic Infrastructure Development and for application directly to the Commission, under Section 37 of the Planning Act.

Proposed Gathabawn Windfarm is a Renewable Energy Directive III (RED III) development. The windfarm will align with the requirements of Section 15 of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021. The windfarm will produce **circa 140 million kWh per annum** of renewable electricity (RE-E) and offset the generation of fossil fuel generated electricity. This production will offset the emissions of **circa 35,700 tonnes of CO₂e per annum**. The windfarm will also deliver local community benefit of **€280,000 per annum, which will directly benefit the Cullahill area.**

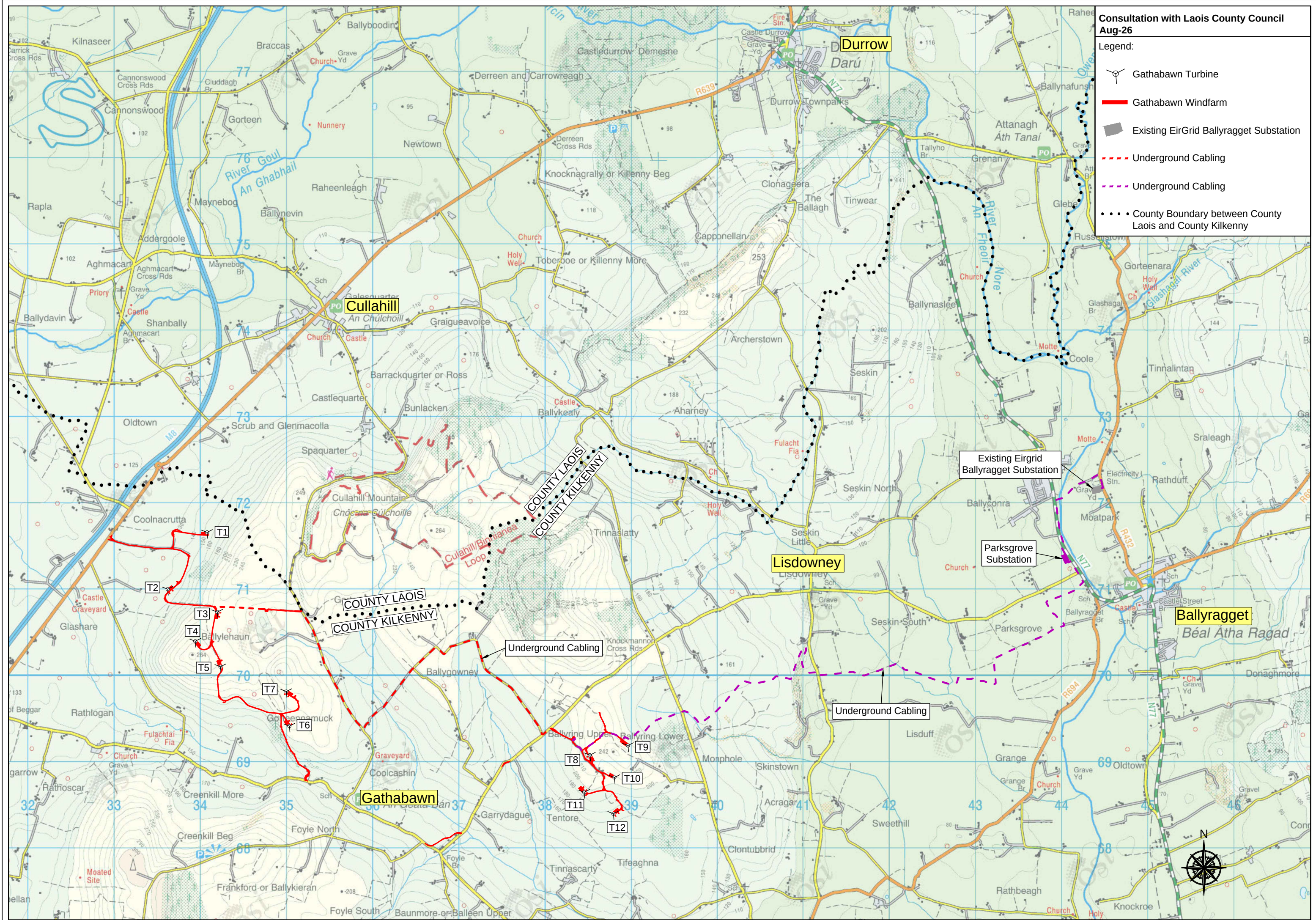
EDL previously consulted Laois County Council in January 2024. ***I attach your response to that consultation.*** Considering over 2-years have elapsed, I am writing to ask if at this stage, you wish to further inform the consultation. This consultation period is open for 4 weeks i.e. until **7th September, 2026**. If you wish to consult or require more information, please reply to me, at philk@ecopower.ie; at the address above or by mobile at (086) 8399 193

Regards, Phil Kenealy (Project Manager, Gathabawn Windfarm)

Consultation with Laois County Council
Aug-26

Legend:

-  Gathabawn Turbine
-  Gathabawn Windfarm
-  Existing EirGrid Ballyragget Substation
-  Underground Cabling
-  Underground Cabling
-  County Boundary between County Laois and County Kilkenny



Overview of Gathabawn Windfarm proposal sent to DAU for 11 November 2022 Meeting with AWN Consultancy and EDL

Gathabawn Windfarm Project, County Kilkenny

The Gathabawn Windfarm Project is proposed for locations on elevated lands between Johnstown and Ballyragget, County Kilkenny. The proposal is to build a 15-turbine windfarm to be called Gathabawn Windfarm and to connect this windfarm by underground cable to the EirGrid Ballyragget Substation. The windfarm will have an output capacity of between 65 to 75MW - depending on the final turbine model chosen.

The proposed 15-turbine Gathabawn Windfarm Project will comprise the following elements:

- 10 No. Wind Turbines, 2 No. Met Masts, Control Building and Associated Works in the Ballylehaun area (Glashare, Coolnacrutta, Ballylehaun, and Gorteennamuck townlands);
- 5 No. Wind Turbines, 1 No. Met Mast and Associated Works in the Ballyring area (Ballyring Lower, Ballyringe Upper, and Tentore townlands);
- 110kV electrical Windfarm Substation in Ballyring Upper;
- Underground electrical cabling, 4.9km in length, will connect a new control building in Gorteenamona in the Ballylehaun area to the Windfarm Substation in Ballyring Upper;
- Underground grid connection, 9.2km in length, will connect the Windfarm Substation to the national electricity system at the existing EirGrid Ballyragget Substation in Moatpark;
- Works/Activities along the Public Road to facilitate turbine delivery.

The proposed turbines will be within an overall size range between 156.5m to 160m from turbine base to tip height. The proposed rotor diameter range is between 132m and 138m and hub height range between 90m and 94m.

Windfarm Site Roads at the Ballylehaun Turbines site will comprise 1.2km of upgraded farm roads and 4.5m of new roads. Site Roads at the Ballyring Turbines site will comprise 0.7km of upgraded farm roads and 1.9km of new roads. The new Windfarm Site Roads will be 4.5m to 5m in width and will be constructed using 'excavate and fill' technique.

Two borrow pits are proposed, one in Ballylehaun townland and one in Ballyring Lower townland. These borrow pits will provide the majority of stone material from within the site itself.

The Ballylehaun – Ballyring Underground Cabling will cross over 12 watercourses – all of which will be at existing crossing points under the public roadway. These existing crossing structures include 1 masonry bridge and 4 masonry culverts. The underground cabling will be installed under the masonry bridge (W1) by directional drilling under the structure (and the watercourse). The culverts will be crossed using standard trenching methods. Three of the four masonry culverts (W6, W10 and W11) are collapsed and are likely to require replacement during construction works.

The Gathabawn Grid Connection will cross over 22 watercourses – 21 of which will be at existing crossing points under the public roadway. The 21 existing structures comprise 4 bridges and 18 culverts (three of which are masonry culverts). The remaining watercourse crossing relates to the River Nore (W32), with the cabling installed using directional drilling technique. Directional drilling will also

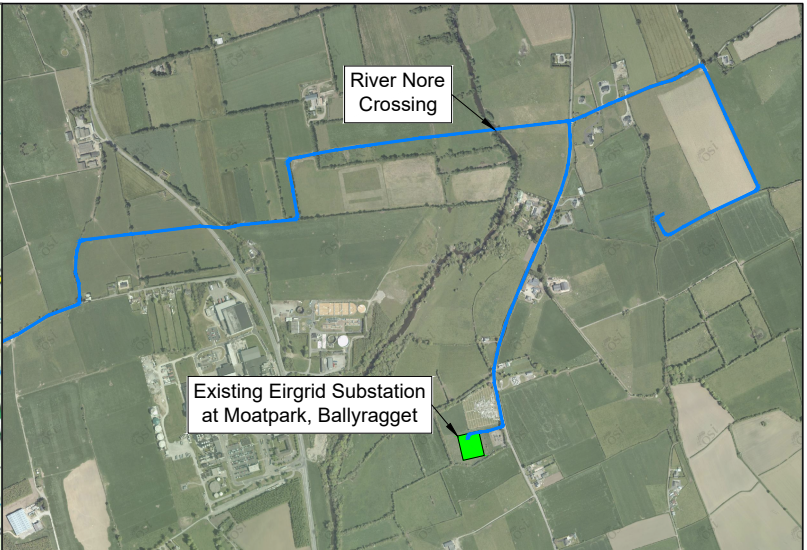
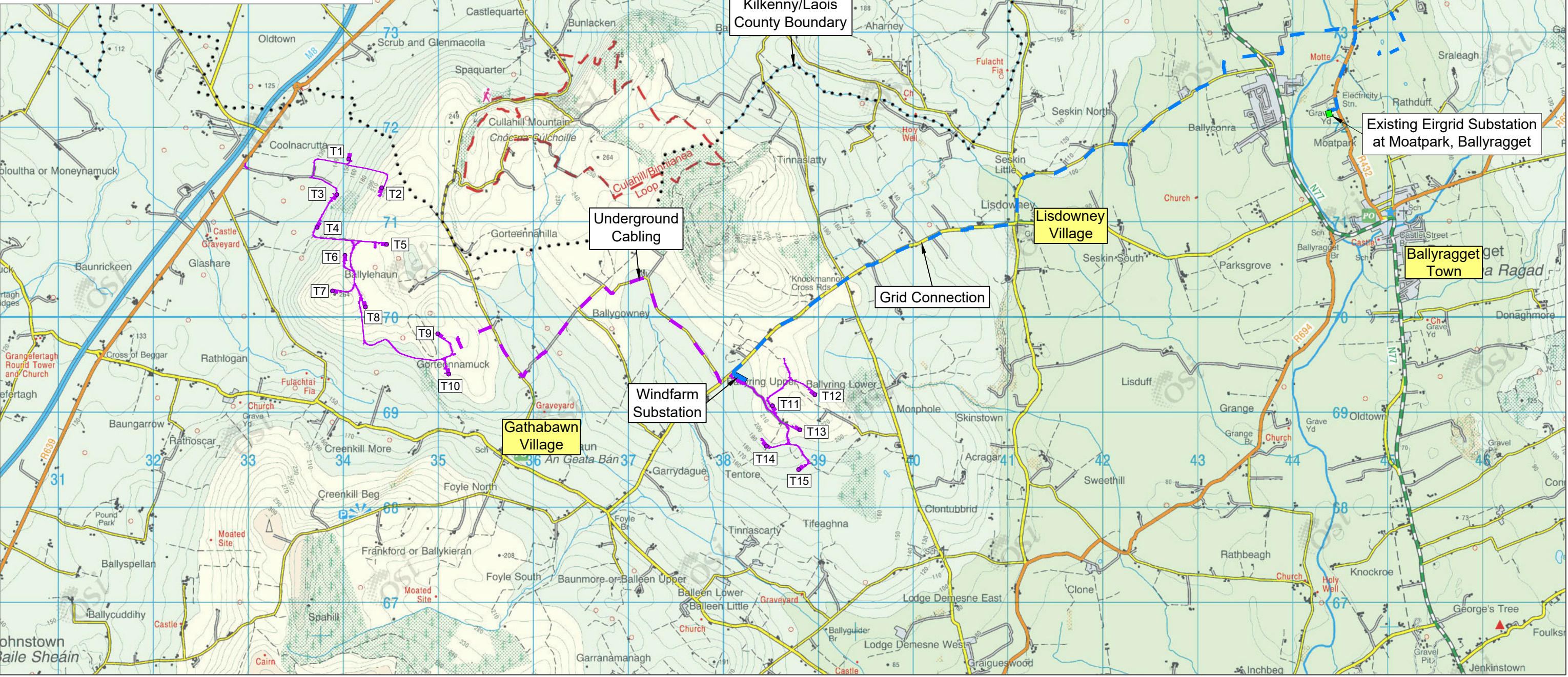
Overview of Gathabawn Windfarm proposal sent to DAU for 11 November 2022 Meeting with AWN Consultancy and EDL

be used to install the grid connection under 3 of the 4 bridges (W22, W24 and W34) and one masonry culvert (W16) along the route. The grid connection will be constructed using trenching method at one bridge (W29) and at the remaining culverts.

Site Location - Gathabawn Windfarm

Legend:

- Gathabawn Windfarm
- Gathabawn Turbines
- T1 Turbine
- Underground Cabling
- Gathabawn Grid Connection
- Gathabawn Substation
- Existing Eirgrid Substation



The Minister
Department of Housing,
Local Government and Heritage,
Custom House,
Dublin 1
D01 W6X0

24th January, 2024

**Re: Scoping for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report for proposed
Gathabawn Windfarm, County Kilkenny**

Dear Minister

Ecopower Developments Limited (EDL) is planning to develop a windfarm at Gathabawn, County Kilkenny, on elevated agricultural grassland between Johnstown and Ballyragget (see attached map). The EIA Report and Appropriate Assessment (AA) Report are being prepared for the forthcoming planning application at present.

Gathabawn Windfarm is proposed for an area designated as “acceptable in principle” for windfarm development, in Kilkenny County Development Plan 2021-2027: Appendix K: Wind Energy Development Strategy.

The proposed windfarm will comprise c.15 wind turbines of c.163m to tip height and with a total installed capacity of c.67MW. Also included in the project are meteorological masts; an electrical control building; electrical substation; internal underground cabling; and c.7km of grid connection cabling to EirGrid Ballyragget Substation. The grid connection cabling will be laid predominately under the public road and will cross under the River Nore, c.1km north of the Eirgrid substation.

The Gathabawn Windfarm Project by its very nature, will meet all the National Climate Policies and Objectives set out in Ireland’s Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021 (the Climate Act), because the windfarm will contribute positively to the imperative to ameliorate climate change by generating electricity without polluting greenhouse gas emissions. The windfarm will offset c.38,850 tonnes of CO₂e per annum that would otherwise be emitted if the predicted 150 million kWh of electricity generated, was instead generated by gas, coal and oil. The windfarm will produce enough renewable electricity for over 33,237 households per annum.

I would be obliged if you would advise me of any particular concerns or of matters you would like examined in the EIAR or AA Report. The consultation period is open for 4 weeks i.e. until **22nd February, 2024**. Please reply to me, Phil Kenealy at pk@ecopower.ie or at the address above.

Regards,
Phil Kenealy (Project Manager, Gathabawn Windfarm)



Date: 19/02/2024
KK ref.: Gathabawn Wind Farm
DAU ref.: KK-CON-A240126-0001

Re: Proposed Gathabawn Wind Farm

Dear Ms Kenealy,

Thank you for your application for consultation prior to the submission of a planning application for a proposed wind farm between Johnstown and Ballyragget, County Kilkenny.

The National Monuments Service (NMS) of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage has reviewed the site location mapping submitted for the proposed wind farm. The information provided was not sufficiently detailed to allow for a full assessment of the archaeological implications of this proposal, however the NMS wishes to advise that your client should retain the services of a Consultant Archaeologist to carry out the Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) as part of the overall Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment of the proposed development, which should be integrated into the finalised Planning and Environmental Considerations Report. In this regard the NMS awaits the results of the Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment (CHIA) and full Planning and Environmental Considerations Report for the scheme before commenting further.

Further to the above, and by way of general archaeological advice, please note that, whilst the proposed development site (PDS) may or may not contain within it known or subsurface Recorded Monuments and/or Archaeological sites that may require assessment as part of the overall CHA, the PDS itself is located within a wider area of known archaeological settlement and activity (NMS initial review of the Record of Monuments and Places, www.archaeology.ie and cartographic sources). All of these Recorded Monuments, both within and outside the PDS, are subject to statutory protection in the Record of Monuments and Places, established under section 12 of the National Monuments Act 1930-2014. Therefore, the CHIA should include an assessment of the possible effects of the proposal on the wider archaeological landscape. It is of importance that the study area for the CHIA should be of sufficient size and extent to support this.



The National Monuments Services advises that the CHIA should incorporate a robust desk-study supported by a comprehensive field inspection as well as a visual impact assessment (to assist in identifying any possible impacts to the setting of sites or monuments).

In this respect it should be noted that in addition to site-specific vulnerabilities to impact on setting many monument types—for example prehistoric monuments such as Standing Stone Alignments, Standing Stone Rows, Single Standing Stones, as well as some megalithic tombs—are often considered to represent a wide area of associated archaeological settlement and activity. The characteristics of a development may have a negative visual impact on such monuments and may diminish or interrupt alignment views and alter key aspects of their original function and layout. Therefore, Visual Impact Assessment should:

- Set out the key characteristics of the monument(s) and its surroundings that contribute to its setting and the degree to which this setting is integral to the significance and appreciation of the monument.
- Assess the effects of the development—both positive and negative—on these key characteristics. The development should be considered in terms of its location and siting relative to the monument as well as its form, appearance and permanence.
- Be supported by appropriate illustrations of the monument, its setting and the development.

The AIA should also involve an examination of all available development layout/design drawings, completion of documentary/cartographic/photographic research and fieldwork, the latter to include where possible - geophysical survey (consent as required under the National Monuments Acts).

NMS is happy to provide further advice and clarification as and if required in relation to the preparation of a suitably comprehensive assessment as outlined above.

Notwithstanding the above, the National Monuments Service awaits the submission of this assessment before commenting further.

Is mise le meas,

Níall Garahy

Archaeologist, National Monuments Service, Dept. of Housing, Local Government and Heritage



Your Ref: Gathabawn Wind Farm

Our Ref: G Pre00033/2024

(Please quote in all related correspondence)

20 February 2024

Zetec House,
Purcellsinch IDA Business Park,
Dublin Road,
Kilkenny,
R95 PX5X

Via email: pk@ecopower.ie

Re: proposed wind farm between Johnstown and Ballyragget, Gathabawn, Co. Kilkenny
--

A chara

I refer to correspondence received in connection with the above.

Outlined below are heritage-related observations/recommendations of the Department under the stated heading(s).

Archaeology

The Department has reviewed the site location mapping submitted for the proposed wind farm. The information provided was not sufficiently detailed to allow for a full assessment of the archaeological implications of this proposal, however the Department wishes to advise that your client should retain the services of a Consultant Archaeologist to carry out the Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) as part of the overall Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment of the proposed development, which should be integrated into the finalised Planning and Environmental Considerations Report. In this regard the Department awaits the results of the Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment (CHIA) and full Planning and Environmental Considerations Report for the scheme before commenting further.

Further to the above, and by way of general archaeological advice, please note that, whilst the proposed development site (PDS) may or may not contain within it, known or subsurface Recorded Monuments and/or Archaeological sites that may require assessment as part of the overall CHA, the PDS itself is located within a wider area of known archaeological



settlement and activity (the Department's initial review of the Record of Monuments and Places, www.archaeology.ie and cartographic sources). All of these Recorded Monuments, both within and outside the PDS, are subject to statutory protection in the Record of Monuments and Places, established under section 12 of the National Monuments Act 1930-2014. Therefore, the CHIA should include an assessment of the possible effects of the proposal on the wider archaeological landscape. It is of importance that the study area for the CHIA should be of sufficient size and extent to support this.

The Department advises that the CHIA should incorporate a robust desk-study supported by a comprehensive field inspection as well as a visual impact assessment (to assist in identifying any possible impacts to the setting of sites or monuments).

In this respect it should be noted that in addition to site-specific vulnerabilities to impact on setting many monument types—for example prehistoric monuments such as Standing Stone Alignments, Standing Stone Rows, Single Standing Stones, as well as some megalithic tombs—are often considered to represent a wide area of associated archaeological settlement and activity. The characteristics of a development may have a negative visual impact on such monuments and may diminish or interrupt alignment views and alter key aspects of their original function and layout. Therefore, Visual Impact Assessment should:

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- Assess the effects of the development—both positive and negative—on these key characteristics. The development should be considered in terms of its location and siting relative to the monument as well as its form, appearance and permanence.
- Be supported by appropriate illustrations of the monument, its setting and the development.

The AIA should also involve an examination of all available development layout/design drawings, completion of documentary/cartographic/photographic research and fieldwork, the latter to include where possible - geophysical survey (consent as required under the National Monuments Acts).

The Department is happy to provide further advice and clarification as and if required in relation to the preparation of a suitably comprehensive assessment as outlined above.



Notwithstanding the above, the Department awaits the submission of this assessment before commenting further.

You are requested to send any further communications to this Department's Development Applications Unit (DAU) at manager.dau@npws.gov.ie.

Is mise, le meas

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Edel Griffin', written over a horizontal line.

Edel Griffin
Development Applications Unit
Administration

Senior Fisheries Environment Officer,
Inland Fisheries Ireland,
3044 Lake Drive,
Citywest Business Campus,
Dublin
D24 Y265

2 June 2022

Re: Proposed Windfarm at Gattabaun, Co. Kilkenny.

Dear Sir/Madam,

Inis Environmental Consultants Ltd., on behalf of our client Ecopower Developments Ltd., have been commissioned to complete statutory ecological surveys at Gattabaun, Co. Kilkenny (please refer to **Figure 1** below) in support of a proposed wind farm application.

IFI recommendations and/or observations will enable us to provide a comprehensive approach within the documents that are being prepared.

Yours faithfully

Rebecca Duane BSc QCIEEM

For and on behalf of Inis Environmental Consultants Ltd.

[Transmitted by email to info@fisheriesireland.ie]

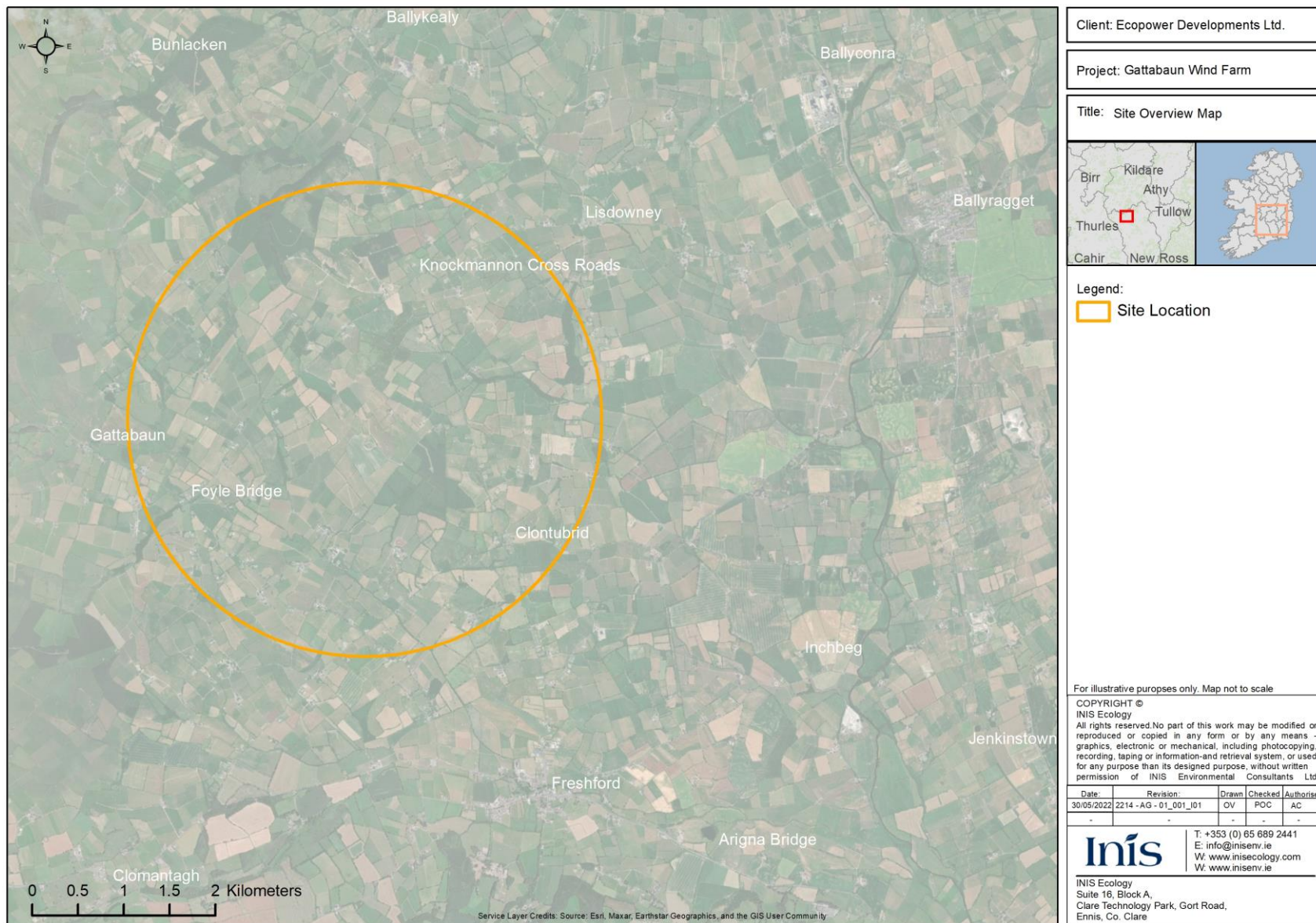


Figure 1: Proposed windfarm location at Gattabaun, Co. Kilkenny.



Iascach Intíre Éireann
Inland Fisheries Ireland

Ms. Emer Hannon
Inis Environmental Consultants Ltd.
Suite 16, Block A, Clare Technology Park,
Gort Road, Ennis,
Co. Clare

15 June 2022

Re: Proposed Windfarm, Gattabaun (Ballyring), Co. Kilkenny

Submitted via email to: info@inisenv.ie

Dear Ms. Hannon,

Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) is the statutory authority tasked under section 7(1) of the Inland Fisheries Act 2010 (No. 10 of 2010) with responsibility for the protection, management, and conservation of the inland fisheries resource.

The proposed development is located in the Nore catchment, in particular in the catchment areas of the following surface water bodies. All are part of or feeding directly to the Barrow – Nore SAC.

Surface Water Body	WFD Status	Risk Status
Gorteenahilla_010	Poor	
Lisdowney_010	Good	At Risk
Goul_050	Moderate	At Risk
Erkina_050	Moderate	At Risk
Nore_150	Good	Not At Risk

In respect of the statutory ecological surveys proposed by Inis Environmental Consultants Limited IFI wish to make the following observations:

Article 28(2) of the Surface Water Regulations (SI 272 of 2009) states that a surface water body whose status is determined to be less than good shall be restored to at least good status.

Furthermore, Article 5 states that there should be no deterioration in Ecological Status.

The proposed surveys / reports must demonstrate how this project would be consistent with the maintenance / restoration of each of the above surface water bodies to Good Ecological Status within the third cycle of the national River Basin Management Plan.

A comprehensive map of all aquatic habitats potentially affected by the project should be provided in the reports. This should include an assessment of the potential adverse effects on all relevant aquatic receptors, including fish. The cumulative effects of the proposed development along with other existing or approved projects should also be considered. This should include an assessment of the impact on the conservation objectives of species listed as qualifying interests in the Barrow – Nore SAC, which include Lamprey species and Atlantic Salmon.



Iascach Intíre Éireann
Inland Fisheries Ireland

Baseline ecological assessments of water courses potentially affected by the proposed development, including biological and physico-chemical surveys, should also be provided. Following the commencement of works, field testing and laboratory analysis of parameters should be undertaken at agreed sites. The reports should include locations, timing and frequency of the proposed monitoring of biological and physico-chemical parameters. A full list of parameters should also be provided.

Records should be kept of biological and chemical monitoring of undertaken before, during and after the works. Records should also be kept of inspections of proposed surface water mitigation measures. These records should be made available upon request to any authorised person as defined under the Local Government (Water Pollution) Acts.

The applicant should adhere to the recommendations and guidelines outlined in IFI's *Guidelines on Protection of Fisheries during Construction Works in and adjacent to Waters* 2016. A copy of this document is available [here](#). The storage, management and conveyance of materials on site must not permit deleterious matter to reach adjacent surface water systems either directly or indirectly. Sources and estimates of potential run-off should be provided and details of measures to mitigate these, including their location, provided in the Report.

Instream works may only take place during the period 1 July to 30 September. There should be no interference with the bed, gradient, profile or alignment of watercourses without prior notification and the agreement of Inland Fisheries Ireland. Proposed instream works must be accompanied by a site-specific method statement provided to IFI.

The number of new water crossings should be minimised. Where existing crossings must undergo alteration, IFI request that these crossings are upgraded in the interests of habitat improvement and biodiversity net gain. IFI should be consulted at the design phase to maximise favourable outcomes. Where works on water crossings are proposed, method statements must be provided. SuDS principles should be incorporated into surface water management plans to attenuate any run-off of suspended solids or other deleterious matter. Drainage infrastructure should be installed during dry ground conditions.

Any EIAR, NIS and/or application for planning should include a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), a Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP), and an Emergency Response Plan (EMP) in case of an emergency incident. Provision should be made for the appointment of a suitably qualified Project Environmental Manager and Ecological Clerk of Works.

Future correspondence or any requests for clarification can be sent via email to cormac.goulding@fisheriesireland.ie or by post to the address below.

Yours sincerely,

Cormac Goulding
Fisheries Environmental Officer
South-Eastern River Basin District

Ms. Chloe Finn,
INIS Environmental Consultants Ltd
Suite 16' Block A, Clare Technology Park
Gort Road, Ennis
County Clare



**Iascach Intire Éireann
Inland Fisheries Ireland**

22 December 2025

Re: Proposed Windfarm at Gattabaun, Co. Kilkenny

Via Email to: chloe.finn@inisenvironment.ie

Dear Ms. Finn,

Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) is the statutory authority tasked under section 7(1) of the Inland Fisheries Act 2010 (No. 10 of 2010) with responsibility for the protection, management, and conservation of the inland fisheries resource. In respect of the statutory ecological surveys proposed by INIS Environmental, IFI wish to make the following observations:

The proposed development is located predominantly in the Nore and Barrow catchment areas. All surface water bodies will be located either within the Barrow-Nore SAC or have a direct hydrological connection with the Barrow - Nore SAC.

Article 5 of the Surface Water Regulations (SI 272 of 2009) states that there should be no deterioration in Ecological Status. Article 28 (2) of the Regulations states that a surface water body whose status is determined to be less than Good shall be restored to at least Good status. The proposed surveys / reports must demonstrate how this project would cause no deterioration to the above surface water bodies and is consistent with their restoration to good ecological status where this is required.

IFI requests that the following assessments be provided:

- Baseline ecological assessments of water courses potentially affected by the proposed development, including fish species as well as other biological and physico-chemical surveys
- Maps of all aquatic habitats potentially affected by the project: all drainage channels (temporary and permanent) should be mapped and where these channels transect the proposed road network.
- An assessment of the potential adverse effects of the proposed works on all relevant aquatic receptors, including fish. Assessments should cover the site of the proposed wind development and the proposed grid connection route.
- An assessment of the cumulative effects of the proposed development along with other existing or approved projects
- An assessment of the impact on the conservation objectives of species listed as qualifying interests in the Barrow - Nore and Lower Suir SACs, which includes Lamprey species and Atlantic Salmon



**Iascach Intire Éireann
Inland Fisheries Ireland**

- The proposed mitigation measures to prevent erosion from soil disturbance in excavation areas and areas where there is significant movement of plant and machinery

Sources for fish ecological status and data are available on the Inland Fisheries Ireland and related websites, including <https://www.fisheriesireland.ie>, <http://wfdfish.ie/> and [here](#). The applicant may also complete a data request form for specific fish survey data from our research department. Please contact [environmentalplanning\(S\)fisheriesireland.ie](mailto:environmentalplanning(S)fisheriesireland.ie) if required.

During the construction and operational phases, the applicant should adhere to the recommendations and guidelines outlined in IFI's *Guidelines on Protection of Fisheries during Construction Works in and adjacent to Waters* 2016. A copy of this document is available [here](#).

Instream works may only take place during the period 1 July to 30 September. There should be no interference with the bed, gradient, profile or alignment of watercourses without prior notification and the agreement of Inland Fisheries Ireland.

The storage, management and conveyance of materials on site must not permit any deleterious matter to reach surface water systems either directly or indirectly, either during construction or post-construction. There must be no run-off of fuels, oils, concrete or from stockpiles of materials or general run-off to surface waters from the works.

There should be no interference with the bed, gradient, profile or alignment of any watercourse on or adjacent to the site without the prior notification and the written agreement of Inland Fisheries Ireland. Watercourses on or bordering the site must be maintained in their original state, their bankside vegetation preserved, and the existing line of the watercourse left unaltered, unless explicitly agreed otherwise.

The number of water crossings, whether on-site or for the proposed grid connection route, should be minimised, and existing crossings utilised where possible. Method statements for new water crossings, or for alterations to existing crossings must be provided.

Proposed instream works must be accompanied by a site-specific method statement provided to IFI. Method statements for proposed works on new water crossings, or for alterations to existing crossings must also be provided. The applicant should provide a commitment to provide these at least ten working days before works commence. Written approval from IFI should be obtained before works proceed.

Where existing crossings must undergo alteration, IFI request that these are upgraded in the interests of habitat improvement and biodiversity enhancement. Crossings should be designed to meet IFI's *Fisheries Construction Guidelines* referred to above. IFI also recommends that the applicant refer to the OPW's *Design Guidance For Fish Passage On Small Barriers* (2021). IFI should be consulted at the design stage for any new crossings or alterations to existing crossings.

With regard to the siting of turbines these should be located on suitable ground and set back from any watercourses so as to minimise the risk for contamination or impact. IFI recommends that minimum buffer zones of 50m be provided from turbine bases to any waters as defined in Section 1 of the Local Government (Water Pollution) Act, 1977 (as amended). IFI also requests that these are located outside the 0.1% AEP flooding zone.



**Iascach Intfre Eireann
Inland Fisheries Ireland**

Site compounds and personal welfare facilities, and the maintenance, cleaning, refuelling and repair work of vehicles and machinery must take place in dedicated areas which are bunded or protected to prevent discharge of materials into any surface waters. IFI requests that these are located at least 50m from any surface watercourses and outside the 1% AEP flooding zone.

SuDS principles should be incorporated into surface water management plans to attenuate any run-off of suspended solids or other deleterious matter. Natural flow paths should not be interrupted or diverted in a manner that would increase the risk of erosion. Drainage infrastructure should be installed during dry ground conditions.

Routes of roads and tracks and the location of turning areas should be planned to minimise environmental disturbance. The use of heavy plant and machinery on site should not result in soil erosion or nutrient losses. Mitigation measures for suspended solids must comply with an upper limit of 25mg per litre for Total Suspended Solids [TSS] as specified in the Salmonid Waters Regulations, SI 293 of 1988.

The use of borrow pits as a source of aggregate/hardstanding material should have regard for the sensitivity of the soils/subsoils to erosion and the potential for the generation of suspended solids pollution from excavations linked to a borrow pit.

In addition to environmental assessments (EIAR, NIS etc.), the application for planning should include a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), and a Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP).

Before works commence the applicant or the appointed contractor should provide contact details for the Ecological Clerk of Works to Inland Fisheries Ireland. In the event of any non-compliant discharge or incident which threatens an aquatic zone, IFI must be informed immediately at the contact details below.

At all times the precautionary principle should be applied throughout the development. Records should be kept of biological and chemical monitoring of undertaken before and during the construction phase and after the works, and during the operational phase for the development. Records should also be kept of inspections of surface water mitigation measures. These records should be made available upon request to any authorised person as defined under the Local Government (Water Pollution) Acts.

Any requests for clarification can be sent via email to environmentalplanning@fisheriesireland.ie or by post to the address below.

Yours sincerely,

Cormac Goulding
Senior Fisheries Environmental Officer
South-Eastern River Basin District



Transport Infrastructure Ireland
By email to ***thirdpartyworks@tii.ie***

1st February 2024

Re: Scoping for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report for proposed Gathabawn Windfarm, County Kilkenny

Ecopower Developments Limited (EDL) is planning to develop a windfarm at Gathabawn, County Kilkenny, on elevated agricultural grassland between Johnstown and Ballyragget. An Bord Pleanála have already deemed the project to be a Strategic Infrastructure Development and therefore for application directly to the Board.

The proposed windfarm will comprise c.15 wind turbines of c.163m to tip height and c.7km of grid connection cabling to the existing EirGrid Ballyragget Substation. The turbines will be located in 2 No. distinct areas – 10 No. turbines to the west of the site at Ballylehaun and 5 No. turbines to the east at Ballyring.

The grid connection cabling will be laid predominately under the public road (Local and Regional Roads) and will interact with Tii assets at one point only – a crossing under the N77 national secondary route just north of the Ballyragget Substation.

In addition, the turbine components haul route will use the National Road network from the port to the Portlaoise interchange on the M7. From the Portlaoise Interchange, the turbine component route will then follow the N77 through Abbeyleix, continue onto Durrow from where the deliveries will diverge. The components for the 10 No. turbines for the Ballylehaun site will continue on from Durrow on the Regional and Local Road network to the windfarm site. No public road works will be required on Tii assets as far as Durrow.

The components for the 5 No. turbines for the Ballyring site will stay on the N77 (turning in Durrow for Ballyragget) and continuing until the right turn-off onto the L1807, after the Glanbia Factory.

The transportation from Durrow to the turn-off the N77 to the L1807, will require matting overlay and street furniture removal at 4 No. locations

1. HR1 (Durrow) - Street furniture removal
2. HR2 (Durrow) – Street furniture removal and matting overlay
3. HR3 (Durrow) – Street furniture removal
4. HR4 (Parksgrove, north of Ballyragget N77) – Matting overlay and street furniture removal

See Figure: Gathabawn Windfarm Haul Route Works Locations



All street furniture predicted to act as an obstacle to the haul route, will be upgraded to socket foundations. Upgrade works will take place outside of peak hours, well in advance of the transportation of the turbine components. The socket foundation design will facilitate the removal and immediate reinstatement of street furniture as turbine components are transported. The matting overlay will be lifted at the same time.

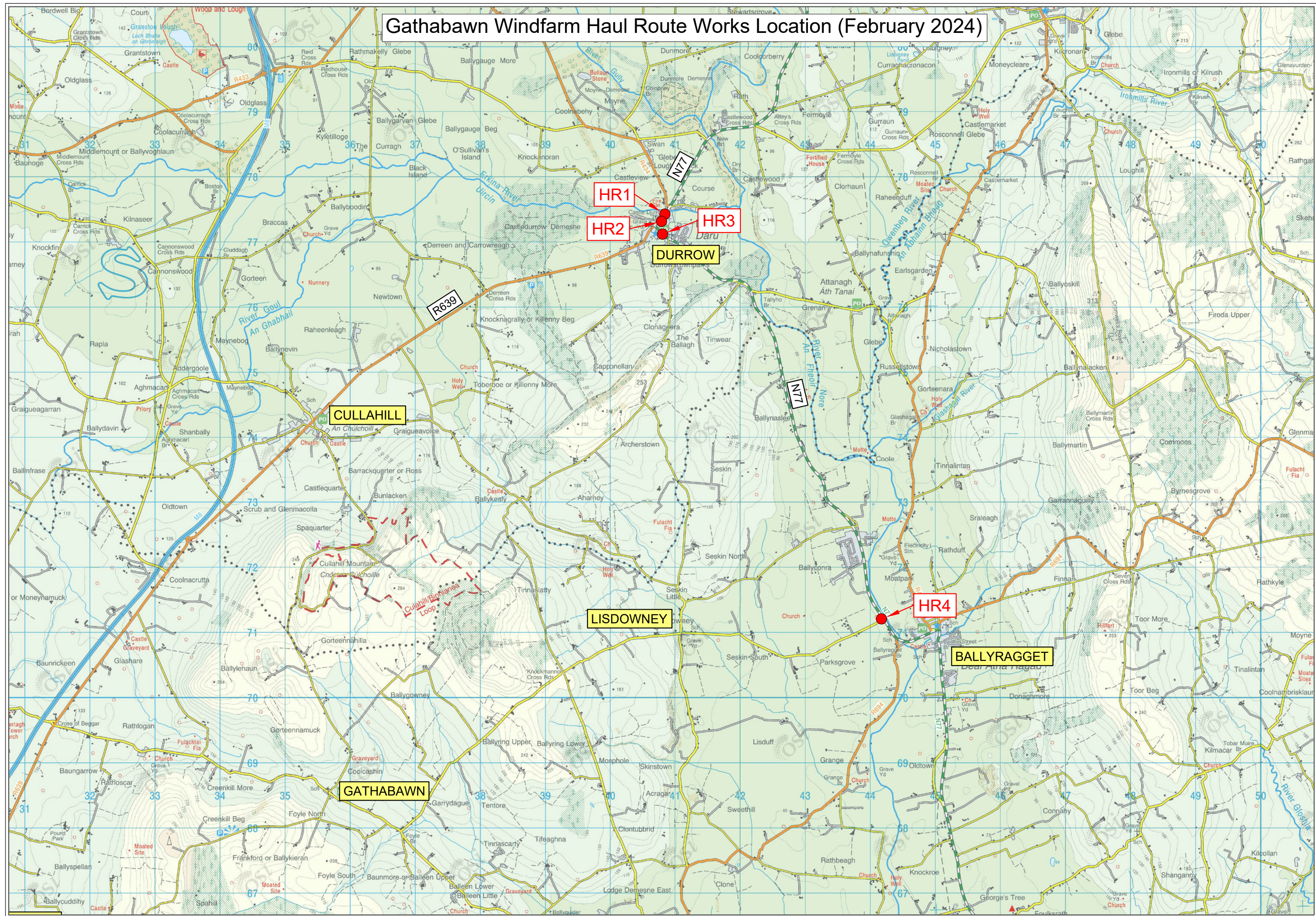
Environmental Studies are almost complete and the EIA Report and Appropriate Assessment Report are being prepared. We hope to submit the Planning Application to An Bord Pleanála, in March 2024. As a prescribed body, Tii will receive notice when the planning application is submitted and a copy of that application will be provided to you.

In the meantime, if Tii has any comments on the requirements for the EIA Report, please contact me Phil Kenealy at pk@ecopower.ie. I am also available on my mobile at **086 8399193**. The consultation period is open until **29th February 2024**.

Yours Sincerely,

Phil Kenealy (*By email bears no signature*)

Gathabawn Windfarm Haul Route Works Location (February 2024)



FW: Consultation on Proposed Gathabawn Windfarm Haul Route

From Anne MacDermott <Anne.MacDermott@tii.ie>

Date Thu 15/02/2024 09:08

To Phil Kenealy <pk@ecopower.ie>

Cc Third party works <Thirdpartyworks@tii.ie>; Landuse Planning <LandUsePlanning@tii.ie>

 1 attachment (5 MB)

Gathabawn Windfarm Consultation Tii pre-application Feb 24.pdf;

Hi Philomena

None of the four locations where you will need to remove street furniture or lay matting to transport the wind turbines are within the network directly maintained/managed by TII. They are within the local authority managed network.

Therefore you should agree details directly with the relevant local authorities; Kilkenny and Laois.

For information, TII managed network can be seen using this link: <https://tii-gis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=31f0384edc1b463aa49d80b3e6f993ce>

Please note that the issuing of this correspondence does not preclude or prejudice Transport Infrastructure Ireland in any form from actively engaging in its role as a statutory consultee under Planning and Development Acts.

Regards

Anne

From: Phil Kenealy <pk@ecopower.ie>

Sent: Thursday, February 1, 2024 3:23 PM

To: Third party works <Thirdpartyworks@tii.ie>

Subject: Consultation on Proposed Gathabawn Windfarm Haul Route

You don't often get email from pk@ecopower.ie. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of TII. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and are sure that the content is safe.

I attach consultation pre-application on the haul route works proposed for a new windfarm planned for County Kilkenny (Gathabawn Windfarm Project). Any feedback received will be taken into account in the design and evaluation of the proposed project.

Regards

Philomena Kenealy
Ecopower Limited

Zetec House, Purcellsinch IDA Business Park
Dublin Road, Kilkenny, R95 PX5X

Tel: 056-7750140 (Ext 201)

Mob: 086-8399193

Transport Infrastructure Ireland

By email to thirdpartyworks@tii.ie on 12.08.2026

Re: Consultation on proposed Gathabawn Windfarm, County Kilkenny

Ecopower Developments Limited (EDL) is planning to develop a windfarm on high ground in the **vicinity of the villages of Gathabawn and Lisdowney, in North County Kilkenny**. An Coimisiún Pleanála has deemed the proposal to be a Strategic Infrastructure Development and for application directly to the Commission, under Section 37 of the Planning Act.

The proposal is to build **12-wind turbines** with a rotor diameter of 136m. Two tip heights are proposed – 3- turbines will be 150m to tip height and 9- turbines will be 170m to tip height. The windfarm development includes site roads; underground electrical cabling; 2-control buildings and haul route works in the vicinity. The grid connection method proposed is an underground cable from the windfarm to a new electrical substation near the proposed grid connection point at the Eirgrid Substation in Moatpark, Ballyragget, which is circa 7km east of the windfarm site. The grid connection will require a cable crossing under the River Nore and the N77 National Route, c.1km north of Ballyragget. ***See location map attached.***

The grid connection cabling will be laid predominately through private lands with some public road crossings and will interact with Tii assets at one point only – a crossing under the N77 national secondary route just north of the Ballyragget Substation. ***See additional map showing the crossing location attached.***

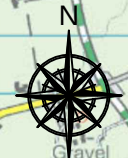
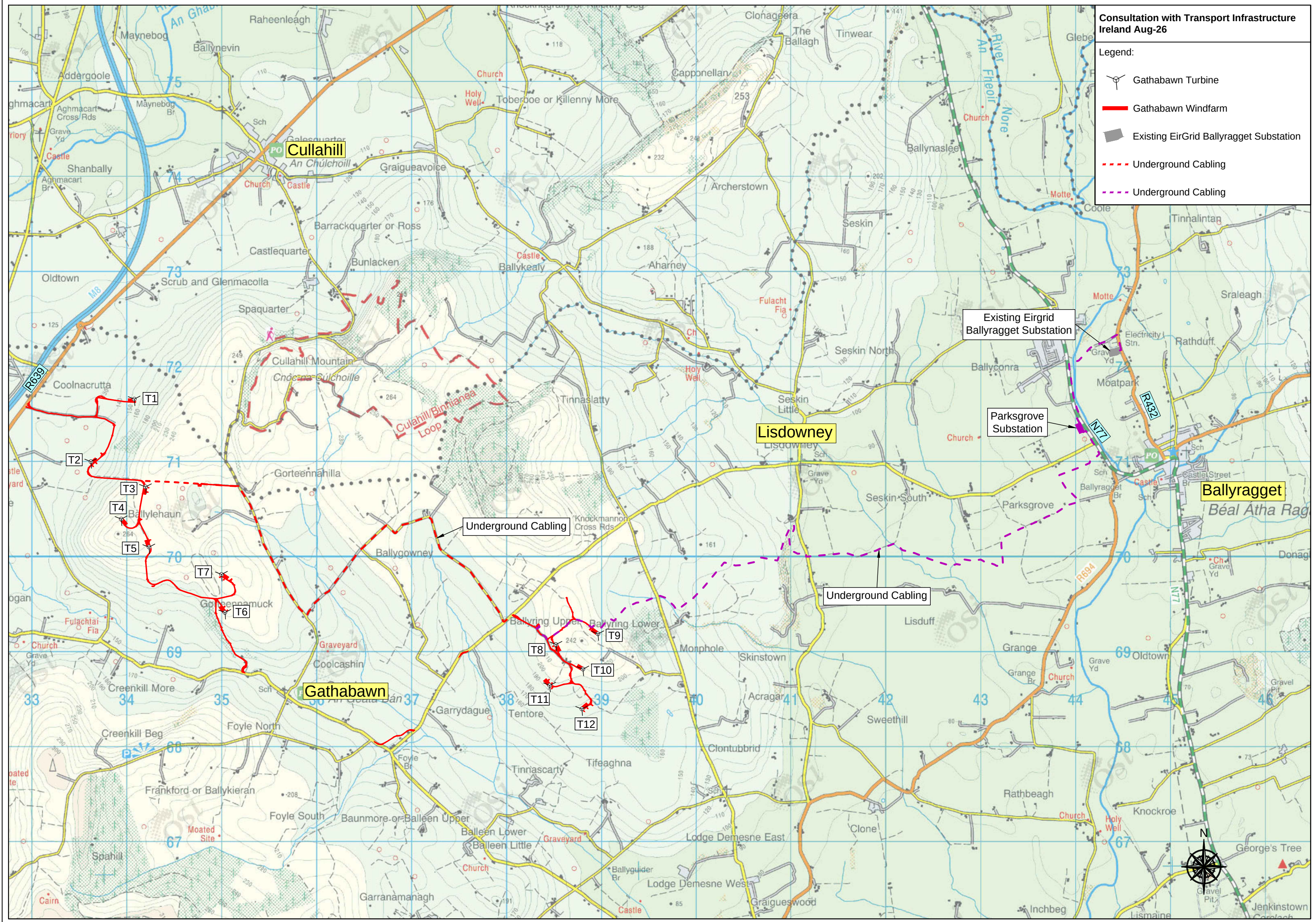
This consultation period is open for 4 weeks i.e. until **9th September, 2026**. If you wish to consult or require more information, please remail me.

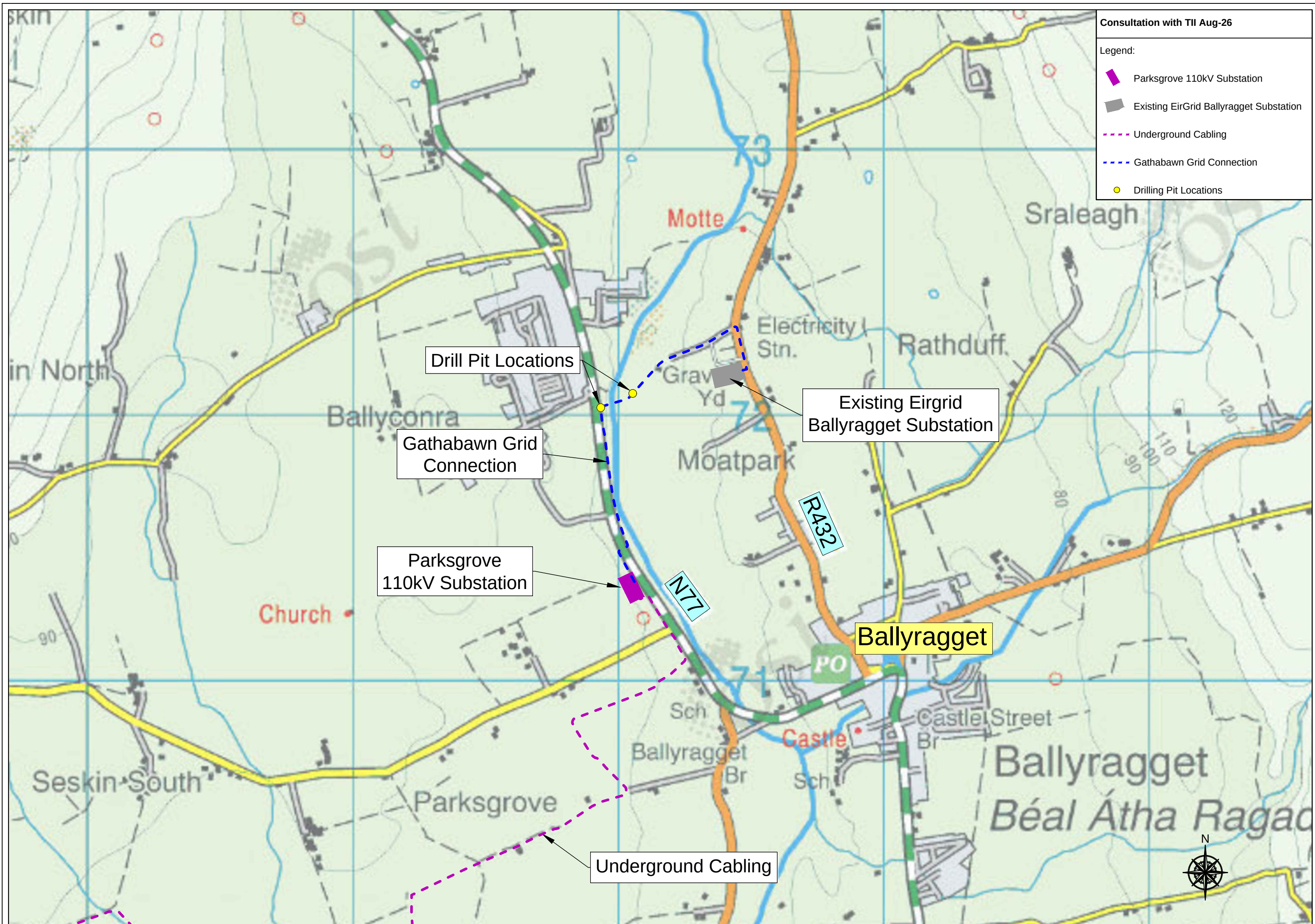
Regards,

Phil Kenealy (Project Manager, Gathabawn Windfarm)

Legend:

-  Gathabawn Turbine
-  Gathabawn Windfarm
-  Existing EirGrid Ballyragget Substation
-  Underground Cabling
-  Underground Cabling





TII26-137495 - Consultation on proposed Gathabawn Windfarm, County Kilkenny

From INFO <Information@tii.ie>

Date Fri 04/09/2026 12:06

To Phil Kenealy <philk@ecopower.ie>

Dear Ms. Kenealy,

Thank you for your correspondence of 12 August 2026 regarding the above. Transport Infrastructure Ireland's (TII) position in relation to your enquiry is as follows.

TII wishes to advise that it is not in a position to engage directly with planning applicants with respect to proposed developments. TII will endeavour to consider and respond to planning applications referred to it, given its status and duties as a statutory consultee under the Planning Acts. The approach to be adopted by TII in making such submissions or comments will seek to uphold official national road and light rail policy and guidelines including the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (DoECLG) Guidelines, 'Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (2012), and TII Publications.

Regard should also be had to other relevant guidance available at www.TII.ie.

The issuing of this correspondence is provided as best practice guidance only and does not prejudice TII's statutory right to make any observations, requests for further information, objections or appeals following the examination of any valid planning application referred.

With respect to EIAR scoping issues, the recommendations indicated below provide only general guidance for the preparation of an EIAR, which may affect the national roads.

The project promoter should have regard, *inter alia*, to the following;

Having regard to the Environmental Protection Agency's '[Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports](#)' (2022), it is recommended, as appropriate, that the National Road and Light Rail Networks are recognised as strategic transport assets under 'material assets'. EIAR assessment and mitigation should have regard to the following:

- **National Roads:** Official policy for development at or near national roads is set out in the DoECLG 'Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (2012) available at the following [location](#).
- **TII Publications:** In addition, as part of TII's responsibilities for managing and improving the Country's National Road and Light Rail Networks, TII sets development guidance and standards for traffic and road assessments and construction that may be necessary by reason of proposed development location, scale or typology to be prepared to accompany applications for developments or works. Technical guidance and standards are contained in TII Publications, available at [TII Publications](#).

In addition, the EIAR should have regard to, *inter alia*, the following:

National Road Network:

- TII would be specifically concerned as to potential significant impacts the development would have on the National Road Network (and junctions with national roads) in the proximity of the proposed development, including the potential haul route.
- Consultations should be had with the relevant Local Authority/National Roads Design Office (RDO) with regard to locations of existing and future national road schemes.
- The EIAR should have regard to any prior Environmental Impact Statement or Assessment Report and all conditions and/or modifications imposed by An Coimisiún Pleanála regarding road schemes in the area. The developer should, in particular, have regard to any potential cumulative impacts.
- The EIAR should have regard to the provisions of Chapter 3 of the DoECLG 'Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines' in the assessment.

- The developer should assess visual impacts from existing national roads.

TII Publications:

- It would be important that, where appropriate, subject to meeting the appropriate thresholds and criteria and having regard to best practice, a Traffic and Transport Assessment (TTA) be carried out in accordance with relevant guidelines, noting traffic volumes attending the site and traffic routes to/from the site with reference to impacts on the National Road Network and junctions of lower category roads with national roads. TII's [Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines](#) should be referred to in relation to proposed development with potential impacts on the National Road Network. The scheme promoter is also advised to have regard to Section 2.2 of the Guidelines which addresses requirements for sub-threshold TTA.
- The designers and assessors are asked to consult TII Publications to determine whether a Road Safety Audit is required.

TII environmental assessment guidance:

- The EIAR should have regard to TII's Environmental Assessment and Construction Guidelines, including the [Good Practice Guidance for the Treatment of Noise during the Planning of National Road Schemes](#) (2014),
- The EIAR should consider the European Communities (Environmental Noise) Regulations 2018 (S.I. No. 549 of 2018) and, in particular, how the development may affect future action plans by the relevant competent authority. The developer may need to consider the incorporation of noise barriers to reduce noise impacts (see Good Practice Guidance for the Treatment of Noise during the Planning of National Road Schemes (2014)),

Haul routes utilising the National Road Network:

- Elements of the National Road Network are operated and managed by a combination of Public Private Partnerships (PPP) Concessions, Motorway Maintenance and Renewal Contracts (MMaRC) and local road authorities in association with TII. In relation to haul route identification, the applicant/developer should clearly identify haul routes proposed and fully assess the network to be traversed to ascertain any operational requirements, including delivery timetabling, etc. to ensure that the strategic function of the National Road Network is safeguarded.
- Separate structure approvals/permits and other licences and works specific deeds of indemnity may be required in connection with the proposed haul route, including where temporary modification to the Road Network may be required. Consultation with relevant local authorities, PPP Companies and MMaRC Contractors may also be required.
- Where abnormal 'weight' loads are a feature of the development, whether wind turbine components or substation components, separate structure approvals/permits and other licences may be required in connection with the proposed haul route.
- All national road structures on the haul route through all the relevant County Council administrative areas should be checked by the applicant/developer to confirm their capacity to accommodate any abnormal 'weight' load proposed. Any requirements for 'Exceptional Abnormal Loads' should also be addressed in accordance with TII Publications.
- An abnormal load is defined as anything above 46 tonnes and below 180 tonnes, any load above 180 tonnes, represents an 'Exceptional Abnormal Load' ('EAL'). All structures to be crossed will need a full structural assessment by the developer in accordance with TII Publications [AM-STR-06048](#) to verify that they can sustain any 'EAL' load safely and without any damage. Reference should also be made to Department of Transport Circular RW18 of 2024 ('Exceptional Abnormal Loads').
- Any damage caused to the pavement on the existing national road arising from any temporary works due to the turning movement of abnormal loads (e.g. tearing of the surface course, etc.) shall be rectified in accordance with TII Pavement Standards and details in this regard shall be agreed with the Road Authority prior to the commencement of any development on site.

National Road Crossings:

- In the interests of maintaining the safety and standard of the National Road Network, the EIAR should identify the methods/techniques proposed for any works traversing/in proximity to the National Road Network.

- The preferred method of necessary National Road Network crossings is by horizontal directional drilling (HDD). It is appropriate for the designers to contact thirdpartyworks@tii.ie in order to co-ordinate and process approvals for this type of crossing that may include requirements for Section 53 consent and specific indemnities for the works.

Potential cable routing:

As noted above the proposal appears to include cable routing along the N77. Therefore, where grid connection and cable routing form part of any development proposal, proposals should be developed to safeguard proposed road schemes as TII will not be responsible for costs associated with future relocation of cable routing where proposals are catered for in an area of a proposed national road scheme. In that regard, consideration should be given to routing options, use of existing crossings, depth of cable laying, etc. Consultation should be undertaken with the Councils relevant Project Teams/National Roads Design Office with regard to locations of existing and future national road schemes in the area.

Where grid connection proposals impact the existing National Road Network, please note, in accordance with the National Planning Framework National Strategic Outcome No. 2 'Enhanced Regional Accessibility', there is a requirement to maintain the strategic capacity and safety of the Network. This requirement is further reflected in the National Development Plan, the National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland and also the existing Statutory Section 28 Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities.

There is around 99,000km of roads in Ireland, the National Road Network which caters for strategic inter-urban travel consists of only approx. 5.4% of this. There is a critical requirement to ensure the strategic capacity and safety of this National Road Network is maintained and significant Government investment already made in the National Road Network is safeguarded.

The provision of cabling along the National Road Network represents a number of significant implications for TII and road authorities in the management and maintenance of the strategic National Road Network and TII is of the opinion that grid connection cable routing should reflect the foregoing provisions of official policy.

Section 12.4.1.1 'Accelerate Renewable Electricity Generation' of the Climate Action Plan 2024 (CAP24) outlines the objective of reaching 80% of electricity demand from renewable sources by 2030 through a range of measures, including; 'All relevant public bodies will carry out their functions in a manner which supports the achievement of the renewable electricity targets, including, but not limited to, the use of road and rail infrastructure to provide a route for grid infrastructure where this is the optimal solution'.

Consistent with CAP24, for all renewable energy developments requiring grid connection to the national grid, TII recommends that a full assessment of all route alternatives for grid connection takes place, including alternatives to public road, where appropriate. In TII's experience, grid connection accommodated on national roads has the potential, inter alia, to result in technical road safety issues such as differential settlement due to backfilling trenches and can impact on ability and cost of general maintenance, upgrades and safety works to existing national roads.

The Scheme promoter should also refer to Department of Transport Circular RW 07 of 2025 and the 'Interim Guidance to Road Authorities (placement of Medium or High Voltage electricity assets)' and the update Circular RW 05 of 2026, both of which can be accessed at the following [location](#).

Having regard to the foregoing, in TII's opinion, grid connection routing, where it is proposed to utilise the Road Network must therefore demonstrate that the route proposed represents the 'optimal solution'. In relation to your consultation on the application, insufficient information has been submitted with the scoping referral and therefore, based on the information available, TII is unable to ascertain if the developer has taken into account relevant policy and TII publications guidance.

Therefore, it is unclear that the proposed development cable routing along the N77 represents the 'optimal solution' or has been adequately assessed and mitigated in submitted documentation. The proposed cable routing along the N77 does not appear to have had regard to the status of the N77 as part of the National Road Network and therefore is subject to DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012), and TII Publications compliance.

In addition, there is a finite road space available to accommodate all utilities in the Road Network and the map indicates a grid connection proposal to the Ballyragget 110kV Substation. TII is aware of a number of other grid connection proposals similarly proposing connection to the Ballyragget 110kV Substation, therefore, it is

recommended that a co-ordinated approach to grid connection routing in this area is achieved to avoid risk to the effective delivery of renewable energy projects in the area.

Other consents or licences may be required from the Road Authority for any trenching or cabling proposals crossing the National Road. TII requests referral of all proposals agreed and licensed between the Road Authority and the applicant which affect the National Road Network.

Cable routing should avoid all impacts to existing TII infrastructure such as traffic counters, weather stations, etc. and works required to such infrastructure shall only be undertaken in consultation with and subject to the agreement of TII, any costs attributable shall be borne by the applicant/developer. The developer should also be aware that separate approvals may be required for works traversing the National Road Network.

All crossings in the vicinity of the National Road should be by HDD and avoid all national road structures, including bridges, culverts, etc.

Notwithstanding, any of the above, the developer should be aware that this list is non-exhaustive, thus site and development specific issues should be addressed in accordance with best practice.

I trust that the above comments are of use in your EIAR preparation.

Yours sincerely,

Alisha Harper

Regulatory & Administration Executive | Transport Infrastructure Ireland

Web: www.tii.ie



From: Phil Kenealy <philk@ecopower.ie>

Sent: Wednesday 12 August 2026 15:38

To: Third party works <Thirdpartyworks@tii.ie>

Subject: Consultation on proposed Gathabawn Windfarm, County Kilkenny

You don't often get email from philk@ecopower.ie. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of TII. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and are sure that the content is safe.

Re: Consultation on proposed Gathabawn Windfarm, County Kilkenny

Ecopower Developments Limited (EDL) is planning to develop a windfarm on high ground in the **vicinity of the villages of Gathabawn and Lisdowney, in North County Kilkenny**. An Coimisiún Pleanála has deemed the proposal to be a Strategic Infrastructure Development and for application directly to the Commission, under Section 37 of the Planning Act.

The proposal is to build **12-wind turbines** with a rotor diameter of 136m. Two tip heights are proposed – 3- turbines will be 150m to tip height and 9- turbines will be 170m to tip height. The windfarm development includes site roads; underground electrical cabling; 2-control buildings and haul route works in the vicinity. The grid connection method proposed is an underground cable from the windfarm to a new electrical substation near the proposed grid connection point at the Eirgrid Substation in Moatpark, Ballyragget, which is circa 7km east of the windfarm site. The grid connection will require a cable crossing under the River Nore and the N77 National Route, c.1km north of Ballyragget. **See location map attached (TII 1).**

The grid connection cabling will be laid predominately through private lands with some public road crossings and will interact with Tii assets at one point only – a crossing under the N77 national secondary route just north of the Ballyragget Substation. **See additional map showing the crossing location attached (TII 2).**

This consultation period is open for 4 weeks i.e. until **9th September, 2026**. If you wish to consult or require more information, please email me.

Philomena Kenealy Project Manager Gathabawn Windfarm

C/o Ecopower Developments Limited

Zetec House - Purcellsinch IDA Business Park

Dublin Road - Kilkenny - R95 PX5X

www.ecopower.ie

M: 086-8399193



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Planning Department
Uisce Éireann,
PO Box 860, South City Delivery Office
Cork City

01.02.2024

Re: Scoping for Gathabawn Windfarm Project, County Kilkenny

As part of the scoping for a planning application, Ecopower Developments is consulting on the potential effects of a proposed **windfarm development** - Gathabawn Windfarm Project on Uisce Eireann assets. An Bord Pleanála have already deemed the project to be a Strategic Infrastructure Development and therefore for application directly to the Board.

The proposed windfarm will comprise c.15 wind turbines and c.7km of grid connection cabling from the windfarm substation to the existing Eirgrid Ballyragget Substation. The turbines will be located in 2 No. distinct areas – 10 No. turbines to the west of the site at Ballylehaun and 5 No. turbines to the east at Ballyring.

The grid connection cabling will be laid under the public road (Local and Regional Roads) between the windfarm sites and the Ballyragget Substation. See mapping enclosed: **Proposed Gathabawn Windfarm Project (February 2024)**.

Aoife Butler (Aoifeb@ecopower.ie) received data from your Data Request Team by email on 22nd June, 2022. She received the Water distribution and Sewer Network drawings (Irish Grid). On examination of the drawings we see that there are just two points of interaction between the proposed Gathabawn Windfarm Project works and Uisce Éireann's assets.

- 1) at a project cable crossing of the R432 (Ballyragget to Ballinakill Road) beside the existing Eirgrid Ballyragget Substation where there is an Uisce Éireann mains water pipe and
- 2) alongside an Uisce Eireann lateral line down the Local Road L-58442 which serves some roadside properties.*

**You might note that this interaction corresponds with a consultation last week from Ecopower Developments on the proposed Ballynalacken Windfarm.*

I would be much obliged if you would confirm that the locations at 1 & 2 above are currently the only interaction possible between Uisce Eireann assets and the Gathabawn grid cabling - are there assets in the N77 where the cable crosses as shown on the enclosed mapping?





In any case, construction of the underground cabling will be carried out in accordance with Best Practice which will include pre-construction review of mapping and confirmatory surveys. Additionally, during construction a banksman will accompany each excavator to oversee all excavation works and excavations within 500mm of water pipes will be hand dug.

If you have any comments at this stage or if your network has been updated since June 2022, please contact me Phil Kenealy at pk@ecopower.ie. I am also available on my mobile at **086 8399193**. The consultation period is open until **29th February 2024**.

Yours Sincerely,

Phil Kenealy (Project Manager, Gathabawn Windfarm)

Ecopower Developments
pk@ecopower.ie

29 February 2024

Re: EIA Scoping Request – Proposed windfarm and associated underground cabling at Gathabawn, Co. Kilkenny.

Uisce Éireann
Bosca OP 6000
Baile Átha Cliath 1
D01 WA07
Éire

Uisce Éireann
PO Box 6000
Dublin 1
D01 WA07
Ireland

T: +353 1 89 25000
F: +353 1 89 25001
www.water.ie

Dear Phil Kenealy,

Uisce Éireann has received notification of your Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) scoping request relating to Ecopower Developments Ltd's forthcoming application to construct and operate a windfarm in Gathabawn Co. Kilkenny.

Please see attached Appendix 1, which outlines issues that the applicant is requested to address, prior to the lodgement of a planning application.

In addition advice is provided at Appendix 2. On receipt of the planning referral, Uisce Éireann will review the finalised Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) as part of the planning process.

Queries relating to the terms and the EIA scoping opinions below should be directed to planning@water.ie

PP. *Ali Robinson*

Yvonne Harris

Connections and Developer Services

APPENDIX 1

Having reviewed the documentation submitted the following must be addressed at pre planning stage to avoid potential unnecessary delays within the consenting process.

Build Over/Diversions

The location and extent of the proposed cabling and extent of crossovers with Uisce Éireann's assets cannot be clearly identified as all notations on the plans submitted are in black and white..

The proposed works appear to traverse or are in close proximity to existing Uisce Éireann infrastructure. Uisce Éireann does not permit build over of its assets and the separation distances as per Uisce Éireann's Standards Codes and Practices must be achieved.

Where building near / building over / diversions of existing UÉ assets are proposed, the associated designs need to be agreed with the UÉ Diversions team in UÉ prior to lodgement of a planning application.

The applicant must submit a diversion enquiry to Uisce Éireann Diversions Section (diversions@water.ie) in order for Uisce Éireann complete a feasibility assessment. The Confirmation of Feasibility must be submitted to An Bord Pleanála on lodgement of the planning application.

Further details on the process to be followed are outlined on the UÉ website at <https://www.water.ie/connections/developer-services/diversions/>.

Abstraction Points

There is an existing Uisce Éireann abstraction point downstream from the proposed windfarm in Freshford. The EIAR must include and consider all direct, indirect and cumulative effects on the abstraction point.

APPENDIX 2

Uisce Éireann's Response to EIA Scoping Requests

At present, Uisce Éireann does not have the capacity to advise on the scoping of individual projects. However, in general the following aspects of Water Services should be considered in the scope of an EIA where relevant;

- a) Where the development proposal has the potential to impact an Uisce Éireann Drinking Water Source(s), the applicant shall provide details of measures to be taken to ensure that there will be no negative impact to Uisce Éireann's Drinking Water Source(s) during the construction and operational phases of the development. Hydrological / hydrogeological pathways between the applicant's site and receiving waters should be identified as part of the report.
- b) Where the development proposes the backfilling of materials, the applicant is required to include a waste sampling strategy to ensure the material is inert.
- c) Mitigations should be proposed for any potential negative impacts on any water source(s) which may be in proximity and included in the environmental management plan and incident response.
- d) Any and all potential impacts on the nearby reservoir as public water supply water source(s) are assessed, including any impact on hydrogeology and any groundwater/ surface water interactions.
- e) Impacts of the development on the capacity of water services (*i.e. do existing water services have the capacity to cater for the new development*). This is confirmed by Uisce Éireann in the form of a Confirmation of Feasibility (COF). If a development requires a connection to either a public water supply or sewage collection system, the developer is advised to submit a Pre-Connection Enquiry (PCE) enquiry to Uisce Éireann to determine the feasibility of connection to the Uisce Éireann network.
- f) The applicant shall identify any upgrading of water services infrastructure that would be required to accommodate the proposed development.
- g) In relation to a development that would discharge trade effluent – any upstream treatment or attenuation of discharges required prior to discharging to an Uisce Éireann collection network.

- h) In relation to the management of surface water; the potential impact of surface water discharges to combined sewer networks and potential measures to minimise and or / stop surface waters from combined sewers.
- i) Any physical impact on Uisce Éireann assets – reservoir, drinking water source, treatment works, pipes, pumping stations, discharges outfalls etc. including any relocation of assets.
- j) When considering a development proposal, the applicant is advised to determine the location of public water services assets, possible connection points from the applicant's site / lands to the public network and any drinking water abstraction catchments to ensure these are included and fully assessed in any pre-planning proposals. Details, where known, can be obtained by emailing an Ordnance Survey map identifying the proposed location of the applicant's intended development to datarequests@water.ie
- k) Other indicators or methodologies for identifying infrastructure located within the applicant's lands are the presence of registered wayleave agreements, visible manholes, vent stacks, valve chambers, marker posts etc. within the proposed site.
- l) Any potential impacts on the assimilative capacity of receiving waters in relation to Uisce Éireann discharge outfalls including changes in dispersion / circulation characterises. Hydrological / hydrogeological pathways between the applicant's site and receiving waters should be identified within the report.
- m) Any potential impact on the contributing catchment of water sources either in terms of water abstraction for the development (*and resultant potential impact on the capacity of the source*) or the potential of the development to influence / present a risk to the quality of the water abstracted by Uisce Éireann for public supply should be identified within the report.
- n) Where a development proposes to connect to an Uisce Éireann network and that network either abstracts water from or discharges wastewater to a "protected"/ sensitive area, consideration as to whether the integrity of the site / conservation objectives of the site would be compromised should be identified within the report.

- o) Uisce Éireann does not permit building over of its assets. As an applicant you are required to;
- survey the site to determine the exact location of the assets. Any trial investigations should be carried out with the agreement and in the presence of Uisce Éireann.
 - Provide evidence of separation distances between the existing Uisce Éireann assets and proposed structures, other services, trees, etc. have to be in accordance with the Irish Water Codes of Practice and Standard Details.
- p) Where a diversion of Public Infrastructure may be required subject to layout proposal of the development and separation distances, the applicant is required to submit a Diversions Enquiry to diversions@water.ie
- q) Mitigation measures in relation to any of the above ensuring a zero risk to any Uisce Éireann drinking water sources (Surface and Ground water).

This is not an exhaustive list.

Please note;

- Where connection(s) to the public network is required as part of the development proposal, applicants are advised to complete the Pre-Connection Enquiry process and have received a Confirmation of Feasibility letter from Uisce Éireann ahead of any planning application.
- Uisce Éireann will not accept new surface water discharges to combined sewer networks.

Uisce Éireann

By Email to: planning@water.ie on 12th August 2026

Re: Consultation on proposed Gathabawn Windfarm, County Kilkenny

Ecopower Developments Limited (EDL) is planning to develop a windfarm on high ground in the **vicinity of the villages of Gathabawn and Lisdowney, in North County Kilkenny**. An Coimisiún Pleanála has deemed the proposal to be a Strategic Infrastructure Development and for application directly to the Commission, under Section 37 of the Planning Act.

The proposal is to build **12-wind turbines** with a rotor diameter of 136m. The windfarm development includes site roads; underground electrical cabling; 2-control buildings and haul route works in the vicinity. The grid connection method proposed is an underground cable from the windfarm to a new electrical substation near the proposed grid connection point at the Eirgrid Substation in Moatpark, Ballyragget, which is circa 7km east of the windfarm site. The grid connection will require a cable crossing under the River Nore and the N77 National Route, c.1km north of Ballyragget. **See location map attached (Uisce Éireann 1).**

Our planning design department sent the coordinates of the site and grid connection route extent to datarequests@water.ie on 22nd June, 2022 and again on 15th June 2026, requesting the latest Water Distribution and Sewer Network drawings for the area. On examination of the received drawings we identified two interactions between the proposed Gathabawn Windfarm works and Uisce Éireann's assets – a Water Mains and a Lateral Line adjacent to the L1807. See **Close up of the area attached (Uisce Éireann 2)**

I confirm that placement of the proposed grid connection cabling will be carried out under the Uisce Éireann assets and in accordance with Best Practice, including a survey of the site to determine the exact location of the assets and additionally any trial investigations will be carried out with the agreement and in the presence of Uisce Éireann. Additionally, during construction a banksman will accompany each excavator to oversee all excavation works and excavations within 500mm of water pipes will be hand dug.

We also consulted planning@water.ie in January 2024 on our proposal - **your reply of February 2024 is attached**. Appendix 2 of your reply will inform the aspects of Water Services which will be considered in the scope of the EIA Report for the proposal. However, because some time has elapsed since then, I am writing again to ask if Uisce Éireann has any additional comments on the proposal.

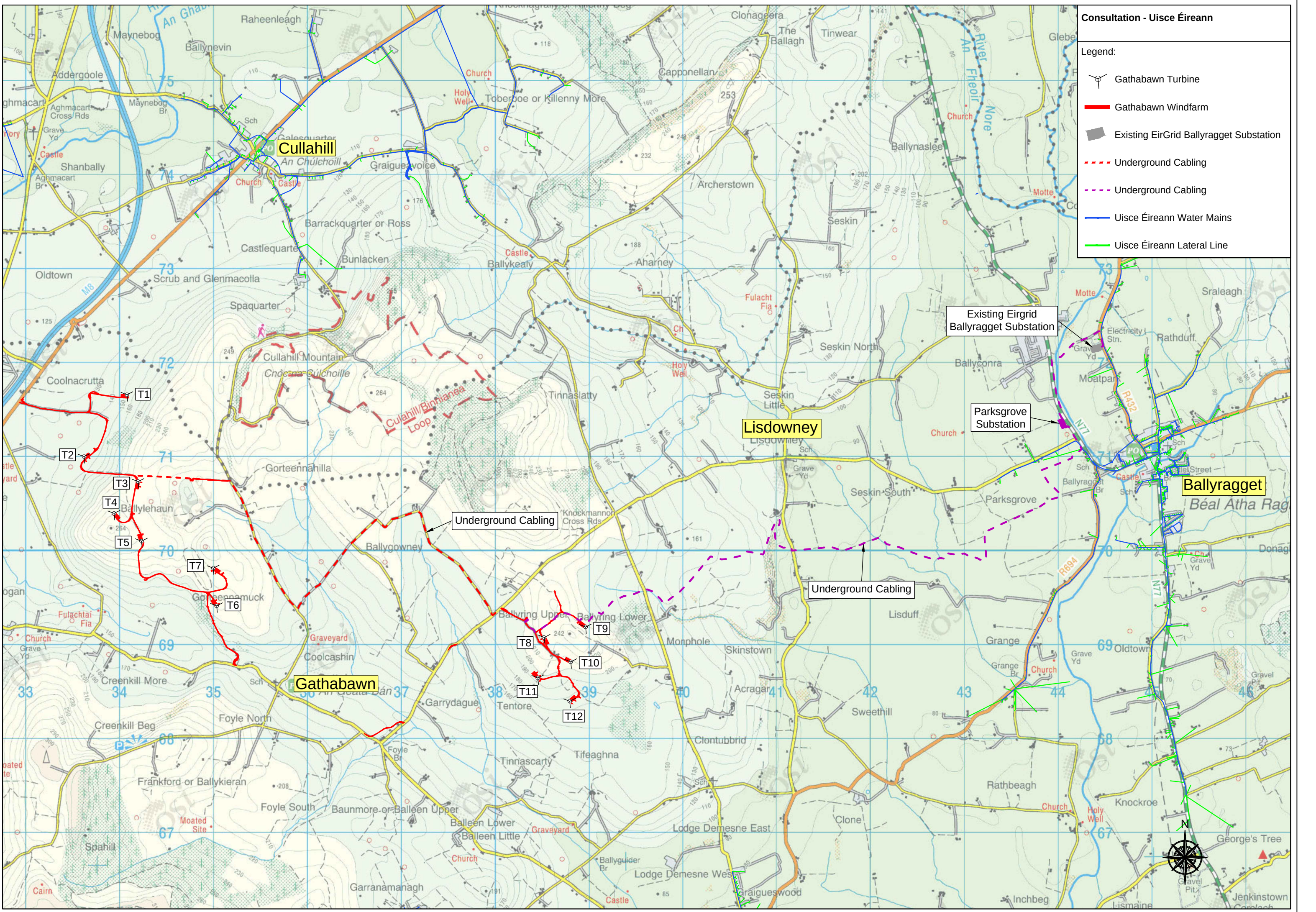
This consultation period is open for 4 weeks i.e. until **9th September, 2026**. If you wish to consult or require more information, please email me.

Yours Sincerely, Phil Kenealy (Project Manager, Gathabawn Windfarm)

Consultation - Uisce Éireann

Legend:

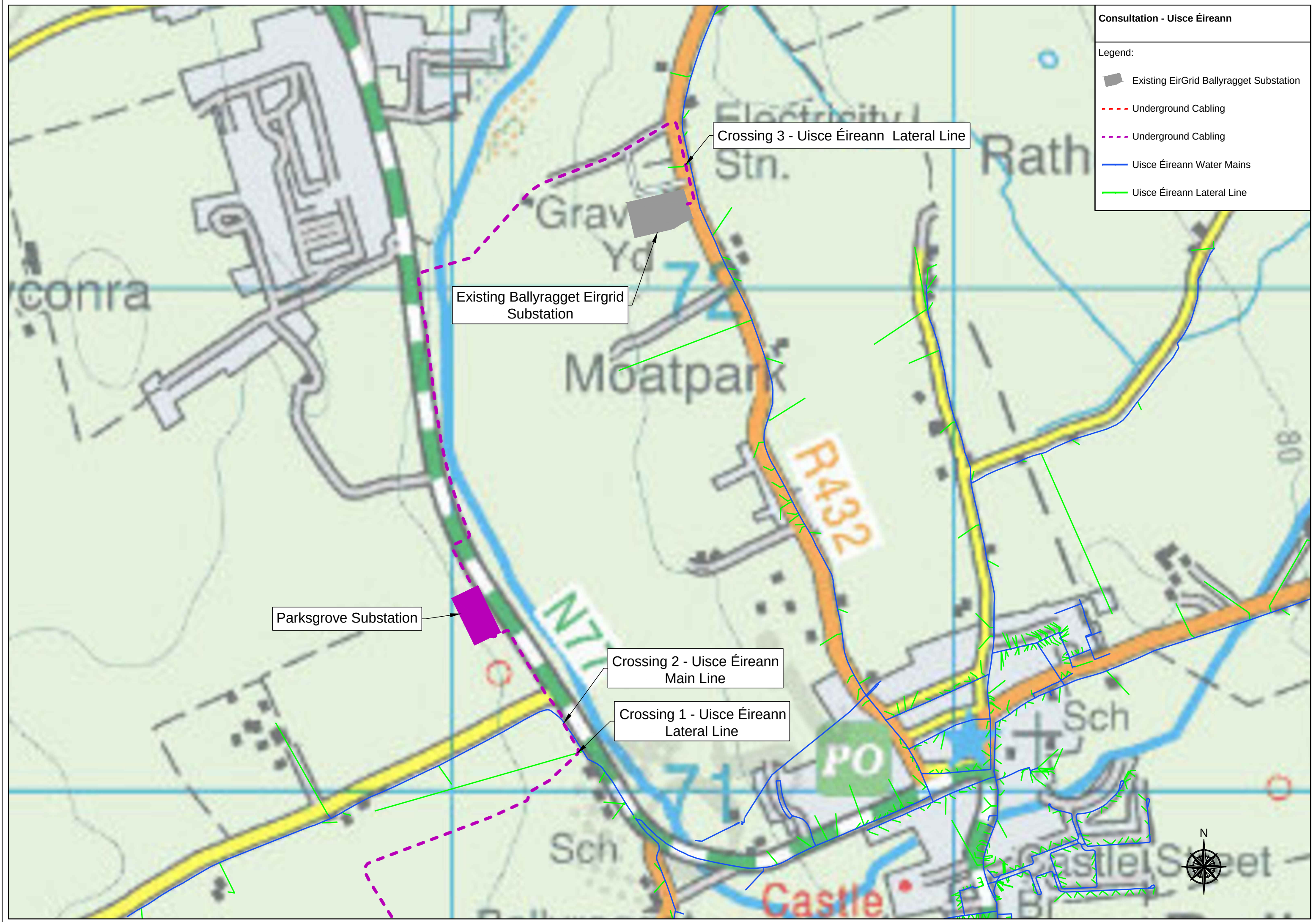
-  Gathabawn Turbine
-  Gathabawn Windfarm
-  Existing EirGrid Ballyragget Substation
-  Underground Cabling
-  Underground Cabling
-  Uisce Éireann Water Mains
-  Uisce Éireann Lateral Line



Consultation - Uisce Éireann

Legend:

- Existing EirGrid Ballyragget Substation
- Underground Cabling
- Underground Cabling
- Uisce Éireann Water Mains
- Uisce Éireann Lateral Line



RE: 2nd Consultation on proposed Gathabawn Windfarm, County Kilkenny EMAIL:0198008

From Planning <Planning@water.ie>
Date Thu 03/09/2026 15:51
To Phil Kenealy <philk@ecopower.ie>
Cc Aisling McGrath <aislingmcgrath@water.ie>

Hi Phil,

The previous advice provided still stands.

You will need to lodge diversion enquiry with Uisce Éireann's Diversions team for the proposed build under of UE assets. This will assess the feasibility of the proposal. The UE Diversions team will then issue a Confirmation of Feasibility (COF) to build under and this COF must be submitted to the ACP on lodgement of the SID application.

Regards

----- Original Message -----

From: philk@ecopower.ie;
Received: Wed Aug 12 2026 15:57:56 GMT+0100 (Irish Standard Time)
To: Planning <planning@water.ie>;
Subject: 2nd Consultation on proposed Gathabawn Windfarm, County Kilkenny

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We also consulted planning@water.ie in January 2024 on our proposal - ***your reply of February 2024 is attached***. Appendix 2 of your reply will inform the aspects of Water Services which will be considered in the scope of the EIA Report for the proposal. However, because some time has elapsed since then, I am writing again to ask if Uisce Éireann has any additional comments on the proposal.

This consultation period is open for 4 weeks i.e. until **9th September, 2026**. If you wish to consult or require more information, please email me.

Philomena Kenealy Project Manager Gathabawn Windfarm

C/o Ecopower Developments Limited

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Dublin Road - Kilkenny - R95 PX5X

www.ecopower.ie

M: 086-8399193



Is don duine amháin nó don eintiteas amháin ainmnithe ar an seoladh an fhaisnéis agus d'fhéadfadh ábhar faoi rún, faoi phribhléid nó ábhar atá íogair ó thaobh na tráchtála de a bheith mar chuid den fhaisnéis. Tá toirmeasc ar aon daoine nó aon eititis; nach dóibh siúd an fhaisnéis-aon athbhreithniú a dhéanamh, aon atarchur a dhéanamh nó aon athdháileadh a dhéanamh, nó aon úsáid eile a bhaint as an bhfaisnéis, nó aon ghníomh a bhraithfeadh ar an bhfaisnéis seo a dhéanamh agus d'fhéadfaí an dlí a shárú dá ndéanfaí sin. Séanann Uisce Éireann dliteanas as aon ghníomh agus as aon iarmhairt bunaithe ar úsáid neamhúdaraith na faisnéise seo. Séanann Uisce Éireann dliteanas maidir le seachadadh iomlán agus ceart na faisnéise sa chumarsáid seo agus séanann Uisce Éireann dliteanas maidir le haon mhoill a bhaineann leis an bhfaisnéis a fháil. Má tá an ríomh-phost seo faighte agat trí dhearmad, déan teagmháil leis an seoltóir más é do thoil é agus scrios an t-ábhar ó gach aon ríomhaire. D'fhéadfadh ríomhphost a bheith so-ghabhálach i leith truailithe, idircheaptha agus i leith leasuithe neamhúdaraith. Séanann Uisce Éireann aon fhreagracht as athruithe nó as idircheapadh a rinneadh ar an ríomhphost seo nó as aon dochar do chórais na bhfaighteoirí déanta ag an teachtaireacht seo nó ag a ceangaltáin tar éis a sheolta. Tabhair faoi deara go bhféadfadh monatóireacht a bheith á dhéanamh ar theachtairreachtaí chuig Uisce Éireann agus ó Uisce Éireann d'fhonn ár ngnó a chosaint agus chun a chinntiú go bhfuiltear ag teacht le beartais agus le caighdeáin Uisce Éireann. Is cuideachta gníomhaíochta ainmnithe é Uisce Éireann atá faoi theorainn scaireanna, a bunaíodh de bhun fhorálacha na n-Achtanna um Sheirbhísí Uisce 2007-2022, a bhfuil a bpríomh-ionad gnó ag Teach Colvill, 24-26 Sráid na Talbóide,

Consultation on proposed Gathabawn Windfarm, County Kilkenny

From Phil Kenealy <philk@ecopower.ie>

Date Thu 27/08/2026 12:51

To Planning <planning@iaa.ie>

 2 attachments (2 MB)

IAA Site Location August 26.pdf; Aug 26 Turbine locations and dimensions.xlsx;

Ecopower Developments Limited (EDL) is planning to develop a windfarm in the vicinity of the villages of Gathabawn and Lisdowney, in North County Kilkenny. An Coimisiún Pleanála has deemed the proposal to be a Strategic Infrastructure Development and for application directly to the Commission, under Section 37 of the Planning Act.

The proposal is to build 12-wind turbines with a rotor diameter of 136m. Two tip heights are proposed – 3- turbines will be 150m to tip height and 9- turbines will be 170m to tip height. The co-ordinates, elevations and turbine dimensions are listed in the Table attached and copied below. A site location map is also attached.

I would obliged if IAA would furnish the aviation requirements for the proposal and details of any aeronautical telecommunications networks in the vicinity of the proposed windfarm.

PROPOSED GATHABAWN WINDFARM TURBINE LOCATIONS AND DIMENSIONS						
Turbine ID	Tip Height (m)	Blade Length (m)	Turbine Co-Ordinates (WGS-84)		Ground Elevation (ASL) (m)	Tip Height (AGL) (m)
			Latitude	Longitude		
T1	170	68	52°47'42.8"N	7°29'44.0"W	156	326
T2	170	68	52° 47' 21.570"N	7° 30' 8.678"W	143	313
T3	170	68	52°47'12.8"N	7°29'38.0"W	224	394
T4	170	68	52° 47' 1.956"N	7° 29' 51.825"W	246	416
T5	170	68	52°46'52.3"N	7°29'36.4"W	236	406
T6	150	68	52° 46' 29.868"N	7° 28' 53.931"W	210	360
T7	170	68	52°46'42.9"N	7°28'55.6"W	231	401
T8	150	68	52° 46' 18.079"N	7° 25' 48.037"W	222	372
T9	150	68	52° 46' 21.621"N	7° 25' 24.355"W	224	374
T10	170	68	52° 46' 9.626"N	7° 25' 32.943"W	208	378
T11	170	68	52° 46' 4.183"N	7° 25' 51.739"W	194	364
T12	170	68	52° 45' 56.072"N	7° 25' 33.761"W	178	348

If you require more information, I am at your disposal.

Philomena Kenealy

Ecopower Developments Limited

Zetec House - Purcellsinch IDA Business Park

Dublin Road - Kilkenny - R95 PX5X

www.ecopower.ie

M: 086-8399193

Phil Kenealy

From: Planning <planning@iaa.ie>
Sent: Thursday 17 September 2026 12:42
To: Phil Kenealy
Cc: Planning
Subject: RE: Consultation on proposed Gathabawn Windfarm, County Kilkenny
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Phil,

Thank you for your email and request for consultation in relation to the proposed Gathabawn Windfarm, County Kilkenny.

Based on the information provided, IAA recommends that the developer engage directly the air navigation service provider (ANSP) AirNav Ireland and the Property Management Branch of Department of Defence to make them aware of proposal and ensure appropriate screening from an aviation safety perspective.

It is likely that the following general observations would be proffered by the Authority during a formal planning process:

In the event of planning consent being granted, the applicant should be conditioned to contact the Irish Aviation Authority to:

- (1) agree an aeronautical obstacle warning light scheme for the wind farm development,
- (2) provide as-constructed coordinates in WGS84 format together with ground and blade tip height elevations at each wind turbine location and
- (3) notify the Authority of intention to commence crane operations with at least 30 days prior notification of their erection in accordance with S.I 215 of 2005 Obstacles to Aircraft In Flight (Order).

Relevant contact details are as follows:

AirNav Ireland	Department of Defence
planning@airnav.ie	airspaceandobstacles@defenceforces.ie warren.downey@defenceforces.ie propertymanagementplanning@defence.ie shanem.doyle@defenceforces.ie

Kind regards,

Dave

From: Phil Kenealy <philk@ecopower.ie>
Sent: Thursday 27 August 2026 12:51

Office of Public Works
Head Office,
Jonathon Swift Street,
Trim,
Co Meath C15 NX36

24th January, 2024

**Re: Scoping for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report for proposed
Gathabawn Windfarm, County Kilkenny**

Ecopower Developments Limited (EDL) is planning to develop a windfarm at Gathabawn, County Kilkenny, on elevated agricultural grassland between Johnstown and Ballyragget (see attached map). The EIA Report and Appropriate Assessment (AA) Report are being prepared for the forthcoming planning application at present.

Gathabawn Windfarm is proposed for an area designated as “acceptable in principle” for windfarm development, in Kilkenny County Development Plan 2021-2027: Appendix K: Wind Energy Development Strategy.

The proposed windfarm will comprise c.15 wind turbines of c.163m to tip height and with a total installed capacity of c.67MW. Also included in the project are meteorological masts; an electrical control building; electrical substation; internal underground cabling; and c.7km of grid connection cabling to EirGrid Ballyragget Substation. The grid connection cabling will be laid predominately under the public road and will cross under the River Nore, c.1km north of the Eirgrid substation.

The Gathabawn Windfarm Project by its very nature, will meet all the National Climate Policies and Objectives set out in Ireland’s Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021 (the Climate Act), because the windfarm will contribute positively to the imperative to ameliorate climate change by generating electricity without polluting greenhouse gas emissions. The windfarm will offset c.38,850 tonnes of CO₂e per annum that would otherwise be emitted if the predicted 150 million kWh of electricity generated, was instead generated by gas, coal and oil. The windfarm will produce enough renewable electricity for over 33,237 households per annum.

I would be obliged if you would advise me of any particular concerns or of matters you would like examined in the EIAR or AA Report. The consultation period is open for 4 weeks i.e. until **22nd February, 2024**. Please reply to me, Phil Kenealy at pk@ecopower.ie or at the address above.

Regards,

Phil Kenealy (Project Manager, Gathabawn Windfarm)



Ecopower Developments Limited,
Zeta House,
Purcellsinch,
IDA Business Park,
Kilkenny,
Ireland.

13/02/2024

Re: Scoping for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report for proposed Gathabawn
Windfarm, County Kilkenny

Dear Sir/Madam,

If it is proposed to construct any new bridge (or other structure such as a culvert or pipework etc.) or alter, reconstruct, or restore any existing bridge (or other structure such as a culvert or pipework etc.) over any watercourse as part of the development then these require prior consent from the Commissioners of Public Works under Section 50 of the Arterial Drainage Act of 1945 as amended.

A grant of 'Permission' for the planning application for a development which contains bridges or culverts etc., or modifications to same, does not confer Section 50 consent on the applicant, nor does it absolve the applicant from the requirement to obtain such consent from the Commissioners.

Where there is the potential for watercourse damming with flume pipes and/or diversion channels to facilitate the construction works, note that damming of a watercourse may be subject to consent under Section 47 of the Arterial Drainage Act of 1945 as amended, and the temporary pipes, culverts, and/or bridges required to cross or divert a watercourse during the construction phase will also require Section 50 consent. Further consultation is required with the Commissioners when the construction methodologies for the proposed works are finalised.

Please note that, in the context of seeking consent under Section 50 of the Arterial Drainage Act of 1945 as amended, the current required design standard for bridges or culverts is based on the flood with an annual exceedance probability of 1% (often referred to as the 1 in 100 year flood), increased by 20% to cater for the effects of climate change. Bridges or culverts are required to be able to convey this design flood without significantly altering the hydraulic characteristics of the watercourse. Further guidance is available on the following website:
<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/957aa7-consent-requirements-constructionalteration-of-watercourse-infrastru/>

Yours sincerely,

The Office of Public Works

Office of Public Works
Head Office, Jonathon Swift Street,
Trim, Co Meath C15 NX36

10.08.2026

Re: 2nd Consultation on proposed Gathabawn Windfarm, County Kilkenny

Ecopower Developments Limited (EDL) is planning to develop a windfarm on high ground in the vicinity of the villages of Gathabawn and Lisdowney, in North County Kilkenny. An Coimisiún Pleanála has deemed the proposal to be a Strategic Infrastructure Development and for application directly to the Commission, under Section 37 of the Planning Act.

The proposal is to build **12-wind turbines** with a rotor diameter of 136m. Two tip heights are proposed – 3- turbines will be 150m to tip height and 9- turbines will be 170m to tip height. The proposal will be located in farmland. The windfarm development includes site roads; underground electrical cabling; 2-control buildings and haul route works in the vicinity. The grid connection method proposed is an underground cable from the windfarm to a new electrical substation near the proposed grid connection point at the Eirgrid Substation in Moatpark, Ballyragget, which is circa 7km east of the windfarm site. The grid connection will require a cable crossing under the River Nore and the N77 National Route, c.1km north of Ballyragget.

There is no requirement to cross an EPA designated watercourse within the windfarm site. There is one permanent watercrossing required on-site which is a land drain. The underground grid connection cabling to Ballyragget will cross EPA watercourses which will necessitate temporary works in the vicinity. ***See mapping showing the EPA watercourses and the land drain at the windfarm site in the context of the windfarm infrastructure.***

EDL previously consulted on this proposal in January 2024. ***I attach the Feb 2024 OPW's response***, detailing the consents required if watercourse crossings/damming is required which will be taken into account during the planning and development process. A Flood Risk Assessment on the proposed development will also be included in the EIA Report.

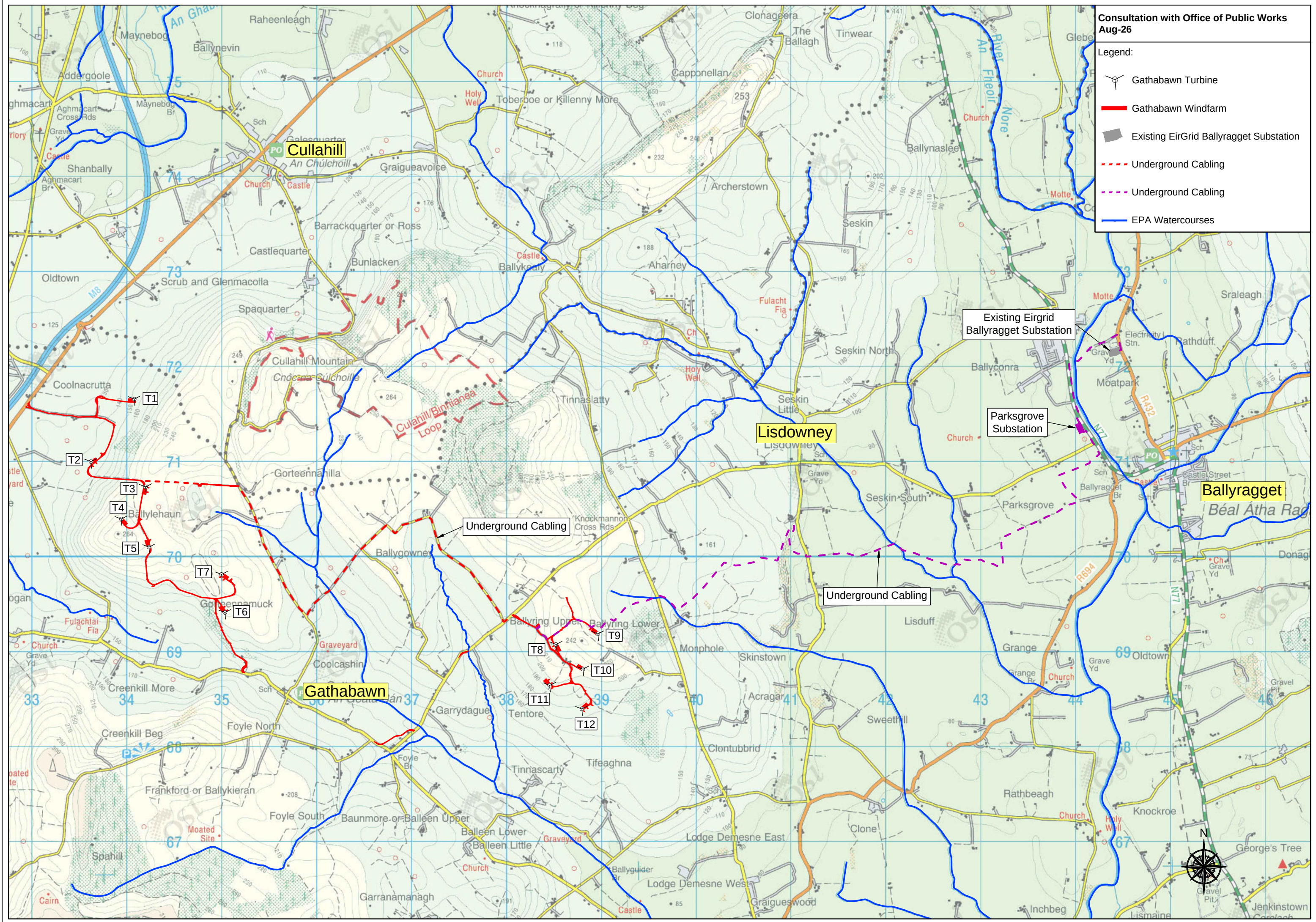
This consultation period is open for 4 weeks i.e. until **7th September, 2026**. If you wish to consult, please reply to me, Phil Kenealy at philk@ecopower.ie or at the address above.

Regards,

Phil Kenealy (Project Manager, Gathabawn Windfarm)

Legend:

-  Gathabawn Turbine
-  Gathabawn Windfarm
-  Existing EirGrid Ballyragget Substation
-  Underground Cabling
-  Underground Cabling
-  EPA Watercourses





Empower Developments Ltd.,
Zetec House,
Purcellsinch IDA Business Park,
Kilkenny,
Co. Kilkenny,

7th September 2026

Re: 2nd Consultation on proposed Gathabawn Windfarm, County Kilkenny

A Chara,

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Office of Public Works (OPW) is a central Government Office operating under the Minister for Public Expenditure, Infrastructure, Public Service Reform and Digitalisation with particular responsibility for Flood Risk and Estate Management, including Heritage. The Office of Public Works (OPW) has responsibility for the care, operation and maintenance of all National Monuments in State Care. Our principal objective is to protect, conserve, maintain and present these sites and to facilitate appropriate public access where possible. In this regard, OPW works in partnership with the National Monuments Service at the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH).

This submission outlines observations from the Heritage Section of the OPW on the proposed Gathabawn Windfarm strategic infrastructure within the townlands of Coolnacrutta, Glashare, Ballylehaun, Gorteennamuck, and Rathlogan, Co. Kilkenny.

2.0 OBSERVATION

The OPW notes that this planning application is currently at the 2nd consultation phase. The OPW notes the following national monuments and their approximated distance from the proposed windfarm:

- NM 74 Grangefertagh Round Tower & Church, Grangefertagh, Co. Kilkenny – 5.35 km
- NM 282 Ballylarkin Church, Ballylarkin Upper, Co. Kilkenny – 5.50 km
- NM 376 Rathealy, Ringfort, Rathealy, Co. Kilkenny – 8.67 km



The OPW requests that the applicant generate verifiable visual impact assessments, including cumulative impact, screening as appropriate at ZTV stage, on National Monument in State Care heritage receptors, as listed above. This will enable An Coimisiún Pleanála, the OPW and others to understand the potential visual impact on the cultural heritage significance of these nationally important protected sites.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The OPW requests that the applicant take into consideration the requests raised in this letter.

Yours sincerely,

Terri Sweeney Meade MUBC, FRIAI, RIBA

Assistant Principal Architect

National Monuments, National Historic Properties & Capital Works Delivery

Sráid Jonathan Swift, Baile Átha Troim, Co na Mí, C15 NX36

National Historic Properties, Jonathan Swift Street, Trim, Co. Meath C15 NX36

T +353 46 9426000 | info@opw.ie

www.opw.ie

..

2

Department of Tourism, Culture
Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media
(Consultation on SID)
23 Kildare Street
Dublin 2, D02 TD30

10/08/2026

Re: 2nd Consultation on proposed Gathabawn Windfarm, County Kilkenny

Ecopower Developments Limited (EDL) is planning to develop a windfarm on high ground in the vicinity of the **villages of Gathabawn and Lisdowney, in North County Kilkenny**. An Coimisiún Pleanála has deemed the proposal to be a Strategic Infrastructure Development and for application directly to the Commission, under Section 37 of the Planning Act.

The proposal is to build **12-wind turbines** with a rotor diameter of 136m. Two tip heights are proposed – 3- turbines will be 150m to tip height and 9- turbines will be 170m to tip height. The proposal will be located in farmland. The windfarm development includes site roads; underground electrical cabling; 2-control buildings and haul route works in the vicinity. The grid connection method proposed is an underground cable from the windfarm to a new electrical substation near the proposed grid connection point at the Eirgrid Substation in Moatpark, Ballyragget, which is circa 7km east of the windfarm site. The grid connection will require a cable crossing under the River Nore and the N77 National Route, c.1km north of Ballyragget.

The windfarm site is not in a Gaeltacht area and there are no sporting facilities within the site boundary. The Gathabawn Loop and the Cullahill/Binnianea Loop walks are in the site vicinity. ***See map showing the windfarm in the context of these features.***

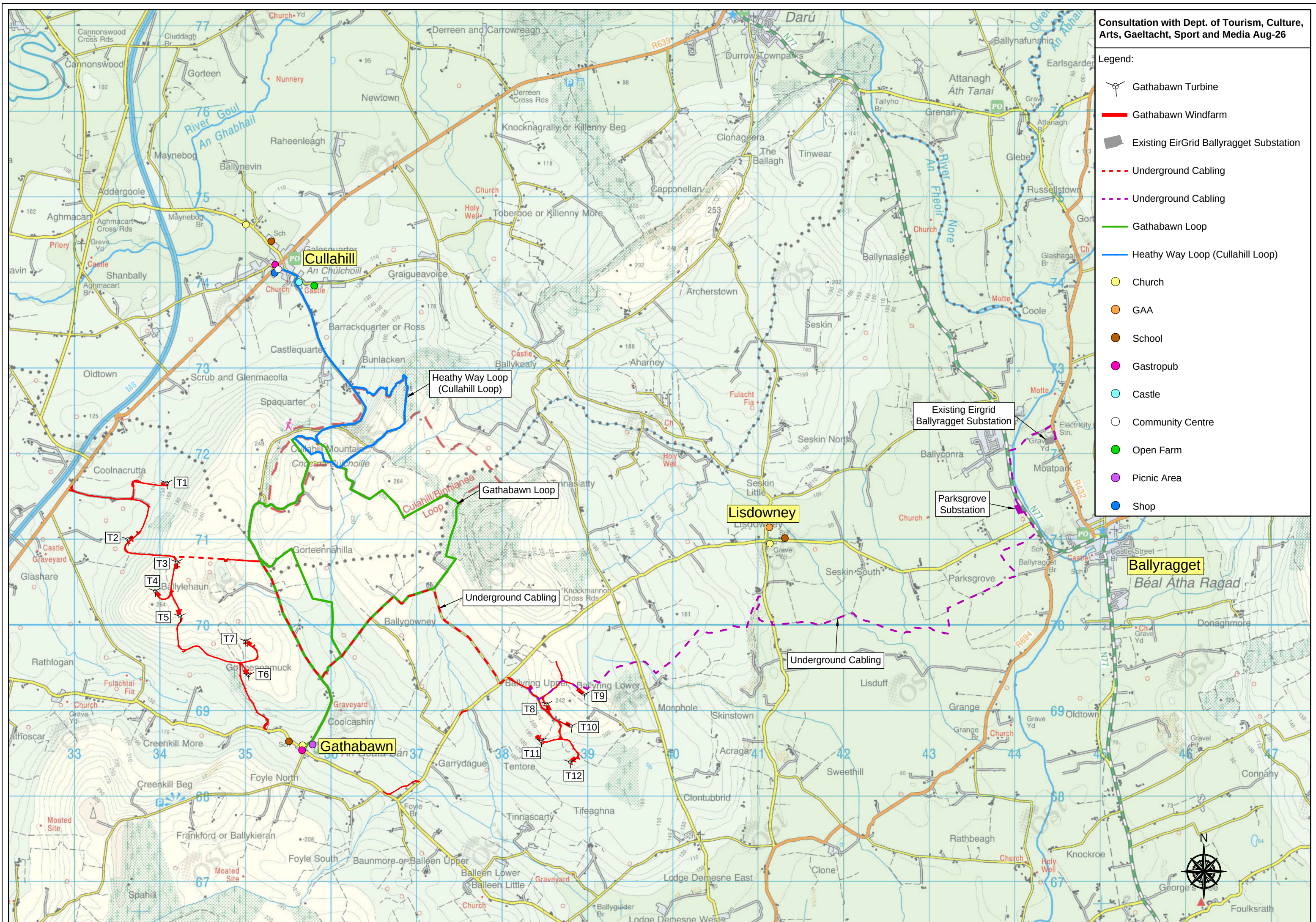
The Gathabawn Windfarm is a Renewable Energy Directive III (RED III) development. The windfarm will align with the requirements of Section 15 of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021. The windfarm will produce **circa 140 million kWh per annum** of renewable electricity (RE-E) and offset the generation of fossil fuel generated electricity. This production will offset the emissions of **circa 35,700 tonnes of CO₂e per annum**. The windfarm will also deliver local community benefit of **€280,000 per annum**.

EDL previously consulted on the same proposal in January 2024 and because over 2-years have elapsed, I am writing to ask if at this stage, you wish to inform the consultation. This consultation period is open for 4 weeks i.e. until **7th September, 2026**. If you wish to consult or require more information, please reply to me, at philk@ecopower.ie; at the address above or by mobile at (086) 8399 193.

Regards, Phil Kenealy (Project Manager, Gathabawn Windfarm)

Legend:

-  Gathabawn Turbine
-  Gathabawn Windfarm
-  Existing EirGrid Ballyragget Substation
-  Underground Cabling
-  Underground Cabling
-  Gathabawn Loop
-  Heathy Way Loop (Cullahill Loop)
-  Church
-  GAA
-  School
-  Gastropub
-  Castle
-  Community Centre
-  Open Farm
-  Picnic Area
-  Shop



Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine,
(Consultation on SID)
Agriculture House Kildare St.
Dublin 2, D02 WK12

10.08.2026

Re: 2nd Consultation on proposed Gathabawn Windfarm, County Kilkenny

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The Gathabawn Windfarm is a Renewable Energy Directive III (RED III) development. The windfarm will align with the requirements of Section 15 of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021. The windfarm will produce **circa 140 million kWh per annum** of renewable electricity (RE-E) and offset the generation of fossil fuel generated electricity. This production will offset the emissions of **circa 35,700 tonnes of CO₂e per annum**. The windfarm will also deliver local community benefit of **€280,000 per annum**.

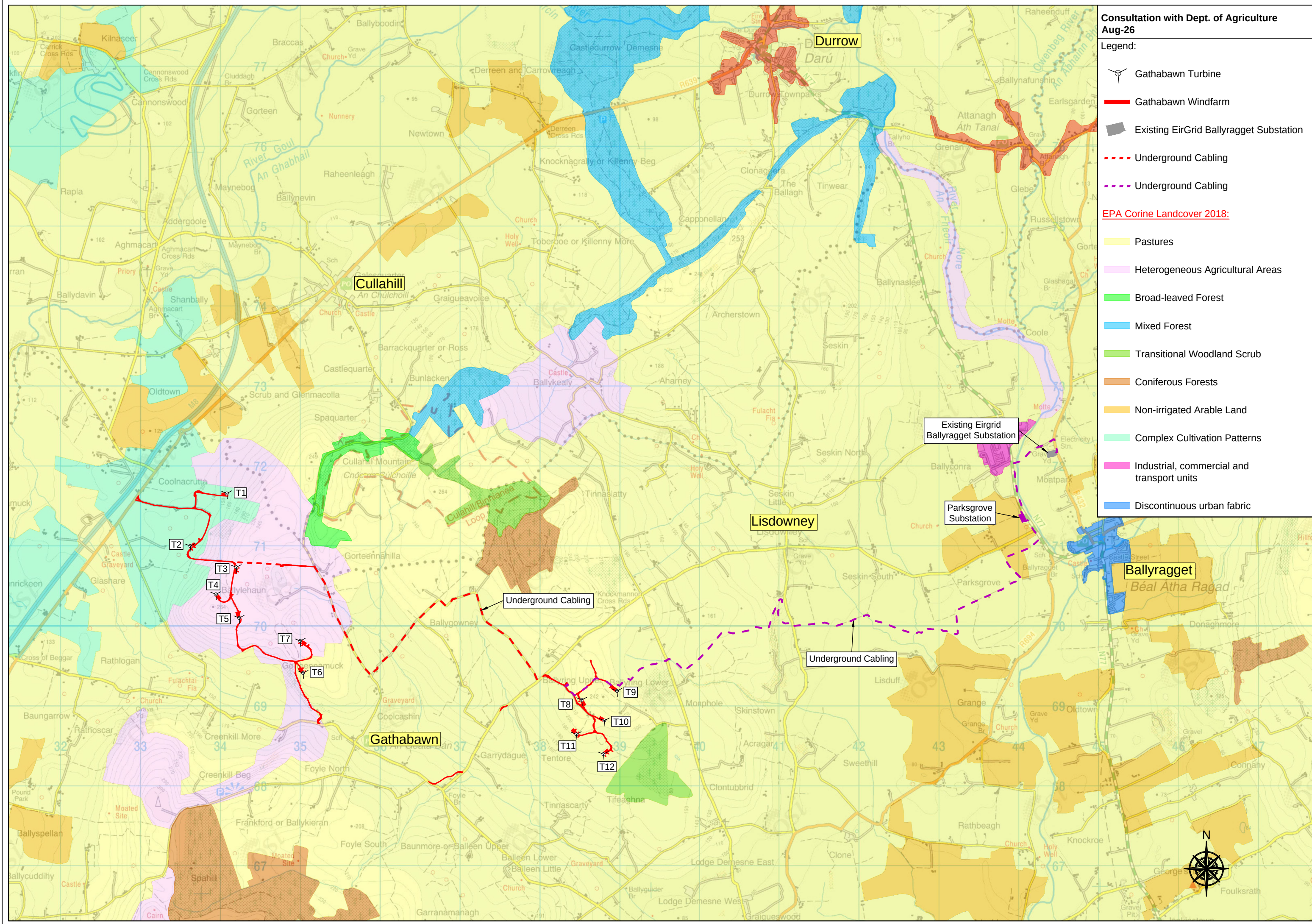
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-  Gathabawn Turbine
-  Gathabawn Windfarm
-  Existing EirGrid Ballyragget Substation
-  Underground Cabling
-  Underground Cabling
- EPA Corine Landcover 2018:
-  Pastures
-  Heterogeneous Agricultural Areas
-  Broad-leaved Forest
-  Mixed Forest
-  Transitional Woodland Scrub
-  Coniferous Forests
-  Non-irrigated Arable Land
-  Complex Cultivation Patterns
-  Industrial, commercial and transport units
-  Discontinuous urban fabric



Department of Environment,
Climate & Communications
(Consultation on SID)
29-31 Adelaide Road
Dublin 2 D02 X285

10.08.2026

Re: 2nd Consultation on proposed Gathabawn Windfarm, County Kilkenny

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Regards,

Phil Kenealy (Project Manager, Gathabawn Windfarm)

2nd Consultation on proposed Gathabawn Windfarm, County Kilkenny

From Phil Kenealy <philk@ecopower.ie>

Date Mon 10/08/2026 17:52

To info@drcd.gov.ie <info@drcd.gov.ie>

 1 attachment (2 MB)

Dept. of Rural and Community Development.pdf;

Ecopower Developments Limited (EDL) is planning to develop a windfarm on high ground in the **vicinity of the villages of Gathabawn and Lisdowney, in North County Kilkenny**. An Coimisiún Pleanála has deemed the proposal to be a Strategic Infrastructure Development and for application directly to the Commission, under Section 37 of the Planning Act.

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The villages of Gathabawn and Lisdowney provide the community services locally. There is a church, national school, shop, gastro-pub and community garden in Gathabawn. There is a church, national school and GAA Club grounds in Lisdowney. In the wider area the small towns of Ballyragget to the east, Freshford to the south, Johnstown to the southwest and Cullahill, County Laois to the north, provide additional services to the local community. ***See map attached showing the windfarm layout in the context of these settlements.***

The windfarm will generate a Community Benefit Fund of circa €280,000 per annum. The Fund will support local projects and community enterprises which will bring social, environmental or economic benefits to the local area. The Fund will be managed locally and distributed annually to near neighbours and to local community organisations such as clubs, schools, tourism projects, sport clubs and home energy efficiency programs. The Fund will be distributed in line the Government's Renewable Energy Support Scheme (RESS) 'Community Benefit Fund Good Practice Principles Handbook'.

EDL previously consulted on the same proposal in January 2024 and because over 2-years have elapsed, I am writing to ask if at this stage, you wish to inform the consultation. This consultation period is open for 4 weeks i.e. until **7th September, 2026**. If you wish to consult or require more information, please reply to , please reply to sender or to the address below.

Philomena Kenealy Project Manager Gathabawn Windfarm

C/o Ecopower Developments Limited

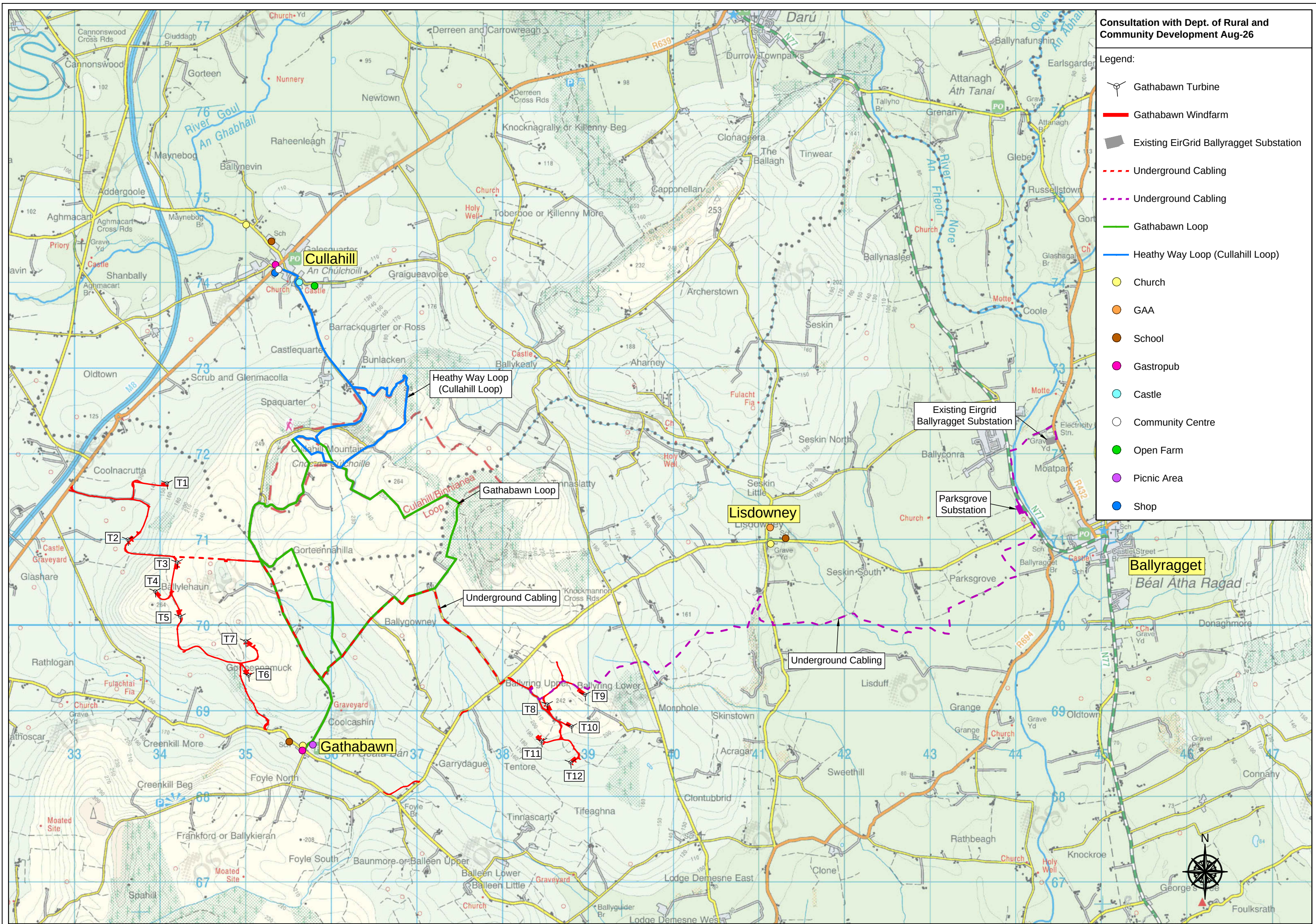
Zetec House - Purcellsinch IDA Business Park

Dublin Road - Kilkenny - R95 PX5X

www.ecopower.ie

Legend:

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-  Church
-  GAA
-  School
-  Gastropub
-  Castle
-  Community Centre
-  Open Farm
-  Picnic Area
-  Shop



Southern Regional Assembly
Assembly House,
O'Connell Street,
Waterford City
X91 F8PC

10.08.2026

Re: 2nd Consultation on proposed Gathabawn Windfarm, County Kilkenny

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The Gathabawn Windfarm is a Renewable Energy Directive III (RED III) development. The windfarm will align with the requirements of Section 15 of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021. The windfarm will produce **circa 140 million kWh per annum** of renewable electricity (RE-E) and offset the generation of fossil fuel generated electricity. This production will offset the emissions of **circa 35,700 tonnes of CO₂e per annum**. The windfarm will also deliver local community benefit of **€280,000 per annum**.

EDL previously consulted on the same proposal in January 2024 and because over 2-years have elapsed, I am writing to ask if at this stage, you wish to inform the consultation. This consultation period is open for 4 weeks i.e. until **7th September, 2026**.

If you wish to consult or require more information, please reply to me, at philk@ecopower.ie; at the address above or by mobile at (086) 8399 193

Regards,

Phil Kenealy (Project Manager, Gathabawn Windfarm)

EirGrid
Block 2, The Oval,
160 Shelbourne Rd,
Dublin 4,
D04 FW28

10.08.2026

Re: 2nd Consultation on proposed Gathabawn Windfarm, County Kilkenny

Ecopower Developments Limited (EDL) is planning to develop a windfarm on high ground in the **vicinity of the villages of Gathabawn and Lisdowney, in North County Kilkenny**. An Coimisiún Pleanála has deemed the proposal to be a Strategic Infrastructure Development and for application directly to the Commission, under Section 37 of the Planning Act.

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See mapping showing the proposal in a locational context and a close up of the area of the new windfarm 110kV substation and the connection to the Eirgrid Ballyragget Substation.

The windfarm is expected to produce **140 million kWh per annum** of renewable generated electricity (RE-E), which will offset **38,250 tonnes of CO₂e per annum**. The windfarm will deliver local community benefit also through the **community fund of c.€280,000 per annum**.

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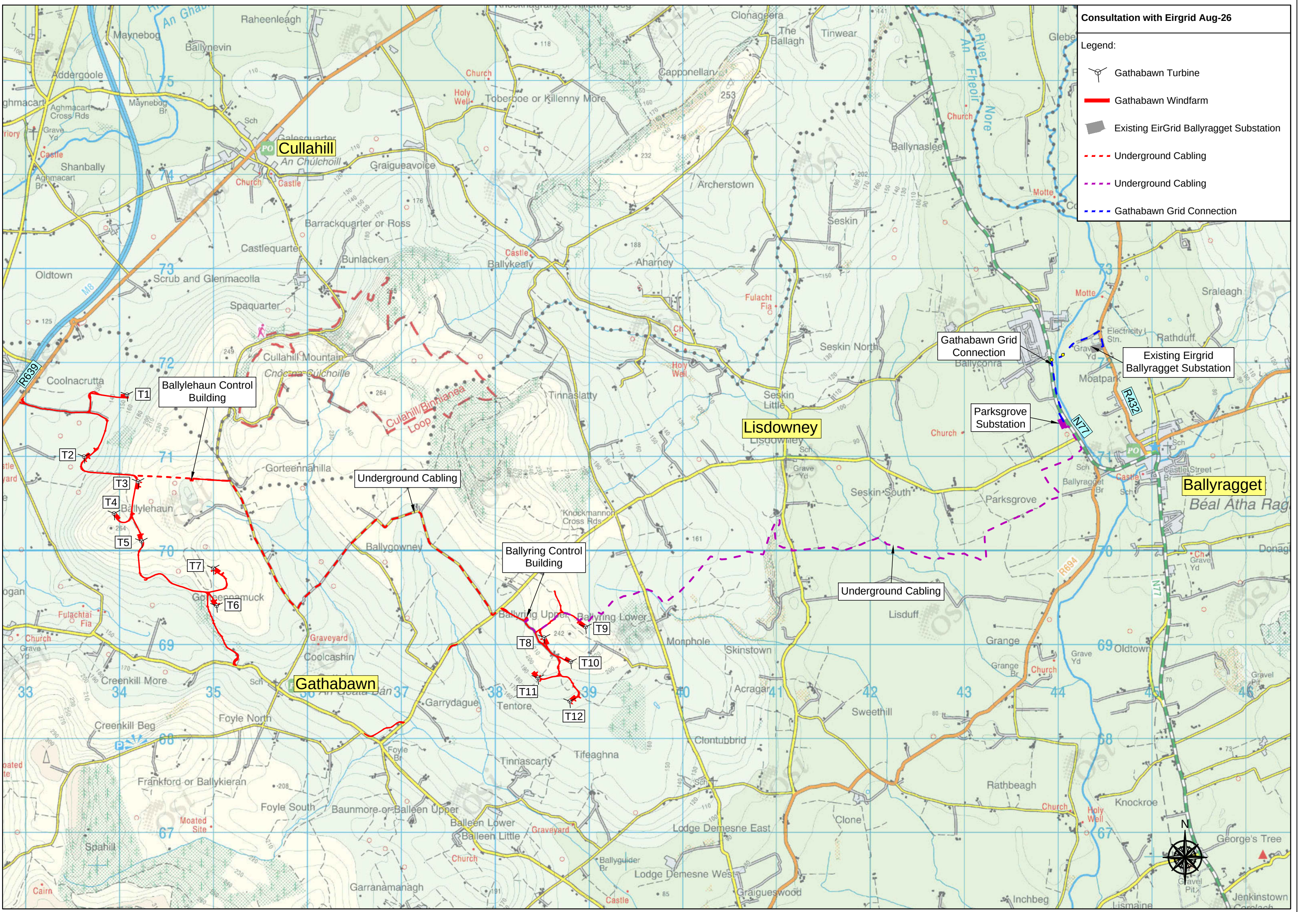
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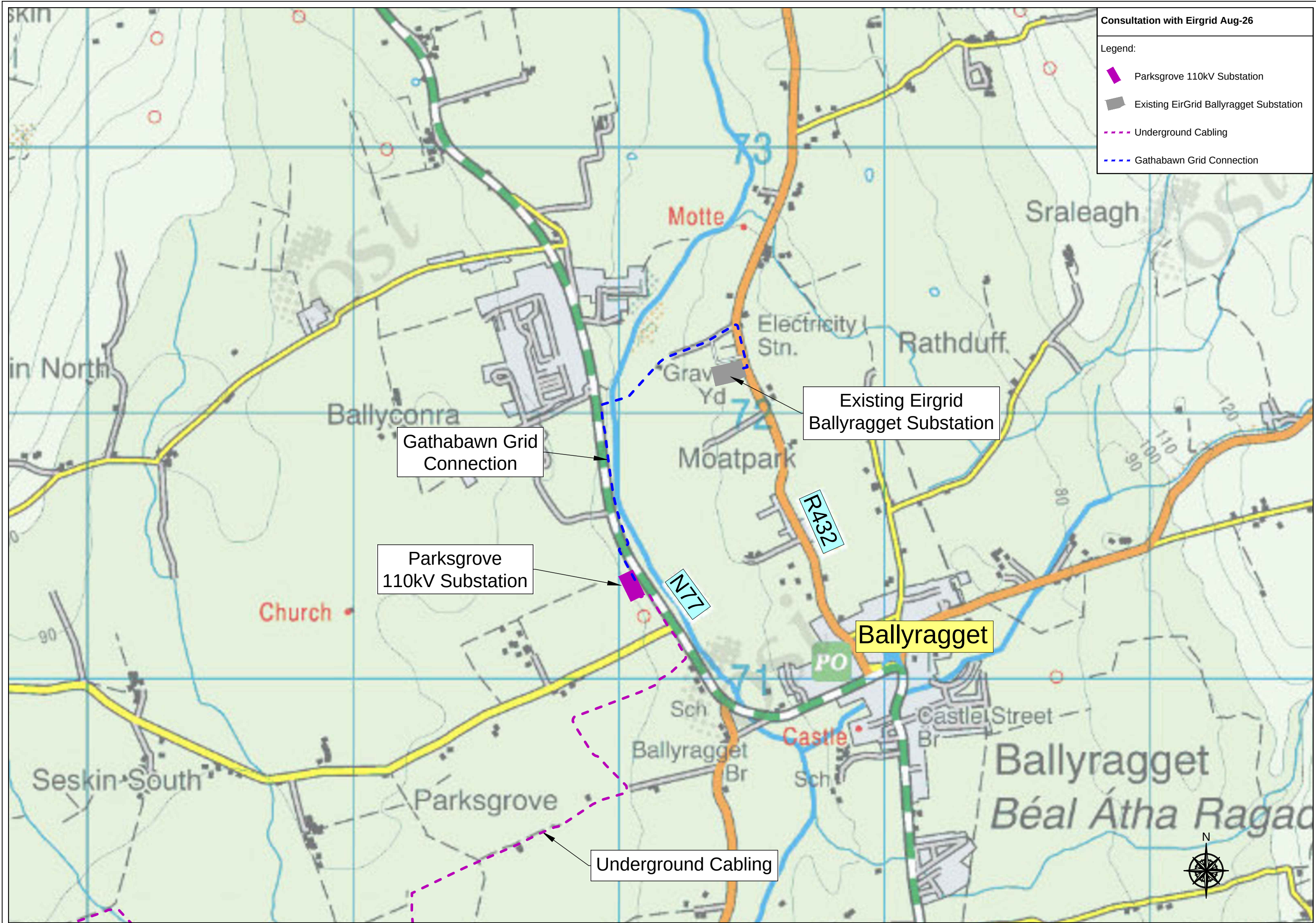
Legend:

-  Gathabawn Turbine
-  Gathabawn Windfarm
-  Existing EirGrid Ballyragget Substation
-  Underground Cabling
-  Underground Cabling
-  Gathabawn Grid Connection



Legend:

-  Parksgrove 110kV Substation
-  Existing EirGrid Ballyragget Substation
-  Underground Cabling
-  Gathabawn Grid Connection



Commission for Regulation of Utilities
The Exchange,
Belgard Square North,
Tallaght,
Dublin 24
D24 PXW0

10.08.2026

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Regards, Phil Kenealy (Project Manager, Gathabawn Windfarm)

An Taisce,
5 Foster Place
Temple Bar
Dublin 2, D02 V0P9

10.08.2026

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There are no National Monuments, NIAH buildings or gardens or European Sites within the site boundary. There are RMPs within the site boundary - the footprint of the windfarm; buildings and cabling have been designed so that they are located outside the Zone of Notification of these RMPs. Cullahill Mountain SAC is adjacent but not overlapping the site boundary. The proposal includes the creation of **Biodiversity Protection and Enhancement Areas** whereby three areas of agricultural land (1.7ha in total) and an existing hazel woodland (5.3ha) have been secured for the operational lifetime of the Gathabawn Windfarm under a long-term lease agreement with the landowners, in order to increase the value of local biodiversity resource at the windfarm site. The agricultural areas will be planted with high biodiversity native tree and plant species for the benefit of biodiversity at the Windfarm site, and the existing hazel woodland will be protected and maintained. ***See map attached for the windfarm layout in the context of the built and natural heritage of the receiving environment.***

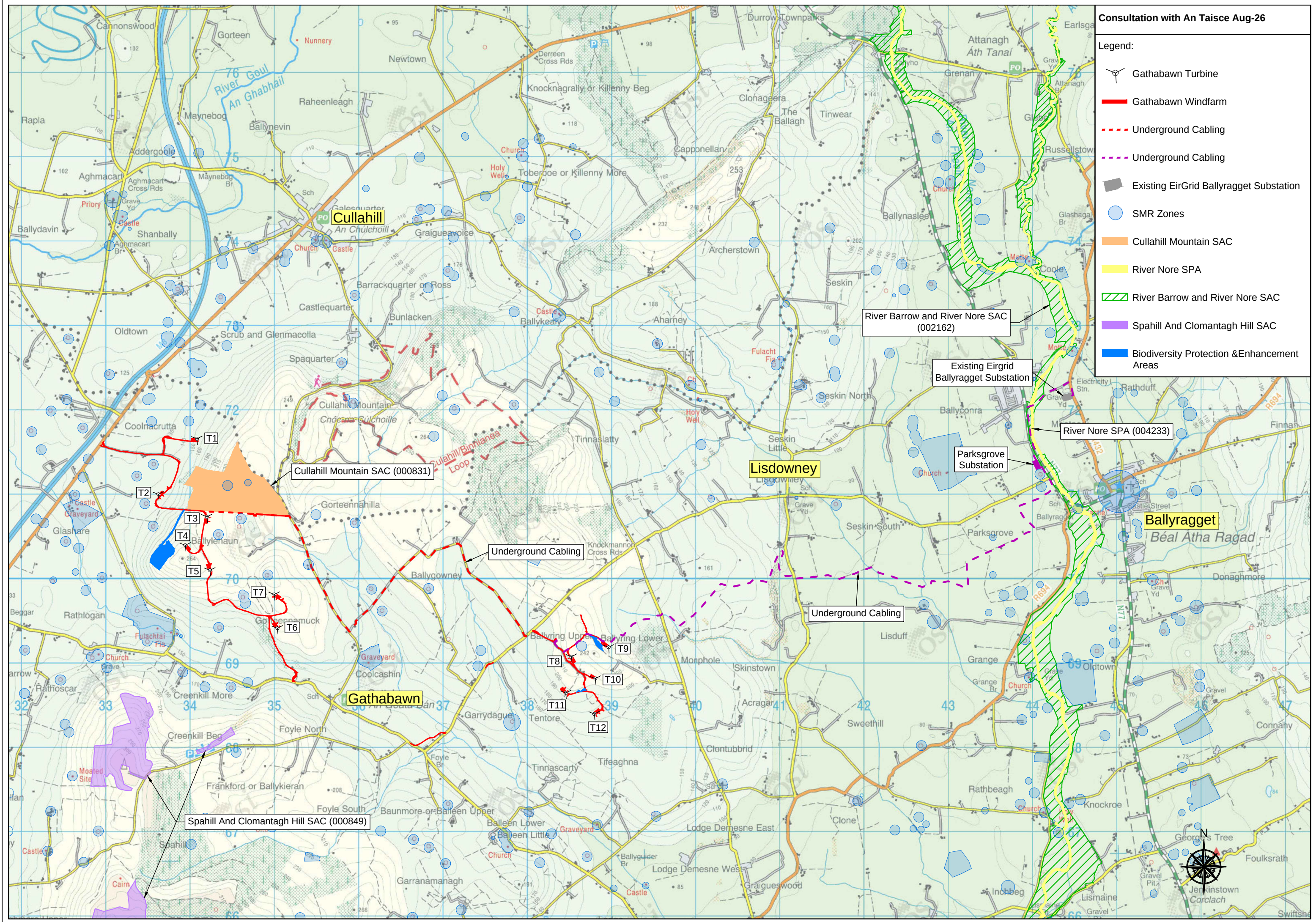
EDL previously scoped the content of the EIA Report in January 2024. The previous proposal was for the same site but, because over 2-years have elapsed, I am writing to ask if at this stage, you wish to inform this latest scoping exercise. FYI, the topic experts who are preparing the Biodiversity Chapter of the EIA Report, the AA Report and the Cultural Heritage Chapter are consulting with the DAU (NPWS & NMS)).

This consultation period is open for 4 weeks i.e. until **7th September, 2026**. If you wish to consult or require more information, please reply to me, at philk@ecopower.ie; at the address above or by mobile at (086) 8399 193.

Regards, Phil Kenealy (Project Manager, Gathabawn Windfarm)

Legend:

-  Gathabawn Turbine
-  Gathabawn Windfarm
-  Underground Cabling
-  Underground Cabling
-  Existing EirGrid Ballyragget Substation
-  SMR Zones
-  Cullahill Mountain SAC
-  River Nore SPA
-  River Barrow and River Nore SAC
-  Spahill And Clomantagh Hill SAC
-  Biodiversity Protection & Enhancement Areas



Arts Council of Ireland
70 Merrion Square South,
Dublin 2
D02 NY52

10.08.2026

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No public arts infrastructure or local community cultural assets will be impacted by the windfarm or grid connection structures. **The windfarm will generate a Community Benefit Fund of circa €280,000 per annum.** The Fund will support local projects and community enterprises which will bring amenity, environmental or economic benefits to the local area. The Fund will be managed locally and distributed annually to local community organisations such as clubs, schools, amenities, sport clubs and cultural initiatives.

The EIA Report will include a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment which will evaluate the impact of the proposed development on the setting of historic monuments and cultural heritage sites, in the receiving environment.

EDL previously consulted on the same proposal in January 2024 and because over 2-years have elapsed, I am writing to ask if at this stage, you wish to inform the consultation. This consultation period is open for 4 weeks i.e. until **7th September, 2026**. If you wish to consult or require more information, please reply to me, at philk@ecopower.ie; at the address above or by mobile at (086) 8399 193.

Regards,

Phil Kenealy (Project Manager, Gathabawn Windfarm)

Fáilte Ireland,
88 - 95 Amiens Street,
Dublin 1
D01 WR86

10.08.2026

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The Gathabawn Loop and the Cullahill Loop walks are in the site vicinity. ***See map showing the windfarm in the context of tourism services.***

EDL previously consulted on the same proposal in January 2024 and because over 2-years have elapsed, I am writing to ask if at this stage, you wish to inform the consultation. Your response in 2024 included the ***‘Fáilte Ireland ‘EIAR Guidelines for the Consideration of Tourism and Tourism Related Projects July 2023’*** document, which will be taken into account for the proposed development and the EIA Report for the forthcoming application.

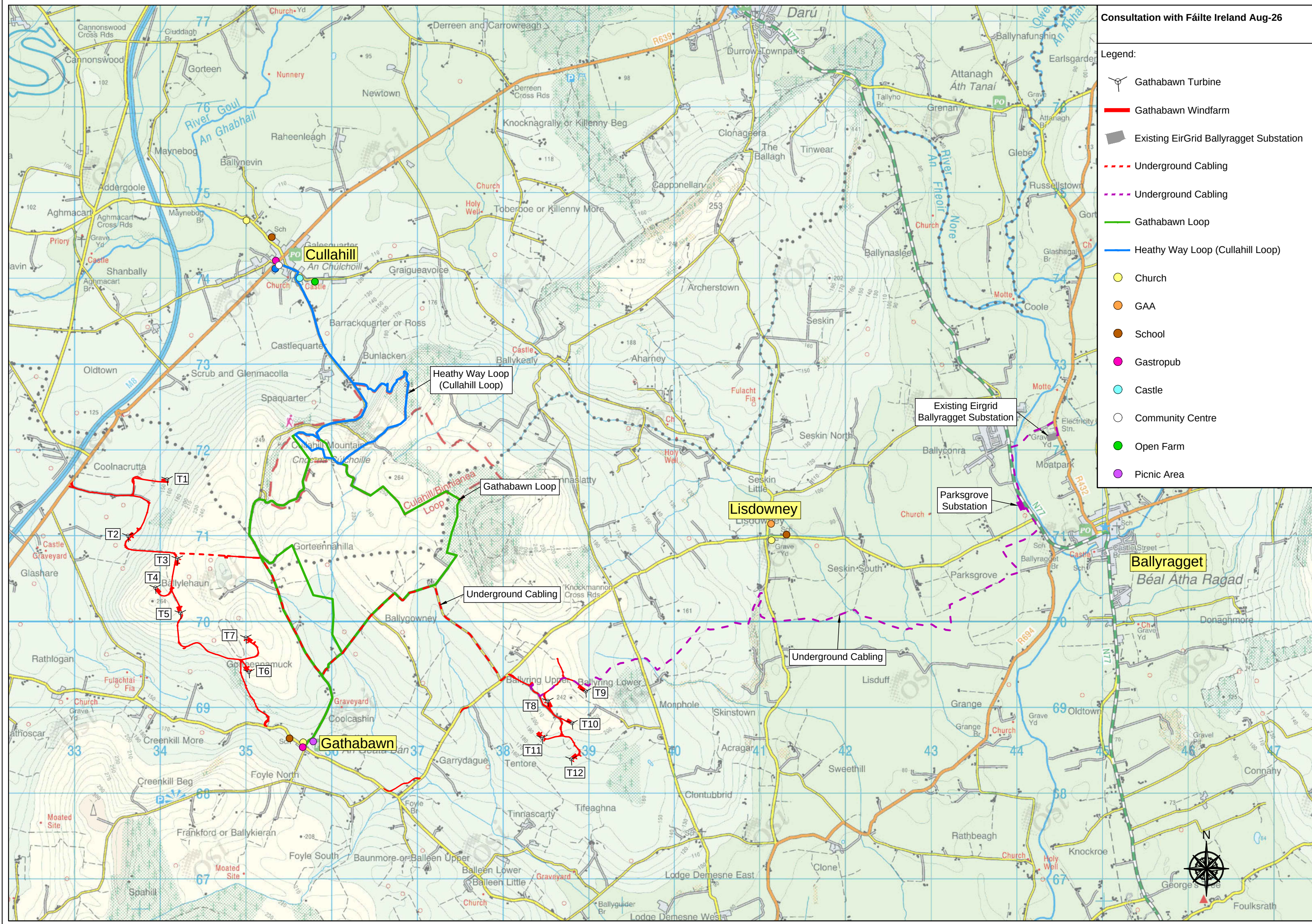
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Regards,

Phil Kenealy (Project Manager, Gathabawn Windfarm)

Legend:

- Gathabawn Turbine
- Gathabawn Windfarm
- Existing EirGrid Ballyragget Substation
- Underground Cabling
- Underground Cabling
- Gathabawn Loop
- Heathy Way Loop (Cullahill Loop)
- Church
- GAA
- School
- Gastropub
- Castle
- Community Centre
- Open Farm
- Picnic Area



The Heritage Council
Church Lane
Kilkenny
RX95 X264

10.08.2026

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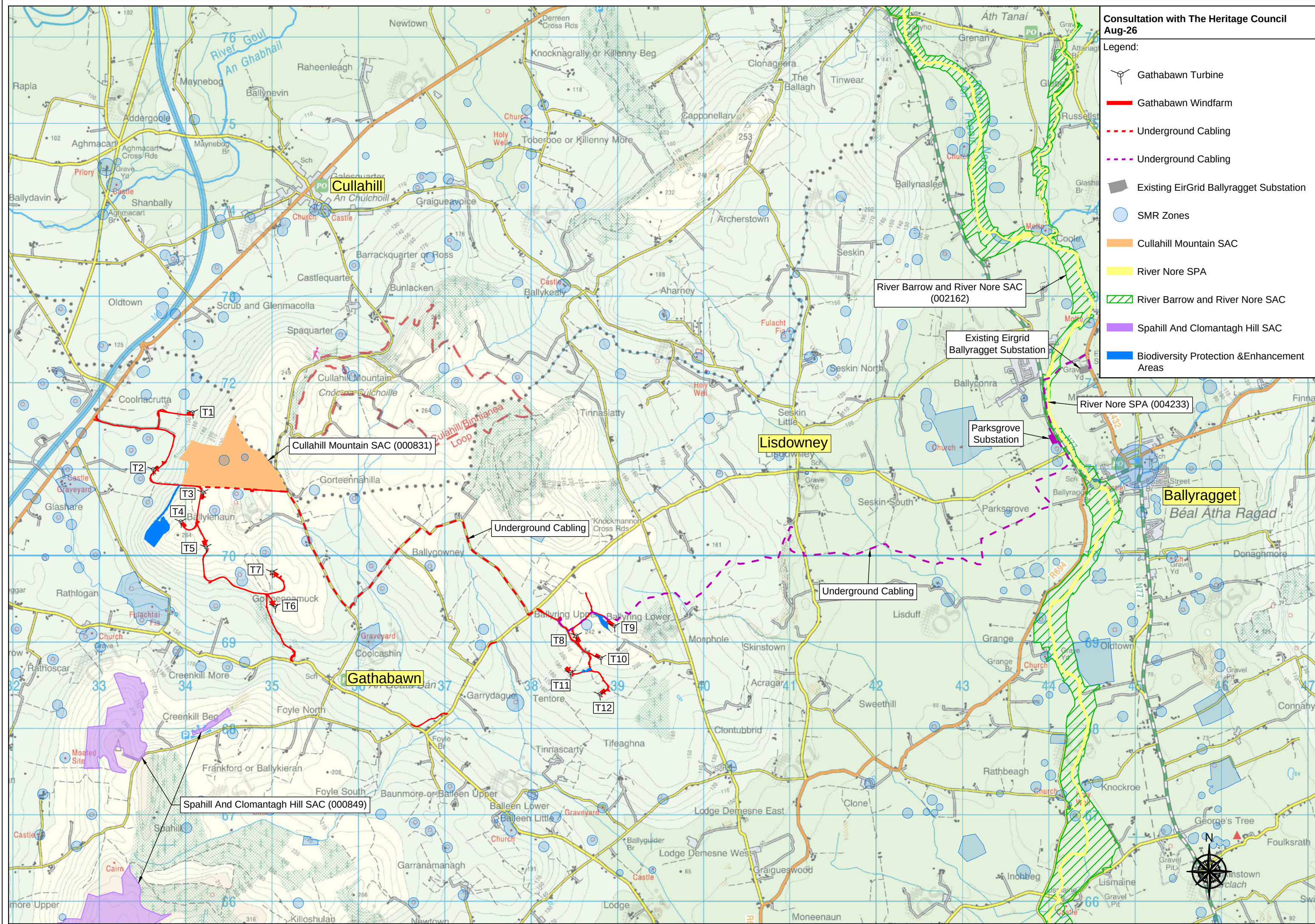
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Regards, Phil Kenealy (Project Manager, Gathabawn Windfarm)

Consultation with The Heritage Council
Aug-26

Legend:

-  Gathabawn Turbine
-  Gathabawn Windfarm
-  Underground Cabling
-  Underground Cabling
-  Existing EirGrid Ballyragget Substation
-  SMR Zones
-  Cullahill Mountain SAC
-  River Nore SPA
-  River Barrow and River Nore SAC
-  Spahill And Clomantagh Hill SAC
-  Biodiversity Protection & Enhancement Areas



App. 3.3 Consultations with Local Community

Table of Contents

- Project Newsletter
- Community Groups Contacted
- Email to Community Groups
- Advertisement in Local Newspaper

Project Newsletter to all Houses within 2km
(sent 11th September 2026)

**INTRODUCTION TO A PROPOSAL FOR A WINDFARM IN THE
GATHABAWN AREA**

Dear Householder,

Ecopower is a **windfarm development company based in Kilkenny** for the past 30-years. We are involved in the full development process for windfarms, from initial site identification, design, planning, construction and operation of the built windfarm. Ecopower has planned and developed windfarms throughout Ireland. We also sell electricity to **homes and businesses under Ecopower Supply**.

The Gathabawn area was identified as a suitable area for a windfarm development in the Wind Energy Strategy of the Kilkenny County Development Plan. Ecopower investigated sites in the area that have an adequate wind resource and where wind turbines could be located at a suitable distance from houses and not on lands with nature designations. We have identified a site that satisfies all these requirements. The site will accommodate a **12-turbine windfarm scheme – called Gathabawn Windfarm**. We have prepared a Layout Plan for the scheme **(enclosed)**.

We identified all residences within 2km of any turbine in this scheme using Eircodes, desktop map investigations and site visits. We are sending this Booklet to these houses.

Your Eircode is

Your house would be from the nearest turbine

We intend to apply for planning permission for Gathabawn Windfarm this Autumn, and we have almost completed the environmental reports that will accompany the Planning Application. These reports will be compiled in an Environmental Impact Assessment Report or EIA Report. The impact of the proposed windfarm on the local community is studied in various chapters in the EIA Report, including Land, Water, Air Quality, Noise; Shadow Flicker; Landscape, Material Assets (Roads and Telecommunications); Population; and Human Health.

This Booklet sets out a general summary of the proposed Gathabawn Windfarm, but if you would like **any more information on the windfarm in relation to your house** or have any questions on the proposal, please contact us.

Ecopower has appointed a **Community Liaison Officer** (CLO) for the Gathabawn Windfarm project who can be emailed at **contact@ecopowergathabawn.ie**. Alternatively write to the CLO at Gathabawn Windfarm, c/o Ecopower Limited, Zetec House, Purcellsinch IDA Business Park, Dublin Road, Kilkenny, R95 PX5X. **Please quote your Eircode.**

COMMUNITY WEBSITE

A dedicated Gathabawn Windfarm community website has been set up **www.ecopowergathabawn.ie**. The website includes the details of the proposal, the climate action and planning policy context of the windfarm, the project **Community Report** and details of the content of the EIA Report which will accompany the Planning Application. The website also includes information and links to information sources, on the impacts and benefits of windfarms in general.

A link to the **Non-technical Summary of the EIA Report** will be included on the website in the coming weeks.

THE GATHABAWN WINDFARM PROPOSAL

The proposal is to build a windfarm, ancillary and associated works comprising 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 twelve turbine foundations and adjacent hardstandings
- **Site roads of 7.7km in total length**, comprising 6.3km in length of new roads and the upgrading and widening of 1.4km of existing private farm tracks
- **Two (2) electrical Control Buildings - one in the Ballylehaun area and one in the Ballyring area.** The buildings will contain electrical and communications equipment. Electrical cabling under the wind farm roads linking the wind turbines to the Control Buildings
- One (1) 30m lattice tower mast and one (1) LiDAR unit for measuring on-site meteorological conditions
- **Temporary haul route works** to facilitate the transport of the large components to the turbine locations. These works comprise temporary access road; some minor public road widening; temporary hardstanding area; temporary widening of existing field entrances off the public road. All works will be reinstated following completion of deliveries.
- **Creation of Biodiversity Areas** for the protection, enhancement and creation of habitats for local plants and animal communities.

THE PROPOSED GATHABAWN WINDFARM LOCATION

It is proposed to build a windfarm of 12 wind turbines, in two areas in the vicinity of Gathabawn – **7 turbines in the Ballylehaun area and 5 turbines in the Ballyring area.**

The wind turbines are proposed for locations in the townlands of **Coolnacrufta, Glashare, Ballylehaun, Gorteennamuck, Ballyring Upper, Ballyring Lower and Tentore.**

The nearest village is **Gathabawn village which is 1km southeast** from the nearest Ballylehaun turbine and 3km west from the nearest Ballyring turbine.

Lisdowney village is located 3km to the northeast of the nearest Ballyring turbine, and 6km from the Ballylehaun turbines.

The town of Ballyragget is located 6km northeast of Ballyring and 10km east of Ballylehaun, while the town of **Johnstown is located 6km** from Ballylehaun and 9km from Ballyring.

In neighbouring County Laois, **Cullahill village is located 3km** north of the nearest Ballylehaun turbine and 6km northwest of the nearest Ballyring turbine, while **Durrow town is located 9km** to the northeast of the nearest turbines.

THE LIKELY GRID CONNECTION

The grid connection point for the proposed Gathabawn Windfarm, has **not yet been confirmed by Eirgrid, but is likely to be the Eirgrid Ballyragget Substation**, circa 7km to the east of the Gathabawn Windfarm site.

The grid connection element will not be included as part of the windfarm planning application, it will be subject to a separate Planning Application, at a future date. However, the grid connection method is **assessed in the environmental documents** to be submitted with the Planning Application, **so that the whole development impact can be understood.**

THE PLANNING APPLICATION

Ecopower is proposing to lodge the Planning Application for Gathabawn Windfarm, this Autumn.

The proposed windfarm is classified for planning purposes as a **Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID)**. Therefore, the Planning Application must be lodged directly to **An Coimisiún Pleanála**, rather than Kilkenny County Council. A copy of the Planning Application will be provided to Kilkenny County Council, for display and examination locally.

People and organisations have the same right to make submissions on the Planning Application, **but the submission must be made directly to An Coimisiún Pleanála, instead of Kilkenny County Council**. A period of 7-weeks from the date of the lodgement of the Application is allowed for submissions.

The full Planning Application will be available once it is lodged, on the An Coimisiún Pleanála website www.pleanala.ie at the following weblink www.gathabawnwindfarmplanning.ie.

The Ecopower community website www.ecopowergathabawn.ie will also have a link to the full application documents and environmental reports that were submitted, for your information. The website will also include details **on how and where to make submissions on the planning application and the final date for submissions**.

Prior to lodgement of the Application, site notices will be erected locally, and advertisements will be placed in the **Irish Independent, the Kilkenny People and the Leinster Express**.

In the meantime, the Gathabawn Windfarm Community Liaison Office can be contacted at contact@ecopowergathabawn.ie

GENERAL TIMELINES FOR WINDFARM DEVELOPMENTS

Windfarms require planning permission; a grid connection agreement from Eirgrid or ESB Networks and power purchase agreements. Generally in Ireland it takes 5 to 6 years from submitting a Planning Application for permission to An Coimisiún Pleanála, to a finally built windfarm.

The Gathabawn Windfarm is at the beginning of the planning application stage and therefore, if planning permission is granted by An Coimisiún Pleanála, **the windfarm could be expected to be built by 2032.**

THE CONSTRUCTION PHASE HAUL ROUTE

Construction materials traffic: Most of the stone required on site will be won from on-site borrow pits. This will reduce the number of deliveries of stone to the site. Most of the construction traffic will be concrete deliveries for the turbine bases which will be concentrated over a single day for each turbine base, i.e. over twelve days. Construction traffic will gain access to the windfarm using the following routes:

- **To the Ballylehaun Area** - from the R639 Durrow to Johnstown Road, turning onto a local road at Coolnacrutta and travelling for 1km before turning onto the Ballylehaun site. This gives access to Turbine numbers 1 to 7 and the Ballylehaun Control Building
- **To the Ballyring Area** - from the N77 Ballyragget to Durrow Road, turning onto the Lisdowney Road and continuing through Lisdowney village and turning off at Ballyring, onto the site. This gives access to Turbines numbers 8 to 12 and to the Ballyring Control Building.

Turbine Delivery Traffic: The turbine components will be delivered on specialist trailers, in convoy with a Garda escort either in the late evening or the early hours of the morning, so as to cause the least disruption to local road users. Turbine component traffic will access the windfarm site via the following route:

- **Using the Motorway Network** as far as Portlaoise, then along the N77 as far as Durrow and then straight onto the R639 to circa 3km past Cullahill, turning left onto the local road at Coolnacrutta and travelling for 1km before turning onto the Ballylehaun site area. All of the 12 turbines will be delivered using this route from the motorway. The 5 turbines for the Ballyring area will then be transported from that point, using the Ballylehaun Area site roads and then on the public road, through Gathabawn village and on to the Lisdowney Road near Foyle Bridge, to the Ballyring site area.

OPERATING TURBINE NOISE

A Noise Assessment Report will be submitted with the planning documents. All houses within 2km of a proposed turbine – there are 274 houses in all, were assessed for noise impact.

To inform the noise assessment, site visits were made during the morning and afternoon, when the primary noise sources noted were traffic on the local roads and agricultural activities. There were no significant night-time sources of noise, at any location. Background noise levels were measured at eight house locations surrounding the development site.

The results of the background noise measurements, details of the site layout and the turbine dimensions, and the turbine noise emission levels warranted by the turbine manufacturer, were modelled. The results of the modelling showed that the worst-case operating turbine noise levels at your house, for a range of operational wind speeds, **will be within best practice noise limits recommended in Irish guidance.**

In the event that the windfarm is granted permission, there will be a Planning Condition to operate the windfarm in accordance with specified noise limits at all houses.

OPERATING TURBINE SHADOW FLICKER

A Shadow Flicker Assessment Report will be submitted with the planning documents. All houses within 1360m of a proposed turbine, were assessed for shadow flicker i.e. 10-rotor diameters, which is in accordance with Best Practice in the wind energy industry.

Wind turbines, like other tall structures, can cast long shadows when the sun is low in the sky. The effect known as “shadow flicker” occurs where the rotating blades of a wind turbine cast a moving shadow which, if it passes over a window in a nearby building

results in a flicker in the incoming sunlight. This effect can only occur for short periods during a given evening or early morning and only under a combination of specific circumstances, namely when: the sun is shining and is at a low angle and there are turbines between the sun and the house and there is a window on that side of the house and the wind is blowing in the right direction for the rotating turbine blades to be facing towards or away from the property window and there is sufficient wind to turn the turbine blades.

Shadow flicker is predicted to occur for very short periods during the year at some neighbouring houses to the Gathabawn Windfarm turbines.

In the event that the windfarm is granted permission, there will be a Planning Condition to operate the windfarm in accordance with specified shadow flicker limits at all houses, which currently allow no more than 30-minutes per day, within a total of 30 hours per year.

The time period in which a house may be affected by shadow flicker is completely predictable in real time by software called a Shadow Flicker Control Module, which can be fitted in modern wind turbines.

The developer commits to the installation of this Shadow Flicker Control Module software on the Gathabawn Windfarm turbines which will control the operation of the turbines in order to stay within the permitted shadow flicker limits at each house.

Furthermore, should a complaint/request regarding shadow flicker be received from a neighbouring resident, the developer also commits to investigating the occurrence of shadow flicker at the house and **setting the software to automatically turn off the turbine to eliminate shadow flicker at the house, if required.**

THE BENEFITS OF WINDFARMS

Climate Action: Gathabawn Windfarm is being proposed in the context of the Irish Government's response to climate change. The windfarm **will generate clean electricity and thereby avoid 38,250 tonnes greenhouse gas emissions every year**, because the equivalent amount of electricity will not need to be generated by oil or gas-fired power stations.

Security of Supply: Gathabawn Windfarm will also enhance security of electricity supply in the country, because it will generate additional electricity for the National Grid. The windfarm will generate enough **clean, Irish electricity to supply approximately 33,237 Irish homes** and which **does not rely on imports of oil and gas**, much of which comes from volatile parts of the world at the moment.

Community Gain: It is Government policy that, once the windfarm is operational, a **Community Benefit Fund** will be set up. Based on the electricity that the windfarm is predicted to generate every year, the Fund will be about **€300,000 per annum for the lifetime of the windfarm**. The Fund will support local projects and community enterprises to deliver projects which will bring social, environmental or economic benefits to the local area.

The Fund will be managed locally and distributed annually to near neighbours and to local community organisations such as clubs, schools, tourism projects, sport clubs and home energy efficiency programs. The Fund will be distributed in line the Government's Renewable Energy Support Scheme (RESS) Community Benefit Fund Rules. In accordance with the Rules, Ecopower will work in partnership with community representatives in the local area, helping to form a fund committee, develop a fund strategy and overseeing the administration of the Fund.

A map which shows the location of the proposed turbines has
been included with this booklet

Contact Details

The Community Liaison Officer for the Gathabawn Windfarm project can be emailed at [**contact@ecopowergathabawn.ie**](mailto:contact@ecopowergathabawn.ie).

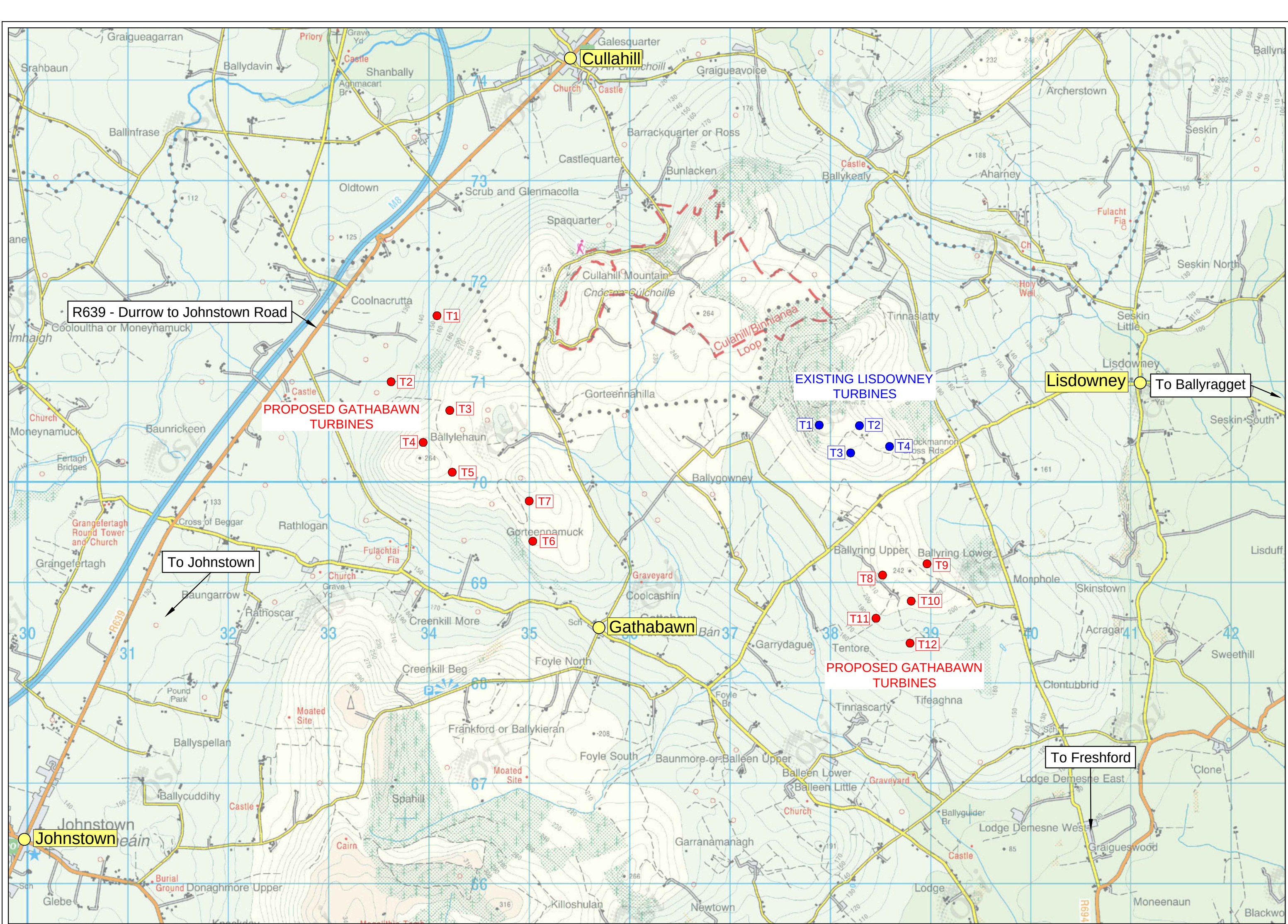
Alternatively write to the Community Liaison Officer at:

Gathabawn Windfarm,
c/o Ecopower Limited,
Zetec House,
Purcellsinch IDA Business Park,
Dublin Road,
Kilkenny,
R95 PX5X.

Please quote your Eircode.

Community Website

[**www.ecopowergathabawn.ie**](http://www.ecopowergathabawn.ie).



Community Groups who received proposal summary and location map by email or post
(sent 14th September 2026)

#	Name	Method of Contact
	Houses	
	All houses by Eircode within 2km of a turbine. The distance of the house from the nearest proposed turbine is noted for the House Eircode in the Newsletter	Project Newsletter in the Post
	Community Groups	
1	Gathabawn Rural Development Council	Email
2	The Community Centre, Cullahill	Post
3	Community Centre Lisdowney (GAA Club)	Post
4	Prague House & Meals on Wheels Freshford	Email
5	Freshford Community Team	Email not valid
6	Freshford Community Cafe	Email
7	Ballyragget Community Hall	Email
8	St. Kieran's Community Centre, Johnstown	Post
9	North Kilkenny Macra	Email
	Sports Groups	
1	Lisdowney GAA Club	Email
2	St. Patricks GAA & Camogie Club Ballyragget	Email
3	Harps GAA Durrow and Cullahill	Email
4	St Lachlain's GAA club Freshford	Email
5	Freshford Squash	Email not valid
6	Freshford Town FC	Email
7	Freshford Boxing Club	Email
8	Fenians GAA Club, Johnstown	Email
9	Galmoy GAA Club	Email
		Email
	Schools	
1	Scoil na Críon Coille, Gathabawn NS	Email
2	Scoil Bhríde National School Lisdowney	Email
3	Scoil Tíghearnach Naofa (Cullahill National School)	Email
4	Scoil Lachtaín National School Freshford	Email
5	Scoil Chiaráin Naofa / Ballyragget National School	Email
6	St Kieran's National School Johnstown	Email
7	Coláiste Mhuire Johnstown Post-Primary	Email
8	St Fergal's College Rathdowney Post-Primary	Email
		Email
	Childcare	
1	Big Dreams B4 & After School Care Gathabawn	Email
2	Lisdowney Montessori Play & Learn	Email

#	Name	Method of Contact
3	Aishling's Little Angels Cullahill	Email
4	Oasis Freshford and District Childcare Centre	Email
5	The Wishing Well Creche and Montessori Ballyragget	Email
6	Croia Early Childhood Education & Afterschool Care Ballyragget	Email
7	Johnstown Community Childcare	Email
		Email
	County Councillors Castlecomer Electoral Area	
1	Cllr. Michael Delaney	Email
2	Cllr. John Brennan	Email
3	Cllr. Mary Hilda Cavanagh	Email
4	Cllr. Pat Fitzpatrick	Email
5	Cllr. Michael McCarthy	Email
6	Cllr. Maurice Shortall	Email
	County Councillors Borris-in-Ossory-Mountmellick Co. Laois	
1	John King (Rathdowney)	Email
2	Ollie Cooney (Durrow)	Email
	Churches	
1	St. Munchin's Church Gathabawn	Email
2	St Tighearnach's Church Cullahill	Email
3	St. Brigid's Church Lisdowney	Email
4	St Lachtain Church of Ireland Freshford	Email
5	St Lachtain RC Church Freshford	Email
6	St. Patrick's Church Ballyragget	Email
7	St. Nicholas' Church, Tulla Freshford	Email not valid
8	Immaculate Conception Church Galmoy	Email not valid
9	St Kieran's Church Johnstown	Email

Email to Community Groups

Dear Community Group contact

Ecopower is an experienced windfarm development company, based in Kilkenny for the past 30-years. Ecopower has planned and developed windfarms throughout Ireland.

Gathabawn Windfarm is a proposal by Ecopower, **to build a twelve-turbine windfarm in the vicinity of Gathabawn village.** It is proposed to apply for planning permission to build a windfarm comprising seven turbines in the Ballylehaun area and five turbines in the Ballyring area. The townlands involved in the full windfarm development are Coolnacrutta, Glashare, Ballylehaun, Gorteennamuck, Rathlogan, Ballyring Upper, Ballyring Lower and Tentore. The nearest settlements and community facilities are in the villages of Gathabawn (1km), Lisdowney (3km) and Cullahill (3km) and further away in the towns of Freshford (4km), Ballyragget (6km) and Johnstown (6km) – to the nearest point of the windfarm. **See the Map attached.**

Ecopower is proposing to lodge the Planning Application for Gathabawn Windfarm, this Autumn.

The Gathabawn Windfarm is at the beginning of the planning application stage and if planning permission is granted, **the windfarm would be expected to be built by 2032.** It is Government policy that, once the windfarm is operational, **a Community Benefit Fund is set up. Based on the electricity that the proposed Gathabawn Windfarm is predicted to generate every year, the Fund will be about €300,000 per annum for the lifetime of the windfarm.**

The Fund will be managed locally and distributed annually to near neighbours and to local community organisations, local schools and sport clubs. Ecopower will work in partnership with community representatives in the local area, helping to form a Fund committee, develop a Fund strategy and oversee the administration of the Fund.

For more information I invite you to check out the community website at www.ecopowergathabawn.ie You can contact the Community Liaison Officer at contact@ecopowergathabawn.ie with any questions or feedback that you may have.

I would be much obliged if you would forward this email to your team or other parties, in the interest of engaging with the local community prior to the making of the Planning Application.

Kind regards, Gathabawn Windfarm Community Liaison Officer at Ecopower



Advertisement in the Kilkenny People
(week beginning 14th September 2026)



Proposed Gathabawn Windfarm County Kilkenny

It is proposed to apply for planning permission for a windfarm in North County Kilkenny located between the villages of Gathabawn and Lisdowney, County Kilkenny and Cullahill, County Laois.

The proposal, **to be called Gathabawn Windfarm**, comprises **seven wind turbines in the Ballylehaun area and five wind turbines in the Ballyring area**; two control buildings; and all associated windfarm works. **Two tip heights are proposed for the turbines – three with 150m tip height and nine with 170m tip height.**

The promoter of the proposed Gathabawn Windfarm is **Ecopower** which is a **windfarm development company based in Kilkenny** for the past 30-years. We are involved in the full development process for windfarms, from initial site identification, design, planning, construction and operation of the built windfarm. **Ecopower has planned and developed windfarms throughout Ireland.**

If the windfarm gets planning permission and is built, it **will have a Community Benefit Fund of circa €300,000 every year** which will be distributed to near neighbours and **local community and sports groups every year**, for the lifetime of the windfarm.

The community website **www.ecopowergathabawn.ie** has more **details on the nature and location of the proposal**. We welcome you to contact us with any questions and feedback on the proposal that you may have. The email contact for the Gathabawn Windfarm **Community Liaison Officer** is

contact@ecopowergathabawn.ie

