

RECEIVED: 07/05/2024



APPENDIX 14-3

PHOTOMONTAGE VIEWPOINT ASSESSMENT TABLES

RECEIVED: 07/05/2024

Table of Contents

| | | |
|--------|--|-----------|
| 1. | VIEWPOINT (PHOTOMONTAGE) ASSESSMENT TABLES | 1 |
| 1.1 | Viewpoint Summary Table | 1 |
| 1.2 | Viewpoint Selection | 3 |
| 1.2.1 | Photomontages: Volume 2 Booklet..... | 3 |
| 1.2.2 | Supplementary Photomontages: 'Photowires': Appendix 14-5 | 3 |
| 1.3 | Visual Impact Assessment Methodology | 3 |
| 1.4 | Viewpoint Assessment Tables | 4 |
| 1.4.1 | VP1: Coolnakisha | 4 |
| 1.4.2 | VP2: Agharue | 6 |
| 1.4.3 | VP3: Coolcullen within Co. Kilkenny..... | 8 |
| 1.4.4 | VP4: Leighlinbridge..... | 10 |
| 1.4.5 | VP5: Oldleighlin | 12 |
| 1.4.6 | VP6: Ballybar | 14 |
| 1.4.7 | VP7: Bagenalstown and River Barrow | 15 |
| 1.4.8 | VP8: Ardough or Huntspark | 17 |
| 1.4.9 | VP9: Reeavanagh | 19 |
| 1.4.10 | VP10: Firoda Lower..... | 22 |
| 1.4.11 | VP11: Kilgraney..... | 23 |
| 1.4.12 | VP12: Ballyryan..... | 25 |
| 1.4.13 | VP13: Brownshill Portal Dolmen..... | 27 |
| 1.4.14 | VP14: Ridge (South-West Viewpoint) | 29 |
| 1.4.15 | VP15: Ridge (South Viewpoint) | 31 |

1. VIEWPOINT (PHOTOMONTAGE) ASSESSMENT TABLES

1.1 Viewpoint Summary Table

The tables included in this appendix detail a visual impact assessment of the photomontage visualisation of the 15 No. viewpoints presented in the *EIAR Volume 2: Photomontage Booklet* (hereafter, *Photomontage Booklet*). This appendix should be read in conjunction with viewing the *Photomontage Booklet*.

The following terminology is used throughout this chapter in relation to Seskin Wind Farm:

- **‘Proposed Project’** refers to the entirety of the project for the purposes of this EIA in accordance with the EIA Directive. The Proposed Project is described in detail in Chapter 4 of this EIAR;
- **‘Proposed Project site’** or **‘site’** refers to the primary study area for the EIAR, as delineated by the EIAR Site Boundary in green as shown in Figure 1-1 in Chapter 1;
- **‘Proposed Grid Connection Route’** refers to the underground 38kV electrical cabling and all associated site development works connecting the Proposed Wind Farm site to the existing Kilkenny 110 kV electrical substation;
- **‘Proposed Wind Farm site’** refers to turbines and associated foundations and hardstanding areas, including access roads, underground cabling, permanent meteorological mast, temporary construction compounds, carriageway strengthening works, junction accommodation works, peat and spoil management, tree felling, site drainage, operational stage signage, battery energy storage system, 38kV onsite substation, and all ancillary works and apparatus. The Proposed Wind Farm is described in detail in Chapter 4 of this EIAR.
- **‘Proposed turbines’** refers to the turbine components of the Proposed Project;

The table below provides brief descriptions and location information about the 15 No. viewpoints assessed. In all tables of this Appendix, the following county developments plans are referenced:

- Carlow County Development Plan 2022–2028 (CCDP);
- Kilkenny County Development Plan 2021–2027 (KKCDP).
- Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027 (LSCDP)

Table 1-1 Viewpoint Location Descriptions

| Viewpoint No. | Description | Grid Ref. (ITM) |
|---------------|--|------------------------|
| VP1 | Open view from the north-east that is approximately 1.2km from the nearest Proposed turbine (T02) that is located at scenic route 8 in the townland of Coolnakisha. | E 665,150 N 670,149 |
| VP2 | Residential Receptor approximately 900m from the nearest Proposed turbine (T01) at Agharue | E 663,054 N 670,410 |
| VP3 | Along the road in which the Proposed Grid Connection Route travels towards Kilkenny 110kVsubstation approximately 2km from the nearest Proposed turbine (T06) in the townland of Coolcullen. | E 661,359 N 668,690 |

| | | |
|------|--|------------------------|
| VP4 | View from the R705 regional road at an elevated vantage point within the village of Leighlinbridge. Located approximately 6km South-East of the nearest Proposed turbine (T05). | E 669,304 N 665,434 |
| VP5 | View from outside the graveyard within the village of Old Leighlin. Located approximately 3.4km South-East of the nearest Proposed turbine (T07). | E 665,843 N 665,486 |
| VP6 | View from the M9 approximately 9.3km from the nearest Proposed turbine (T03) in the townland of Ballybar Upper. | E 673,259 N 671,512 |
| VP7 | View along the R705 regional road in the town of Bagenalstown, North of the local swimming pool. Located approximately 8.8km South-East of the nearest Proposed turbine (T05). | E 670,589 N 662,774 |
| VP8 | Residential receptor approximately 3.6km from the nearest Proposed turbine (T1) in the townland of Ardough or Huntspark. | E 663,906 N 673,265 |
| VP9 | Along Kilkenny scenic view approximately 6.2km from the nearest Proposed turbine (T7) in the townland of Reevanagh. | E 658,714 N 664,245 |
| VP10 | Along Kilkenny scenic view approximately 13.2km from the nearest Proposed turbine (T1) in the townland of Glenmagoo or Firoda Lower. | E 650,825 N 673,695 |
| VP11 | View from the R705 regional road in the townland of Kilgraney along Co. Carlow designated Scenic Route 25 (SR-25) (CCDP). Located approximately 13.8km South-East of the nearest proposed turbine (T07). | E 670,878 N 656,327 |
| VP12 | Along scenic route 5 of Carlow approximately 9.3km from the nearest Proposed turbine (T3) in the townland of Ballyryan. | E 673,455 N 668,088 |
| VP13 | Representing Brownshill Portal Dolmen. | E 675,398 N 676,870 |
| VP14 | Receptor along scenic route 7 approximately 900m from the nearest Proposed turbine (T06), west of the Proposed Project in the townland of Ridge. | E 662,670 N 668,141 |
| VP15 | Receptor along scenic route 7 approximately 850m from the nearest Proposed turbine (T07) in the townland of Ridge. | E 663,282 N 667,367 |

1.2 Viewpoint Selection

1.2.1 Photomontages: Volume 2 Booklet

The locations chosen for photomontages follow a detailed and extensive process including a review of baseline information, site visits and high-quality photographs taken at multiple locations within the LVIA Study Area. Based on a desktop review, multiple sites were identified as having potential views of the Proposed turbines; these sites were either (i) subjected to complete intervening screening, or (ii) screened to such an extent that the development of photomontages was not considered useful in terms of the assessment process, i.e. having little or no visibility of the Proposed turbines.

Please refer to the full methodology for selecting photomontage viewpoint locations in Section 1.5 'Photomontage Visualisations' of Appendix 14.1: LVIA Methodology.

1.2.2 Supplementary Photomontages: 'Photowires': Appendix 14-5

Photomontage imagery was captured from 20 No. other alternative viewpoint locations in the LVIA Study Area other than the 15 No. viewpoints selected for the *Photomontage Booklet*, and 'photowires' were produced accordingly. Photowires are early-stage photomontage visualisations comprising stitched photos with draft overlaid wirelines (classified as 'Type 3 Visualisations' in the Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 06/19, 2019). Ultimately, the 20 No. alternative photomontage viewpoints were not selected for inclusion in the final booklet; therefore, these early-stage photomontages do not form part of the assessment of visual effects included in this appendix. However, their photowires are visually presented in an additional document (*Appendix 14-5: Photowire Visualisation Booklet*) and they are considered in the discussion of visual effects in Section 14.7.2.2 and 14.7.3.2 'Visual Effects (Construction) and Visual Effects (Operational)' of Chapter 14. The locations of all photowire viewpoints discussed in the text are marked as orange icons in Figure 14-16 'Photomontage (Photowire) Viewpoints' of that Chapter.

1.3 Visual Impact Assessment Methodology

Visual impact assessments were conducted for individual viewpoints and are reported in the tables below following the methodology set out in Section 1.5.2: 'Assessing Visual Effects' of Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology. The cumulative visual effects of the Proposed turbines with other existing, permitted and/or proposed wind farms located in the LVIA Study Area are included in the assessment tables below.

Assessment of Cumulative Visual Effects

As reported in Section 14.6: 'Cumulative Context' of Chapter 14, the assessment of cumulative visual effects considers all other existing, permitted, and proposed wind energy developments in the LVIA Study Area and their visual interactions with the Proposed Project. The descriptions of cumulative visual effects reported in this Appendix are based on the photomontages in the *Photomontage Booklet* and are guided by the identification labels on the wireline views accompanying each photomontage view. The potential for cumulative visual effects is accounted for in the 'Magnitude of Change' row in each impact assessment table and is considered in the 'Residual Visual Effect' determination given for each viewpoint.

When determining how cumulative effects contribute to the magnitude of change, the focus is always on the extent to which the Proposed Project will contribute towards the cumulative effects on the particular receptors under assessment at each viewpoint. The assessment and discussion of cumulative

effects also consider the probability of such cumulative effects arising in mind of the category of the other developments with which the Proposed Project interacts: 'Existing' – Certain; 'Permitted' – High Probability; or 'Proposed' – an Uncertain scenario.

1.4 Viewpoint Assessment Tables

1.4.1 VP1: Coolnakisha

| Viewpoint 1: Coolnakisha (and Co. Carlow SR-8) | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| Viewpoint Description and Details | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > View from the L7130 in the townland of Coolnakisha on SR-8. > The viewpoint is located approx. 1.2km North-East of the nearest Proposed turbine (T02). > Grid Reference (ITM): E: 665,150; N: 670,147. > No. of turbines visible (including blades/tips): 7 (out of 7). | | |
| LCA and Sensitivity | C-LCA 4 Killeshin Hills: Medium | Visual Receptors and Sensitivity | SR-8: High Residential Receptors in the area located in close proximity to the Proposed Wind Farm: High |
| Description of 'Existing View' | The imagery shows a medium-ranging view over the undulating agricultural landscape, along with commercial forestry. The type of land use is clearly visible, due to the higher elevation of the viewpoint. The agricultural land is used for grazing throughout the landscape. Vegetation can be seen throughout the view, providing clear field patterns. Several residential dwellings are located to the middle and right of the view. There is commercial forestry located to the right of the view, in the background. | | |
| Proposed Photomontage Description | All 7 No. Proposed turbines are visible in the middle and background of the undulating landscape. All Proposed turbines are visible in this image, throughout and behind the treeline in the centre. The hubs and blades of all Proposed turbines are visible above the treeline, while the lower sections of all turbines are not visible due to screening by the treeline and undulating landscape. The tower of Proposed turbine T01 is fully screened by the commercial forestry in the landscape. The Proposed turbines appear as a cluster in the middle of the image and thus comprise only a small horizontal extent of the view, nor do they obstruct the open and expansive long-ranging views to the south, south-east or east. | | |
| Cumulative Context – Proposed View with Cumulative | 5 no. of the 7 no. permitted White Hill Wind Farm turbines are visible in the background of this image, directly behind the Proposed Project, with the commercial forestry site screening out the remaining 2 turbines of this permitted development. | | |
| Cumulative Effects | The permitted White Hill Wind Farm is located directly to the south-west of the Proposed turbines. These appear aesthetically coherent with the Proposed turbines; they do not widen the spatial extent of the Proposed turbines or cumulative turbines. They appear appropriately set-back from the Proposed turbines and are consequently seen to be of smaller scale due to the distance | | |

| | |
|--|---|
| | from this viewpoint, providing a sense of separation with the Proposed Project. The permitted Bilboa Wind Farm turbines are located behind this viewpoint, however visibility from this location is likely to be very limited due to dense roadside screening in that field of view. |
| Sensitivity of Visual Receptor(s) | <p>Sensitivity = High. On account of this viewpoint located on a Co. Carlow designated scenic Route.</p> <p>Refer to Section 1.7.1 'Visual Receptor Sensitivity' in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology.</p> |
| Magnitude of Change | <p>Moderate. The Proposed turbines are large features altering the character and composition of the view. The Proposed turbines do not comprise a large horizontal extent of the view and they are partially obscured by intervening features of the landscape. Some cumulative effects could potentially occur in a future receiving environment and are accounted for in this determination.</p> <p>For the definition of this rating, please refer to Section 1.7.2 'Magnitude of Visual Change' in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology.</p> |
| Significance of Effect | <p>High × Moderate = Moderate = 'Significant' (EPA, 2022) <i>'An effect, which by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity alters a sensitive aspect of the environment'.</i></p> <p>Refer to Section 1.7.3 'Visual Effects Assessment Matrix' in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology.</p> |
| Mitigation Factors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There are open and expansive panoramic views across the Barrow Valley of high scenic quality in an easterly and south-easterly direction from Co. Carlow scenic route 8. This viewpoint was captured from a small bend in the scenic route which permits open views to the south-west towards the Proposed Project. There will be very limited visibility of the Proposed turbines from many other areas of the designated scenic route. ➤ Within the CCDP, the view of the designated Scenic Route SR-8 is described as a panorama to the South-East, looking away from the Proposed turbines. Both the description and appraisals during site visits determined that the main focus of the views from this scenic route is towards the Barrow Valley rather than the medium range view towards the area of commercial forestry that comprises the Proposed Project; ➤ Whilst SR-8 is a designated scenic route, it is a local road of low traffic density and it is unlikely this route is highly valued for its tourism amenity. ➤ The Proposed turbines do not significantly impact upon the key scenic sensitivities of this area and the designated scenic route, which are considered to be the expansive panoramic views to the east and south-east, in a different direction to the Proposed turbines. ➤ The Proposed turbines are evenly spaced and read coherently within the landscape; ➤ From this location, the Proposed turbines comprise only a narrow horizontal spatial extent of the view. ➤ Siting of Proposed turbines adheres to the recommended 500m set-back distance in the DoEHLG 2006 Guidelines and also the 4-times-tip-height set-back distance set out for residential visual amenity prescribed by the Draft DoHPLG 2019 Guidelines; ➤ Residential receptors, such as those visible in the foreground of the photomontage have their primary scenic amenity focused across the |

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| | Barrow Valley to the east and south-east, not in the direction of the Proposed turbines. |
| Residual Visual Effect | <p>After considering all Mitigation Factors = 'Moderate' (EPA, 2022) <i>'An effect that alters the character of the environment in a manner consistent with existing and emerging baseline trends'.</i></p> <p>Refer to Section 1.8 'Determining Residual Landscape and Visual Effects' in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology.</p> |

1.4.2 VP2: Agharue

| Viewpoint 2: Agharue | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
| Viewpoint Description and Details | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> View from the L7127 local road in the townland of Agharue. The viewpoint is located approx. 900m North of the nearest Proposed turbine (T1). Grid Reference (ITM): E: 663,058; N: 670,411. No. of turbines visible (including blades/tips): 7 (out of 7). | | |
| LCA and Sensitivity | C-LCA-4 Killeslin Hills Medium | Visual Receptors and Sensitivity | Cluster of Residential Receptors in close proximity to the Proposed Wind Farm site: High |
| Description of 'Existing View' | <p>This image shows a short-range view towards agricultural fields. The fields are delineated by mature boundary vegetation. The landform slopes slightly upwards from the viewpoint location to the back of the field. This slightly elevated landform limits long-ranging views from this location. Dense vegetation can be seen to the left in the foreground of the view.</p> | | |
| Proposed Photomontage Description | <p>All 7 No. Proposed turbines are visible in this view. The blades and hubs of all turbines are visible above the landform and vegetation. The lower tower sections of the Proposed turbines are screened from view by the mature vegetation and intervening landform. Although turbine T01 is located in closer proximity to this viewpoint than the other turbines, the mature vegetation screens the lower half of the tower. Turbines T05, T06 and T07 are further screened due to their increased setback from the viewpoint, with less of the towers visible. The Proposed turbines are relatively evenly spaced and have an ordered arrangement, causing them to read coherently in the landscape.</p> | | |
| Cumulative Context – Proposed View with Cumulative | <p>No other turbines are visible in the photomontage. 5 No. turbines of the permitted Bilboa Wind Farm are located in an alternative field of view than is presented in the photomontage. The nearest permitted Bilboa Wind Farm turbine is located approximately 1.3km to the north-east of this viewpoint on the north-western side of Gallows Hill.</p> | | |
| Cumulative Effects | <p>In a 'permitted' future receiving environment, several residential receptors in the east of Agharue townland will likely experience cumulative visual effects. Combined in succession (where an observer has to turn their head to see another development in another field of view) views of the permitted Bilboa Wind Farm turbines will occur with the Proposed turbines. In this scenario</p> | | |

| | |
|--|---|
| | there will be visual separation between these developments as well as the landform buffer of Gallows Hill located between the two developments. No surrounding effects are likely to occur on residential receptors, and there will be no cumulative effects on the more open and scenic views along the river valley to the north and west from residential receptors in this area. |
| Sensitivity of Visual Receptor(s) | High. Includes viewers such as residents in close proximity to the viewpoint who have primary views that will be in the direction of the Proposed turbines. Refer to Section 1.7.1 'Visual Receptor Sensitivity' in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology. |
| Magnitude of Change | Moderate: The Proposed turbines are large features altering the character and composition of the view. The Proposed turbines do not comprise a large horizontal extent of the view and they are partially obscured by the intervening landform and vegetation. The Proposed turbines do not obstruct or intrude upon any long ranging views. Some cumulative effects could potentially occur in a future receiving environment and are accounted for in this determination. For the definition of this rating, please refer to Section 1.7.2 'Magnitude of Visual Change' in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology. |
| Significance of Effect | High × Moderate = Moderate = 'Significant' (EPA, 2022) <i>'An effect, which by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity alters a sensitive aspect of the environment'.</i> Refer to Section 1.7.3 'Visual Effects Assessment Matrix' in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology. |
| Mitigation Factors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Siting of Proposed turbines adheres to the recommended 500m set-back distance in the DoEHLG 2006 Guidelines and also the 4-times-tip-height set-back distance set out for residential visual amenity prescribed by the Draft DoHPLG 2019 Guidelines; ➤ The Proposed turbines are evenly spaced and read coherently within the landscape; ➤ Due to the intervening landform and mature boundary vegetation in the landscape, the lower turbine components are partially obscured from view, reducing their visual prominence and making them appear appropriately set-back from this view; ➤ From this location, the Proposed turbines comprise only a narrow horizontal spatial extent of the view. ➤ Due to screening from localised topography and mature vegetation, many of the other residential receptors in this area (e.g. western side of Argharue townland) will have very limited views of the Proposed turbines, far less than is shown in the photomontage. ➤ Due to the topographic characteristics of the area, views from residences in the townland of Agharue (and this area in general) are naturally focussed to the north and west along the River Dinin valley where there are longer ranging views of a higher scenic quality. The Proposed turbines will have no effect on these scenic sensitivities. |
| Residual Visual Effect | 'Moderate' (EPA, 2022) <i>'An effect that alters the character of the environment in a manner consistent with existing and emerging baseline trends'.</i> Refer to Section 1.8 'Determining Residual Landscape and Visual Effects' in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology. |

RECEIVED: 07/05/2024

1.4.3 VP3: Coolcullen within Co. Kilkenny

| Viewpoint 3: Coolcullen within Co. Kilkenny | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Viewpoint Description and Details | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> View from a crossroads between the L30371 local road and another local road in the townland of Coolcullen within Co. Kilkenny. The viewpoint is located approx. 2km West of the nearest Proposed turbine (T06). Grid Reference (ITM): E 661,359; N 668,690. No. of turbines visible (including blades/tips): 5 (out of 7). | | |
| LCA and Sensitivity | KK-LCA B Castlecomer Plateaux: Medium | Visual Receptors and Sensitivity | Local road L30371 and townland of Coolcullen: Low Residential Receptors in the area which have Medium proximity to the Proposed turbines: Medium |
| Description of 'Existing View' | The view from Kilkenny looking towards the upland area of the Killeslin Hills. Views in this direction observe L30371, as well as agricultural land with substantial hedging and vegetation. Through the hedging, views of commercial forestry sites are apparent. From this viewpoint, a valley can be seen, where the elevation initially decreases slightly before increasing again towards the commercial forestry site and beyond. | | |
| Proposed Photomontage Description | 4 No. Proposed turbines are clearly visible, with the remaining Proposed turbines being screened from view by vegetation. The Proposed turbines are seen as a staggered linear array across the background of the landscape. From this location the Proposed turbines are viewed above the horizon and are framed in the background of the photomontage. | | |
| Cumulative Context – Proposed View with Cumulative | <p>One turbine of the permitted Bilboa Wind Farm is visible in the left background of the photomontage; the remaining 4 no. turbines are screened by some mature trees. These are likely to be visible during winter months when the deciduous trees have lost their foliage, as demonstrated by the wireline view.</p> <p>Although not visible in the field of view presented by the photomontage, all existing Gortahile Wind Farm turbines are visible to the north from this viewpoint.</p> <p>The permitted White Hill Wind Farm is likely to be visible to the south of the cross-road in a future receiving environment. One of the permitted White Hill Wind Farm turbines is located approximately 1.1km to the south and will likely be clearly visible in commercial forestry form this viewpoint.</p> | | |
| Cumulative Effects | In combination simultaneous effects occur with the permitted Bilboa Wind Farm and the existing Gortahile Wind Farm to the north. In combination in succession visibility (where a receptor turns to another field of view) is likely to occur with the permitted White Hill Wind Farm turbines. | | |

| | |
|--|---|
| Sensitivity of Visual Receptor(s) | <p>Medium: This crossroad is a receptor of Low sensitivity, however, the viewpoint is representative of residential receptors in the surrounding rural landscape. It is a sparsely settled area and residential receptors are setback (2km) from the Proposed Wind Farm site. The view does not comprise any unique or distinctive landscape features. On balance, sensitivity is deemed to be Medium.</p> <p>Refer to Section 1.7.1 'Visual Receptor Sensitivity' in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology.</p> |
| Magnitude of Change | <p>'Moderate' The Proposed turbines are well set back and read coherently within the view and could be considered to have a 'Slight' magnitude of change. However, cumulative visual effects are taken into account and the magnitude of change is deemed to be Moderate.</p> <p>For the definition of this rating, please refer to Section 1.7.2 'Magnitude of Visual Change' in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology.</p> |
| Significance of Effect | <p>Medium × Moderate = Moderate/Minor = 'Moderate' (EPA, 2022)</p> <p><i>'An effect that alter the character of the environment in a manner consistent with existing and emerging baseline trends'.</i></p> <p>Refer to Section 1.7.3 'Visual Effects Assessment Matrix' in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology.</p> |
| Mitigation Factors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Residential receptors in the settlement cluster of Coolcullen (area near Sheerins Pub) are located in closer proximity to the Proposed Wind Farm site than this viewpoint, these receptors will have very limited visibility of the Proposed turbines compared with this photomontage. Visibility from the settlement cluster is illustrated by photowire PWVP-B which is presented in Appendix 14-5. ➤ Siting of Proposed turbines adheres to the recommended 500m set-back distance in the DoEHLG 2006 Guidelines and also the 4-times-tip-height set-back distance set out for residential visual amenity prescribed by the Draft DoHPLG 2019 Guidelines; ➤ Due to the intervening vegetation and localised topography in the landscape, the Proposed turbines appear appropriately set-back from this view; ➤ From this location, the Proposed turbines are seen as a staggered linear layout across the commercial forestry and read coherently in the landscape view |
| Residual Visual Effect | <p>After considering all Mitigation Factors = 'Moderate' (EPA, 2022)</p> <p><i>An effect that alter the character of the environment in a manner consistent with existing and emerging baseline trends'.</i></p> <p>Refer to Section 1.8 'Determining Residual Landscape and Visual Effects' in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology.</p> |

1.4.4 VP4: Leighlinbridge

RECEIVED: 07/05/2024

| Viewpoint 4: Leighlinbridge | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
| Viewpoint Description and Details | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> View from the R705 regional road at an elevated vantage point within the village of Leighlinbridge. The viewpoint is located approx. 6km South-East of the nearest Proposed turbine (T05). Grid Reference (ITM): E 669,304; N 665,434. No. of turbines visible (including blades/tips): 5 (out of 7). | | |
| LCA and Sensitivity | C-LCT Central Lowland: Medium | Visual Receptors and Sensitivity | Leighlinbridge: Medium ; R705 regional road: Low |
| Description of 'Existing View' | <p>This image shows a medium-range view from Leighlinbridge looking onto the Killeshin Hills and agricultural fields in the background. The R705 regional road gently slopes down towards the town centre, with residential dwellings along the road. High treelines in the centre middle-ground of the image screen a portion of the view of the upland area of the Killeshin Hills. The Vivaldi Garden is located in the left foreground of the image. The residents along the R705 are orientated such that their primary views are facing away from the Proposed turbines.</p> | | |
| Proposed Photomontage Description | <p>4 No. Proposed turbines are visible from this viewpoint. The lower portions of all turbine towers are partially screened from view by the prominent ridgeline which forms the eastern boundary of the site and the horizon in this landscape view. The Proposed turbines comprise a relatively small horizontal extent of this view. Due to the distance from this viewpoint and positioning upon the uplands, the Proposed turbines are framed in the background of the photomontage and appear as relatively small features.</p> | | |
| Cumulative Context – Proposed View with Cumulative | <p>The permitted White Hill Wind Farm can be seen to the left of the Proposed Project, with one turbine hub being visible above the ridge, and the lower components of these permitted turbines are screened from view. The permitted Bilboa Wind Farm can be seen to the right of the Proposed Project within the wireline view, although all the turbines are obscured from the view due to the screening from buildings.</p> | | |
| Cumulative Effects | <p>In combination (simultaneous) cumulative visual effects arise. The Proposed Project is flanked on either side by the turbines of the permitted Bilboa Wind Farm (right/north) and the permitted White Hill Wind Farm (left/south). The Proposed Project increases the number of turbines visible above and beyond the ridgeline which forms the Killeshin Hill. There is some visual separation between the developments.</p> | | |
| Sensitivity of Visual Receptor(s) | <p>Medium: Receptors in the village of Leighlinbridge are deemed to be of Medium sensitivity. Visitors to the Vivaldi Garden within the town of Leighlinbridge are receptors of slightly higher sensitivity, although they are not likely to be attending the garden for the purpose of experiencing the landscape views in the direction of the Proposed Project. On balance sensitivity is deemed to be medium. Refer to Section 1.7.1 'Visual Receptor Sensitivity' in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology.</p> | | |

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Magnitude of Change | <p>‘Slight’ <i>“The proposals would be partially visible or visible at sufficient distance to be perceptible and result in a low level of change in the view and its composition and a low degree of contrast. The character of the view may be altered but will remain similar to the baseline existing situation. This change could be short term or of a short duration.”</i></p> <p>For the definition of this rating, please refer to Section 1.7.2 ‘Magnitude of Visual Change’ in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology.</p> |
| Significance of Effect | <p>Medium × Slight = Minor = ‘Slight’ (EPA, 2022) <i>‘An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment without affecting its sensitivities’.</i></p> <p>Refer to Section 1.7.3 ‘Visual Effects Assessment Matrix’ in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology.</p> |
| Mitigation Factors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ This is one of the only locations within Leighlinbridge where the Proposed Project will be clearly visible, due to its location on the most elevated vantage point at the eastern side of town. Visibility will be greatly restricted from other locations and receptors in the town at lower elevation due to screening from built form and other features of the landscape – See Photowire E in Appendix 14-5 where not visibility occurs at Black Castle. ➤ Due to the orientation of the residential properties at this vantage point in Leighlinbridge, the Proposed turbines will have limited effect on most of the primary visual amenity of the residences in the foreground of the view. ➤ The Proposed turbines are viewed above the skyline in the distant background of the view and do not obstruct any landscape views from this location; ➤ Visual effects are mitigated by the distance; ➤ The Proposed Project is effectively absorbed with the other permitted developments in the area; |
| Residual Visual Effect | <p>‘Not Significant’ (EPA, 2022) <i>‘An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment but without significant consequences’.</i></p> <p>Refer to Section 1.8 ‘Determining Residual Landscape and Visual Effects’ in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology.</p> |

1.4.5 VP5: Oldleighlin

| Viewpoint 5: Old Leighlin | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| Viewpoint Description and Details | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > View from outside the graveyard within the village of Oldleighlin. > The viewpoint is located approx. 3.4km South-East of the nearest Proposed turbine (T07). > Grid Reference (ITM): E 665,843; N 665,486. > No. of turbines visible (including blades/tips): 4 (out of 7). | | |
| LCA and Sensitivity | CLCA 4 Killeshin Hills: Medium | Visual Receptors and Sensitivity | Residents in close proximity to the viewpoint: Medium Visitors to the cemetery: Medium/High |
| Description of 'Existing View' | The image shows a view towards agricultural fields. The fields are delineated by low stone walls and hedgerows. The landform slopes slightly upwards from the viewpoint location to the back of the fields. This slightly elevated landform limits long-ranging views from this location. A dense treeline can be seen across the background of the view. | | |
| Proposed Photomontage Description | 1 No. Proposed turbine can be clearly viewed, while for the other visible Proposed turbines, only the blades and blade tips can be seen. Substantial vegetation has screened out visibility of most of the Proposed Project; furthermore, the slight increase in topography obscures the Proposed Project from Oldleighlin. | | |
| Cumulative Context – Proposed View with Cumulative | No cumulative turbines are visible in this photomontage. From the wireline it suggests that some of the permitted Bilboa Wind Farm turbines will be visible but vegetation screens it in the photomontage. | | |
| Cumulative Effects | No Cumulative effects will arise from this viewpoint. | | |
| Sensitivity of Visual Receptor(s) | <p>Medium: Receptors in the village of Oldleighlin are deemed to be of Medium sensitivity. Visitors to the graveyard within the Cathedral are receptors of slightly higher sensitivity, although they are not likely to be attending the graveyard for the purpose of experiencing the landscape views in the direction of the Proposed Project, more so the enclosed setting of the Cathedral and graveyard itself. On balance sensitivity is deemed to be medium.</p> <p>Refer to Section 1.7.1 'Visual Receptor Sensitivity' in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology.</p> | | |
| Magnitude of Change | <p>'Slight' “The proposals would be partially visible or visible at sufficient distance to be perceptible and result in a low level of change in the view and its composition and a low degree of contrast. The character of the view may be altered but will remain similar to the baseline existing situation. This change could be short term or of a short duration.”</p> <p>For the definition of this rating, please refer to Section 1.7.2 'Magnitude of Visual Change' in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology.</p> | | |

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Significance of Effect | <p>Medium × Slight = Minor = ‘Slight’ (EPA, 2022) <i>‘An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment without affecting its sensitivities’.</i></p> <p>Refer to Section 1.7.3 ‘Visual Effects Assessment Matrix’ in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology.</p> |
| Mitigation Factors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Prominent ridgeline forming the eastern perimeter of the site substantially obscured the majority of the Proposed turbines from view, as well as mature boundary vegetation in the intervening landscape; ➤ Visibility appraisals conducted during site visits determined that the Proposed turbines will only be visible in this part of Oldleighlin due to the slightly elevated nature of the cemetery and this viewpoint upon an elevated embankment at the very eastern side of the cemetery. There is likely to be either no, or very limited visibility of the Proposed turbines from the adjacent road and throughout the village, owing to screening by buildings. ➤ Visibility elsewhere within the cemetery and the grounds of the church will be extremely limited due to the enclosed nature of views from mature woodland to the north-west and the embankment where the photomontage was captured. There will be no significant effects on the setting of the church and graveyard. |
| Residual Visual Effect | <p>After considering all Mitigation Factors = ‘Not Significant’ (EPA, 2022) <i>‘An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment but without significant consequences’.</i></p> <p>Refer to Section 1.8 ‘Determining Residual Landscape and Visual Effects’ in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology.</p> |

1.4.6 VP6: Ballybar

| Viewpoint 6: Ballybar (and M9 motorway) | | | |
|---|--|---|----------------------------------|
| Viewpoint Description and Details | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> View from the M9 motorway in the townland of Ballybar. The viewpoint is located approx. 9.3km East of the nearest Proposed turbine (T03). Grid Reference (ITM): E: 673,258; N: 671510. No. of turbines visible (including blades/tips): 7 (out of 7). | | |
| LCA and Sensitivity | CLCA 2 Central Lowlands: Medium | Visual Receptors and Sensitivity | Road Users on the M9: Low |
| Description of 'Existing View' | <p>This image shows a medium-range view across the M9 motorway looking onto Killeshin Hills and agricultural fields in the background. The viewpoint is taken on a local road above the M9 at a higher elevation, allowing for views over treetops along the M9. The Killeshin Hills extend north-south across the background of the image. Fields along the base of the Killeshin Hills are surrounded by commercial forestry and mature vegetation. The topography slopes upwards in the background of the image, obstructing any further views. Several residential properties can be seen to the right and centre of the image.</p> <p>No existing wind farms are visible in the view.</p> | | |
| Proposed Photomontage Description | <p>All 7 No. Proposed turbines are visible as a staggered linear array above the horizon in the background of the view. The lower portions of all Proposed turbine towers are partially screened from view by the prominent ridgeline which forms the eastern boundary of the site and the horizon in this landscape view. The Proposed turbines comprise a relatively small horizontal extent of this view. Due to the distance from this viewpoint and positioning upon the uplands, the Proposed turbines are framed in the background of the photomontage and appear as relatively small features.</p> | | |
| Cumulative Context – Proposed View with Cumulative | <p>The permitted White Hill Wind Farm can be seen to the left of the Proposed Wind Farm, the lower components of these permitted turbines are screened from view. The permitted Bilboa Wind Farm can be seen to the right of the Proposed Wind Farm, 3 no. of 5 no. turbines that comprise the permitted Bilboa Wind Farm are visible, with the 2 no. remaining turbines partially obscured from view.</p> | | |
| Cumulative Effects | <p>In combination (simultaneous) cumulative visual effects arise. The Proposed Project is flanked on either side by the permitted turbines of the Bilboa Wind Farm (right/north) and the permitted White Hill Wind Farm (left/south). The Proposed Project increases the number of turbines visible above and beyond the ridgeline which forms the Killeshin Hill. Due to its positioning between the two permitted developments, the Proposed Project does not increase the horizontal extent of turbines seen in the landscape. From this viewpoint and at this distance, the Proposed Project instead links the three developments together as an intermittent linear array of turbines seen across the uplands.</p> <p>Whilst some cumulative effects occur, due to the great distance and non-obstruction of key sensitive views, no 'Significant' effects are likely to arise.</p> | | |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| Sensitivity of Visual Receptor(s) | <p>Low: Includes viewers engaged in activities where the focus is not on the landscape or view. These including those traveling along a busy route, the M9.</p> <p>Refer to Section 1.7.1 'Visual Receptor Sensitivity' in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology.</p> | | |
| Magnitude of Change | <p>Slight. <i>"The proposals would be partially visible or visible at sufficient distance to be perceptible and result in a low level of change in the view and its composition and a low degree of contrast. The character of the view may be altered but will remain similar to the baseline existing situation. This change could be short term or of a short duration."</i></p> <p>For the definition of this rating, please refer to Section 1.7.2 'Magnitude of Visual Change' in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology.</p> | | |
| Significance of Effect | <p>Low × Slight = Minor/Negligible = 'Not Significant' (EPA, 2022) <i>'An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment but without significant consequences'.</i></p> <p>Refer to Section 1.7.3 'Visual Effects Assessment Matrix' in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology.</p> | | |
| Mitigation Factors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Proposed turbines are viewed above the skyline and therefore does not obstruct any valuable landscape views from this location; ➤ Visual effects are mitigated by the distance to the site; ➤ The Proposed Project is effectively absorbed within the relatively wide and expansive landscape view; ➤ There will be no significant visual effects for receptors using the M9 as visibility of the Proposed turbines will be far less than is shown in the photomontage which is an elevated vantage point above the motorway. | | |
| Residual Visual Effect | <p>After considering all Mitigation Factors = 'Not Significant' (EPA, 2022) <i>'An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment but without significant consequences'.</i></p> <p>Refer to Section 1.8 'Determining Residual Landscape and Visual Effects' in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology.</p> | | |

1.4.7 VP7: Bagenalstown and River Barrow

| Viewpoint 7: Bagenalstown and River Barrow | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
| Viewpoint Description and Details | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ View along the R705 regional road in the town of Bagenalstown, North of the local indoor swimming pool. ➤ The viewpoint is located approx. 8.8km South-East of the nearest Proposed turbine (T05). ➤ Grid Reference (ITM): E 670,589; N 662,774. ➤ No. of turbines visible (including blades/tips): 6 (out of 7). | | |
| LCA and Sensitivity | CLCT Central Lowland: Medium | Visual Receptors and Sensitivity | River Barrow (Blueway and walking trails): High Bagenalstown: Medium R705 regional road: Low |

| | |
|---|---|
| Description of 'Existing View' | The image shows a view along the corridor of the River Barrow. The orientation of the river from this perspective permits long ranging views of the uplands where the Proposed Wind Farm site is located in the distant background of the view. The landscape is flat along the River Barrow corridor and is generally enclosed by mature deciduous vegetation. |
| Proposed Photomontage Description | 6 No. Proposed turbines are visible as a staggered linear array beyond the distant ridgeline. Turbines T02 and T07 are screened by vegetation but may be visible in winter months. From this location the Proposed turbines are viewed above the horizon and are framed in the background of the photomontage by the mature vegetation either side of the river. The lower portions of all Proposed turbine towers are partially screened from view by the prominent ridgeline which forms the eastern boundary of the site and the horizon in this landscape view. The Proposed turbines comprise a relatively small horizontal extent of this view. Due to the distance from this viewpoint and positioning upon the uplands, the Proposed turbines are framed in the background of the photomontage and appear as relatively small features. |
| Cumulative Context – Proposed View with Cumulative | Turbines of the permitted White Hill Wind Farm can be seen to the left of the Proposed Project, the lower components of these permitted turbines are screened from view. The permitted Bilboa Wind Farm is visible in the wireline but the photomontage shows that dense mature vegetation will screen the permitted turbines from view. |
| Cumulative Effects | In combination (simultaneous) cumulative visual effects arise as the Proposed turbines are visible with the permitted White Hill Wind Farm turbines. The Proposed Project increases the number of turbines visible above and beyond the ridgeline which forms the Killeshin Hill. |
| Sensitivity of Visual Receptor(s) | High: This District Town is a receptor of medium sensitivity. However, the viewpoint is representative of receptors visiting the River Barrow and the recreational walking trails along the river, receptors are likely to be at this location in a recreational capacity, therefore, on balance, sensitivity is deemed to be High. Refer to Section 1.7.1 'Visual Receptor Sensitivity' in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology. |
| Magnitude of Change | Slight. <i>"The proposals would be partially visible or visible at sufficient distance to be perceptible and result in a low level of change in the view and its composition and a low degree of contrast. The character of the view may be altered but will remain similar to the baseline existing situation. This change could be short term or of a short duration."</i> For the definition of this rating, please refer to Section 1.7.2 'Magnitude of Visual Change' in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology. |
| Significance of Effect | High × Slight = Moderate/Minor = 'Moderate' (EPA, 2022) <i>'An effect that alters the character of the environment in a manner consistent with existing and emerging baseline trends'.</i> Refer to Section 1.7.3 'Visual Effects Assessment Matrix' in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology. |

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Mitigation Factors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ This specific viewpoint was chosen as its specific orientation permits long ranging views to the north-west along the unobstructed form of the river in the exact direction of the Proposed Project. Visibility of the Proposed turbines as shown in the photomontage does not occur in most other low lying areas within the river corridor where the mature woodland lining either side of the river will greatly restrict visibility; A photowire PWVF1 (included in Appendix 14-5) was captured from a location by the banks of the river approximately 200 meters south of this viewpoint where no visibility of the Proposed turbines will occur. ➤ This is the only viewpoint within Baginbally with open views of the Proposed turbines, there is also likely to be no/very limited visibility from receptors in Moneybeg to the south. ➤ The Proposed turbines are viewed above the skyline and read coherently within the landscape, they do not obstruct any protected landscape views from this location; ➤ Visual effects are mitigated by the distance; |
| Residual Visual Effect | <p>After considering all Mitigation Factors = 'Slight' (EPA, 2022) <i>'An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment without affecting its sensitivities'.</i></p> <p>Refer to Section 1.8 'Determining Residual Landscape and Visual Effects' in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology.</p> |

1.4.8 VP8: Ardough or Huntspark

| Viewpoint 8: Ardough or Huntspark | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| Viewpoint Description and Details | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ View from the L3897 in the townland of Ardough or Huntspark, North of the Proposed Project, adjacent to the existing Gortahile Wind Farm; ➤ The viewpoint is located approx. 3.6km north of the nearest Proposed turbine (T01). ➤ Grid Reference (ITM): E: 663,892; N: 673,275. ➤ No. of turbines visible (including blades/tips): 7 (out of 7). | | |
| LCA and Sensitivity | L-LCT Mountain, Hills and Upland Areas: Medium | Visual Receptors and Sensitivity | Residents in medium proximity to Proposed Project: Medium |
| Description of 'Existing View' | <p>This image shows a medium-range view from an elevated perspective on a local road. The view looks across an undulating landscape characterised by agricultural fields and commercial forestry. Gallows Hills is the elevated landform seen in the middle-distance comprising tracts of conifer plantations. Slightly longer ranging views are permitted down the small river valley to the south-west (right of the image). The distant form of Mount Leinster is visible in the far background left (south-east) of the image. Residential dwellings and farm sheds can be seen throughout the landscape, although in general it is a sparsely settled area.</p> <p>One turbine of the existing Gortahile Wind Farm is located in the right foreground.</p> | | |

| | |
|---|---|
| Proposed Photomontage Description | <p>All 7 No. Proposed turbines are visible in the centre background of the photomontage, beyond Gallows Hill (and the permitted Bilboa Wind Farm turbines visible in closer proximity to this viewpoint). From this perspective, the Proposed Project is perceived as two separate groups of three turbines, which has some visual balance. All Proposed turbines are generally viewed above the horizon. The hubs and blades of all Proposed turbines are visible above the treeline, while the lower sections of all turbines are not visible due to screening by the treeline and undulating landscape. The proposed met mast is modelled in the wireline, however it will have limited visibility at this distance due to its slender lattice form and limited prominence in the landscape compared with the Proposed turbines.</p> |
| Cumulative Context – Proposed View with Cumulative | <p>The 5 No. permitted Bilboa Wind Farm turbines are located just beyond the first ridgeline of Gallows Hill seen in the middle distance of the photomontage. 3 No. turbines of the permitted White Hills Wind Farm are just visible in the right background, beyond the localised rise in the topography and farm shed adjacent to the existing Gortahile Wind Farm turbines seen in the foreground. Due to the location immediately adjacent to the wind farm, the 7 No. other existing Gortahile Wind Farm turbines are clearly visible in other fields of view (north and west) from this viewpoint. The Proposed Freneystown Wind Farm turbines are modelled in the wireline view, they are unlikely to be visible from this location due to screening from localised topography.</p> |
| Cumulative Effects | <p>In combination simultaneous cumulative effects arise as the Proposed turbines are viewed with the permitted Bilboa Wind Farm turbines. The two developments (Proposed Project and permitted Bilboa Wind Farm) are contiguous and connected from this perspective and could be perceived as one wind farm within the extensive area of commercial forestry beyond Gallows Hill. The addition of the permitted White Hill Wind Farm in the distant right adds to the in combination visual effects. In combination successional (where a receptor turns their head) cumulative effects will arise with the existing Gorthile Wind Farm turbines which are seen to the north and west. The Proposed Project contributes to a wide spatial extent of turbines visible across the landscape from this viewpoint.</p> |
| Sensitivity of Visual Receptor(s) | <p>Medium: The viewpoint is representative of residential receptors in the surrounding rural landscape where cumulative visual effects are most likely to occur. It is a sparsely settled area and residential receptors are setback (>3.5 km) from the Proposed Wind Farm site. The view comprises a working landscape of forestry and fields. On balance, sensitivity is deemed to be Medium.</p> <p>Refer to Section 1.7.1 ‘Visual Receptor Sensitivity’ in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology.</p> |
| Magnitude of Change | <p>Moderate: The Proposed turbines are well set back and read coherently within the view and could be considered to have a ‘Slight’ magnitude of change. However, cumulative visual effects are taken into account and the magnitude of change is deemed to be Moderate.</p> <p>For the definition of this rating, please refer to Section 1.7.2 ‘Magnitude of Visual Change’ in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology.</p> |

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Significance of Effect | <p>Medium × Moderate = Moderate/Minor = ‘Moderate’ (EPA, 2022) <i>‘An effect that alters the character of the environment in a manner consistent with existing and emerging baseline trends’.</i></p> <p>Refer to Section 1.7.3 ‘Visual Effects Assessment Matrix’ in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology.</p> |
| Mitigation Factors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ This viewpoint is on the western side of a small river valley and is one of the more open views of the Proposed turbines in this area. Other residential receptors along this road have more limited views towards the Proposed turbines due to roadside screening and residential dwellings having primary views looking away from the site (and other cumulative turbines) across the valley to the east; ➤ Siting of Proposed turbines adheres to the recommended 500m set-back distance in the DoEHLG 2006 Guidelines and also the 4-times-tip-height set-back distance set out for residential visual amenity prescribed by the Draft DoHPLG 2019 Guidelines; ➤ The working landscape of commercial forestry beyond Gallows Hill effectively absorbs both the permitted Bilboa Wind Farm turbines and the Proposed turbines, they can be perceived as one connected development from this perspective and do not impact any particularly sensitive landscape views. ➤ Due to the intervening vegetation and localised topography in the landscape, the Proposed turbines appear appropriately set-back from this view; ➤ From this location, the Proposed turbines are seen as a staggered linear layout across the commercial forestry and read coherently in the landscape view; |
| Residual Visual Effect | <p>‘Moderate’ (EPA, 2022) <i>‘An effect that alters the character of the environment in a manner consistent with existing and emerging baseline trends’.</i></p> <p>Refer to Section 1.8 ‘Determining Residual Landscape and Visual Effects’ in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology.</p> |

1.4.9 VP9: Reevanagh

| Viewpoint 9: Reevanagh (and Co. Kilkenny Scenic View 13) | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| Viewpoint Description and Details | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ View to the north-east from Co. Kilkenny designated Scenic View 13 (KCDP) in the townland of Reevanagh. ➤ The viewpoint is located approx. 6.2km South-West of the nearest Proposed turbine (T07). ➤ Grid Reference (ITM): E 658,714; N 664,245. ➤ No. of turbines visible (including blades/tips): 4 (out of 7). | | |
| LCA and Sensitivity | KK-LCT-B Castlecomer Plateaux: Medium | Visual Receptors and Sensitivity | Kilkenny Scenic View 13: High Residential receptors: Medium |
| Description of ‘Existing View’ | The image shows medium ranging view overlooking a landscape characterised by undulating agricultural land and commercial forestry. Fields are delineated by mature boundary vegetation throughout the view. Forestry sites are a | | |

| | |
|---|--|
| | <p>comment element in the landscape and occasional residential dwellings, although it appears to be a sparsely settled area. The Castlecomer Plateau extends east (to the right) across the background of the image towards the Killeslin Hills where the Proposed Project is located.</p> <p>2 No. existing Gortahile Wind Farm turbines are just visible as very small features upon the distant ridgeline in the left background of the view. All existing Gortahile Wind Farm turbines are modelled in the wireline view, but are not seen in the existing image due to screening from elements in the foreground of this view. The existing Gortahile Wind Farm is likely to be seen as a whole from other locations in this area.</p> |
| Proposed Photomontage Description | <p>4 No. Proposed turbines are clearly visible as a staggered linear array above the horizon in the background of the view (The permitted White Hill Wind Farm turbines are the largest turbines in the photomontage, visible in closest proximity to this viewpoint – see wireline view for identification). Proposed turbines T01, T02, and T04 are partially screened by mature deciduous vegetation in the middle distance (may have some visibility in winter months). The Proposed turbines are visible as small features in the background of the photomontage. The Proposed turbines comprise only a small horizontal extent of this view.</p> |
| Cumulative Context – Proposed View with Cumulative | <p>All turbines of the permitted White Hill Wind Farm are visible in the middle distance of the photomontage and are the most prominent turbines due to their proximity to this viewpoint. 4 no. of the permitted White Hill Wind Farm turbines will have the lower components screened by vegetation. The Proposed turbines are visible beyond the permitted White Hill Wind Farm turbines. Several turbines of the permitted Bilboa Wind Farm are visible upon the elevated lands in the distance within the centre left background of the view.</p> |
| Cumulative Effects | <p>In combination (simultaneous) cumulative visual effects arise as multiple wind energy developments are visible within one relatively narrow field of view. The Proposed Project contributes to the density of turbines visible from this viewpoint, contributing additional turbines to the background of the view beyond the permitted White Hill Wind Farm. Due to its positioning between the two permitted developments (White Hill and Bilboa Wind Farms), the Proposed Project does not increase the horizontal extent of turbines seen in the landscape. Ultimately the Proposed Project has a limited contribution to the cumulative visual effects from this receptor, due to the set back distance and partial screening of some of the Proposed turbines.</p> <p>The proposed Frenystown Wind Farm will potentially be visible to the south in a future receiving environment from other areas close to this viewpoint which could also represent Kilkenny Scenic View 13. The proposed Frenystown Wind Farm turbines would not be seen from this viewpoint (in combination - succession) but could contribute to cumulative effects in this area.</p> |
| Sensitivity of Visual Receptor(s) | <p>High: On account of this viewpoint located at Co. Kilkenny designated scenic view No. 13.</p> <p>Refer to Section 1.7.1 ‘Visual Receptor Sensitivity’ in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology.</p> |
| Magnitude of Change | <p>Moderate: On their own, the Proposed turbines contribute a ‘Slight’ magnitude of change to this view. However, in mind of potential cumulative visual effects</p> |

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| | <p>which could potentially occur in a future receiving environment, the magnitude of change is deemed to be 'Moderate'.</p> <p>For the definition of this rating, please refer to Section 1.7.2 'Magnitude of Visual Change' in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology.</p> |
| Significance of Effect | <p>High × Moderate = Moderate = 'Significant' (EPA, 2022) <i>'An effect, which by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity alters a sensitive aspect of the environment'.</i></p> <p>Refer to Section 1.7.3 'Visual Effects Assessment Matrix' in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology.</p> |
| Mitigation Factors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Within the KKCDP, the view of the designated Scenic View 13 is described as a panorama to the South-East, South and to the south-west, and it is also indicated in these directions on the mapping in the KKCDP. The protected scenic amenity is therefore in a direction looking away from the Proposed turbines, the opposite direction than is presented in the photomontage, which is focussed to the north-east. ➤ The descriptions in policy and appraisals during site visits determined that the main focus and key sensitivities from this scenic view are both open views towards the Barrow Valley (South-East) as well as open views to the south-west towards Kilkenny City. The protections and scenic sensitivities are not likely to be the medium range view towards the area of commercial forestry that comprises part of the land use on the Proposed Project site; ➤ This viewpoint was captured from an opening of vegetation along the L2627 where the scenic view 13 is located and this permits open views to the east and north-east towards the Proposed Project. There will be very limited visibility of the Proposed turbines from many other locations in this area. ➤ Whilst KK Scenic View 13 is a designated scenic view, it is a local road of low traffic density, and it is unlikely this route is highly valued for its tourism amenity. ➤ The Proposed Project and other existing or permitted wind energy developments will not significantly impact upon the key landscape or scenic sensitivities of this area and the protected view, even accounting for likely cumulative visual effects. ➤ The Proposed turbines are small features in the background of the view and have a limited contribution to the cumulative visual effects. ➤ Residential receptors, such as those visible in the foreground of the photomontage have their primary scenic amenity focused across the Barrow Valley to the east and south-east, not in the direction of the Proposed turbines. |
| Residual Visual Effect | <p>After considering all Mitigation Factors = 'Moderate' (EPA, 2022) <i>'An effect, which by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity alters a sensitive aspect of the environment'.</i></p> <p>Refer to Section 1.8 'Determining Residual Landscape and Visual Effects' in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology.</p> |

1.4.10 VP10: Firoda Lower

| Viewpoint 10: Firoda Lower (and Co. Kilkenny Scenic View 12) | | | |
|--|---|----------------------------------|---|
| Viewpoint Description and Details | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> View form the R694 regional road in the townland of Firoda Lower adjacent to Kilkenny designated Scenic View 12. The viewpoint is located approx. 13.2km North-West of the nearest Proposed turbine (T01). Grid Reference (ITM): E 650,827; N: 673,702. No. of turbines visible (including blades/tips): 7 (out of 7). | | |
| LCA and Sensitivity | KK-LCT-B Castelcomer Plateaux: Medium | Visual Receptors and Sensitivity | R694 regional road: Medium Castelcomer: Medium Kilkenny Scenic View 12: High |
| Description of 'Existing View' | <p>This image shows a long-range view across the Castlecomer Plateau from an elevated location to the western side of the valley containing the River Dinin and town of Castlecomer. The R694 regional road can be seen in the foreground. The landscape is characterised by a sparsely settled rural landscape comprising small agricultural fields, pockets of woodland and tracts of forestry in the most elevated areas. The distinctive form of Mount Leinster is visible in the distant background right of the view.</p> <p>5 No. existing Gortahile Wind Farm turbines are visible upon the ridgeline in the background left of the view.</p> | | |
| Proposed Photomontage Description | <p>All 7 No. Proposed turbines are visible as a linear array above the horizon in the background of the view. The lower portions of all turbine towers are partially screened from view by the intervening ridgeline forming the eastern side of the Dinin valley. The Proposed turbines comprise a relatively small horizontal extent of this view. Due to the distance from this viewpoint and positioning upon the uplands in the background of the photomontage, the Proposed turbines appear as relatively small features.</p> | | |
| Cumulative Context – Proposed View with Cumulative | <p>The permitted White Hill Wind Farm is visible to the right background of the photomontage, at a similar scale to the Proposed Project. The permitted Bilboa Wind Farm turbines are viewed to the left background of the photomontage between the Proposed turbines and existing Gortahile Wind Farm.</p> | | |
| Cumulative Effects | <p>In combination with the other existing and permitted wind farm developments, the Proposed Project contributes the array of turbines viewed beyond the distant ridgeline. From this perspective, there is clear separation between the differing developments, and they are all well absorbed across the upland area in this long ranging landscape view.</p> | | |
| Sensitivity of Visual Receptor(s) | <p>High. On account of this viewpoint located at a Co. Kilkenny designated scenic view.</p> <p>Refer to Section 1.7.1 'Visual Receptor Sensitivity' in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology.</p> | | |
| Magnitude of Change | <p>Slight <i>"The proposals would be partially visible or visible at sufficient distance to be perceptible and result in a low level of change in the view and its composition and a low degree of contrast. The character of the view may be</i></p> | | |

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| | <p><i>altered but will remain similar to the baseline existing situation. This change could be short term or of a short duration."</i></p> <p>For the definition of this rating, please refer to Section 1.7.2 'Magnitude of Visual Change' in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology.</p> |
| Significance of Effect | <p>High × Slight = Moderate/Minor = 'Moderate' (EPA, 2022) <i>'An effect that alters the character of the environment in a manner consistent with existing and emerging baseline trends'.</i></p> <p>Refer to Section 1.7.3 'Visual Effects Assessment Matrix' in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology.</p> |
| Mitigation Factors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Visual effects are reduced by the distance and that the Proposed turbines read coherently in the landscape as an evenly spaced linear array in the background of the view; ➤ The Proposed turbines are viewed above the skyline and do not obstruct any landscape views from this location; ➤ The Proposed Project and other wind energy developments are effectively absorbed within the relatively wide and expansive landscape view which extend beyond the fields of view presented in the photomontage booklet. ➤ Kilkenny Scenic View 12 includes several other views and prospects upon the regional road to the west of this viewpoint where there is no theoretical visibility of the Proposed turbines. ➤ The Proposed turbines do not significantly impact upon the key scenic sensitivities of this area and the designated scenic view. ➤ No Visibility will occur in the settlement of Castlecomer. |
| Residual Visual Effect | <p>After considering all Mitigation Factors = 'Slight' (EPA, 2022) <i>'An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment without affecting its sensitivities'.</i></p> <p>Refer to Section 1.8 'Determining Residual Landscape and Visual Effects' in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology.</p> |

1.4.11 VP11: Kilgraney

| Viewpoint 11: Kilgraney (and Co. Carlow SR-25) | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| Viewpoint Description and Details | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ View from the R705 regional road in the townland of Kilgraney along SR-25. ➤ The viewpoint is located approx. 13.8km South-East of the nearest Proposed turbine (T07). ➤ Grid Reference (ITM): E 670,878; N 656,327. ➤ No. of turbines visible (including blades/tips): 7 (out of 7). | | |
| LCA and Sensitivity | C-LCT Central Lowland: Medium | Visual Receptors and Sensitivity | SR-25: High R705 regional road: Low |
| Description of 'Existing View' | <p>The image shows a long-range view across agricultural fields onto the upland area of the Killeslin Hills. The landscape is relatively flat, with a gentle sloping undulation in the right middle-ground to the upland area of the Killeslin Hills in the background. Mature trees in the left middle-ground screen long-ranging views to the west.</p> | | |

| | |
|--|--|
| | <p>The existing Gortahile Wind Farm turbines are seen in the distant centre-right background of the view upon the distant ridgeline. The wireline view indicates that the single existing Kilcarrig turbine will be seen, however it is screened from view by mature treelines and localised topography.</p> |
| Proposed Photomontage Description | <p>All 7 No. Proposed turbines are visible as a staggered linear array above the horizon in the background of the view. The lower portions of all Proposed turbine towers are partially screened from view by the prominent ridgeline which forms the eastern boundary of the site and the horizon in this landscape view. The Proposed turbines comprise a relatively small horizontal extent of this view. Due to the distance from this viewpoint and positioning upon the uplands, the Proposed turbines appear as relatively small features.</p> |
| Cumulative Context – Proposed View with Cumulative | <p>The permitted Bilboa Wind Farm turbines are viewed to the north (right) of the Proposed Project in the same field of view as the existing Gortahile Wind Farm turbines, increasing the density of turbines in that location. The permitted White Hill Wind Farm turbines are visible in the left background of the photomontage although they are mostly obscured by the intervening landform and mature woodland. A blade tip of the singular permitted Jerry Bolger turbine will be visible above the woodland to the far right of the view. The Proposed Freneystown Wind Farm turbines will potentially be visible beyond the distant ridgeline to the left background of the photomontage in a future receiving environment.</p> |
| Cumulative Effects | <p>The Proposed Project increase the density of turbines visible upon the elevated ridgeline in the background of the view. From this perspective, most in combination (in succession) cumulative effects occur where the Proposed turbines are visible adjacent to the existing Gortahile Wind Farm and permitted Bilboa Wind Farm turbines.</p> |
| Sensitivity of Visual Receptor(s) | <p>High: On account of this viewpoint located on a Co. Carlow designated Scenic Route 25.</p> <p>Refer to Section 1.7.1 ‘Visual Receptor Sensitivity’ in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology.</p> |
| Magnitude of Change | <p>Slight: <i>“The proposals would be partially visible or visible at sufficient distance to be perceptible and result in a low level of change in the view and its composition and a low degree of contrast. The character of the view may be altered but will remain similar to the baseline existing situation. This change could be short term or of a short duration.”</i></p> <p>For the definition of this rating, please refer to Section 1.7.2 ‘Magnitude of Visual Change’ in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology.</p> |
| Significance of Effect | <p>High × Slight = Moderate/Minor = ‘Moderate’ (EPA, 2022)</p> <p><i>‘An effect that alters the character of the environment in a manner consistent with existing and emerging baseline trends’.</i></p> <p>Refer to Section 1.7.3 ‘Visual Effects Assessment Matrix’ in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology.</p> |
| Mitigation Factors | <p>➤ The Proposed Project reads coherently within the landscape as the Proposed turbines are evenly spaced in a linear layout visually balanced with the form and shape of the elevated ridgeline;</p> |

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Proposed Project is viewed above the skyline and does not obstruct any landscape views from this location; ➤ Visual effects are mitigated by the distance; ➤ The Proposed Project and other wind farms in the elevated upland area are effectively absorbed within the relatively wide and expansive landscape view; ➤ Whilst SR-25 is a designated scenic route, it is a local road of low traffic density and it is unlikely this route is highly valued for its tourism amenity. ➤ This location along SR-25 represents one of the most open views of the Proposed turbines in this area. A large proportion of SR-25 is located in areas where there is no theoretical visibility of the Proposed turbines. ➤ The Proposed turbines do not significantly impact upon the key scenic sensitivities of this area and the designated scenic route, which are considered to be the expansive panoramic views to the north and north-west, in a different direction to the Proposed turbines. |
| Residual Visual Effect | <p>After considering all Mitigation Factors = 'Slight' (EPA, 2022) <i>'An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment without affecting its sensitivities'.</i></p> <p>Refer to Section 1.8 'Determining Residual Landscape and Visual Effects' in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology.</p> |

1.4.12 VP12: Ballyryan

| Viewpoint 12: Ballyryan (and Co. Carlow SR-5) | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| Viewpoint Description and Details | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ View from the L3052 local road in the townland of Ballyryan along SR-5. ➤ The viewpoint is located approx. 9.3km South-East of the nearest Proposed turbine (T03). ➤ Grid Reference (ITM): E 673,455; N 668,088. ➤ No. of turbines visible (including blades/tips): 7 (out of 7). | | |
| LCA and Sensitivity | CLCT Central Lowland: Medium | Visual Receptors and Sensitivity | SR-5: High Ballyryan Townland (very few residential receptors): Low |
| Description of 'Existing View' | <p>This image shows an open and expansive long-range view from a higher-elevation vantage point looking out across the Barrow Valley which comprises a wide floodplain of agricultural fields, with mature vegetation delineating the field boundaries. The landscape slopes downwards from the foreground across the flats and then rises to steeper slopes beyond the Barrow River forming the upland area of the Killeshin Hills across the background of the view. Residential dwellings are sparsely located throughout the landscape. The linear layout and form of the Proposed Project is visually balanced in the landscape relative to the linear form of the ridgeline.</p> <p>The wireline suggests that blades of three turbines of the existing Gortahile Wind Farm will be visible. One blade is just discernible in the existing view.</p> | | |
| Proposed Photomontage Description | <p>All 7 No. Proposed turbines are visible as a staggered linear array above the horizon in the background of the view. The lower portions of all turbine towers are partially screened from view by the prominent ridgeline which forms the eastern boundary of the site and the horizon in this landscape view. At this</p> | | |

| | |
|---|---|
| | distance, the Proposed turbines are small features and comprise a relatively small horizontal extent of this view. Due to the distance from this viewpoint, and positioning upon the uplands are well set back from receptors at this viewpoint on the other side of the valley. |
| Cumulative Context – Proposed View with Cumulative | The permitted White Hill Wind Farm can be viewed in the left background and the permitted Bilboa Wind Farm will be viewed in the right background of the photomontage. Lower components of these permitted turbines are mostly partially obscured from view by the distant ridgeline. The Proposed Project is centred between these permitted developments and there is clear separation between the three developments. |
| Cumulative Effects | In combination (simultaneous) cumulative visual effects arise. The Proposed Project is flanked on either side by the turbines of the permitted Bilboa Wind Farm (right/north) and the permitted White Hill Wind Farm (left/south). The Proposed Project increases the number of turbines visible above and beyond the ridgeline which forms the Killeshin Hills, contributing a greater linear array of turbines across this well defined linear ridgeline. Whilst some cumulative effects occur, they are not deemed to be significant. |
| Sensitivity of Visual Receptor(s) | High: On account of this viewpoint located on a Co. Carlow designated scenic Route. Refer to Section 1.7.1 ‘Visual Receptor Sensitivity’ in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology. |
| Magnitude of Change | Slight. <i>“The proposals would be partially visible or visible at sufficient distance to be perceptible and result in a low level of change in the view and its composition and a low degree of contrast. The character of the view may be altered but will remain similar to the baseline existing situation. This change could be short term or of a short duration.”</i> For the definition of this rating, please refer to Section 1.7.2 ‘Magnitude of Visual Change’ in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology. |
| Significance of Effect | High × Slight = Moderate/Minor = ‘Moderate’ (EPA, 2022) <i>‘An effect that alters the character of the environment in a manner consistent with existing and emerging baseline trends’.</i> Refer to Section 1.7.3 ‘Visual Effects Assessment Matrix’ in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology. |
| Mitigation Factors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Proposed Project is viewed above the skyline and therefore does not obstruct any valuable landscape views from this location; ➤ Visual effects are mitigated by the distance to the site; ➤ The Proposed Project is effectively absorbed within the wide and expansive landscape view; ➤ Whilst SR-5 is a designated scenic route, it is a local road of low traffic density and it is unlikely this route is highly valued for its tourism amenity. ➤ The Proposed turbines are evenly spaced and read coherently within the landscape; ➤ The Proposed turbines are a staggered linear layout, aligned with the DoEHLG 2006 Guidelines guidance for Transitional Marginal Landscape Character Types. This linear layout is visually balanced with the prominent linear ridgeline from this perspective; |

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| | <p>➤ This viewpoint location along SR-5 represents one of the most open views of the Proposed turbines in this area. Other residential receptors and views along this road will have more limited views of the Proposed turbines, owing to roadside screening.</p> |
| Residual Visual Effect | <p>After considering all Mitigation Factors = 'Slight' (EPA, 2022) <i>'An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment without affecting its sensitivities'.</i></p> <p>Refer to Section 1.8 'Determining Residual Landscape and Visual Effects' in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology.</p> |

1.4.13 VP13: Brownhill Portal Dolmen

| Viewpoint 13: Brownhill Portal Dolmen | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| Viewpoint Description and Details | <p>➤ View from Brownhill Portal Dolmen near Carlow Town.</p> <p>➤ The viewpoint is located approx. 13.5km East of the nearest Proposed turbine (T03).</p> <p>➤ Grid Reference (ITM): E 675,398; N 676,870.</p> <p>➤ No. of turbines visible (including blades/tips): 2 (out of 7).</p> | | |
| LCA and Sensitivity | CLCA 2 Central Lowlands: Medium | Visual Receptors and Sensitivity | <p>Brownhill Portal Dolmen, a Cultural Heritage Tourism Destination: High</p> <p>R726 regional road: Low;</p> <p>Settlements south of Portal Dolmen: Low;</p> |
| Description of 'Existing View' | <p>The image shows a short range view across the grassy field which surrounds Brownhill Portal Dolmen, immediately adjacent to the monument. As shown in the image, mature boundary vegetation in the form of hedgerows and tree line provide a sense of enclosure and restrict most long-range views. Long There will be a slight, intermittent view of the upland area of the Killeshin Hills, with vegetation obscuring the full horizontal extent of the upland area. The slightly elevated landform surrounding the western side of monument limits long-ranging views to the west from this location. As shown in the image, only a small portion of the Killeshin Hills is visible in the distant background of the view.</p> | | |
| Proposed Photomontage Description | <p>2 No. Proposed turbines can be clearly viewed in the photomontage (T06, and T03) upon the far distant ridgeline, they are very small features in the view at this distance. Substantial vegetation of hedgerows and a tree-line screens several Proposed turbines from view in this photomontage, however, T07, T05, T04 and T02, would likely be partially visible in winter months when vegetation has lost their foliage. As shown by the wireline, the lower components of the Proposed turbine are partially screened by the prominent ridgeline which forms the eastern boundary of the site. The Proposed turbines comprise a small horizontal extent of this view.</p> | | |

| | |
|---|--|
| Cumulative Context – Proposed View with Cumulative | Turbines of the permitted Bilboa Wind Farm and White Hill Wind Farms are shown in the wireline view either side of the Proposed Wind Farm. Other permitted turbines from these wind farms are not visible in the photomontage due to vegetation screening, although they may be visible in winter months. Even in winter months, the other permitted turbines would be substantially screened from intervening landform at the western side of the Barrow Valley. |
| Cumulative Effects | The Proposed Project increases the number of turbines visible above and beyond the ridgeline which forms the Killeshin Hill. As indicated by the wireline the Proposed Project links the three developments together as an intermittent linear array of turbines seen across the uplands, should they be visible in winter months. |
| Sensitivity of Visual Receptor(s) | High: on account of viewers at well-known heritage or popular tourist or recreational areas – The Portal Dolmen, which is the largest dolmen in Europe. Refer to Section 1.7.1 ‘Visual Receptor Sensitivity’ in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology. |
| Magnitude of Change | Negligible: <i>“Any change would only be barely distinguishable from the status quo “do-nothing scenario” in the surroundings. The composition and character of the view would be substantially unaltered, approximately to little or no change.”</i> For the definition of this rating, please refer to Section 1.7.2 ‘Magnitude of Visual Change’ in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology. |
| Significance of Effect | High × Negligible = Minor = ‘Slight’ (EPA, 2022) <i>‘An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment without affecting its sensitivities’.</i> Refer to Section 1.7.3 ‘Visual Effects Assessment Matrix’ in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology. |
| Mitigation Factors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Due to set back distance, vegetation and localised topography in the intervening landscape the Proposed turbines will have no significant effects on the setting or key sensitivities of the Portal Dolmen; ➤ Visibility appraisals conducted during site visits, determined that the Proposed turbines will only be visible in this section of the Brownshill Portal Dolmen site - the Viewpoint Location. Due to the slightly elevated nature of the topography enclosing the area to the west and screening from vegetation, visibility will not occur from most other areas – See photowire PWVP-T in Appendix 14-5. ➤ There is likely to be either no, or very limited visibility of the Proposed turbines from the adjacent road (the car park) and throughout the surrounding area, owing to screening by buildings; ➤ Visibility elsewhere within the Portal Dolmen site will be extremely limited due to the enclosed nature of views from mature hedgerows to the west. There will be no significant effects on the setting of the Portal Dolmen. |
| Residual Visual Effect | After considering all Mitigation Factors = ‘Not Significant’ (EPA, 2022) <i>‘An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment but without significant consequences’.</i> |

| | |
|--|--|
| | Refer to Section 1.8 'Determining Residual Landscape and Visual Effects' in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology. |
|--|--|

1.4.14 VP14: Ridge (South-West Viewpoint)

| Viewpoint 14: Ridge (South-West Viewpoint) along Co. Carlow SR-7 | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| Viewpoint Description and Details | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > View from SR-7 in the townland of Ridge > The viewpoint is located approx. 900m West-South-West of the nearest Proposed turbine (T06). > Grid Reference (ITM): E: 662,669; N: 668,144. > No. of turbines visible (including blades/tips): 7 (out of 7). | | |
| LCA and Sensitivity | C-LCA 4 Killeshin Hills: Medium | Visual Receptors and Sensitivity | Residential receptors in close proximity: High SR-7: High |
| Description of 'Existing View' | This image shows a short-to-medium-ranging views to the north-east over a small valley comprising agricultural fields of grassland and commercial forestry. The fields are bordered by mature vegetation. The viewpoint is situated on the road at an elevated vantage point, while the topography slopes slightly upwards to the background of the image from the road to the right. Slightly longer ranging views are permitted to the left of the image, along the small valley to the north. | | |
| Proposed Photomontage Description | <p>The blades and hubs of all 7 No. Proposed turbines are visible. Proposed turbines T01, T04 and T06 are fully visible with no screening. The lower towers of Proposed turbines T02, T03, T05, and T07 are screened by commercial forestry. The proposed met mast is located in the foreground of the image, with no screening. The Proposed turbines comprise a relatively small horizontal extent of this view. All Proposed turbines are viewed above the commercial forestry and the horizon and not obstruct any existing landscape views. Whilst this viewpoint is in close proximity to some of the Proposed turbines, the intervening valley provides a sense of separation from this viewpoint and the Proposed turbines are not overbearing or dominant in this view.</p> <p>Although not shown in the photomontage (Proposed turbines are the focus of photomontages – as detailed in Section 1.5 of the methodology Appendix 14-1), the proposed site access road will be visible in the foreground of this view, mostly during the construction phase. However, planting is proposed as part of the Biodiversity Mitigation and Enhancement Plan (Appendix 6-4 of this EIAR) and Green Infrastructure Plan for the Proposed Project (Appendix 4-3 of this EIAR). This includes replacement of hedgerows removed for the access road, after planting has established, there will be limited visibility of the site access road from the viewpoint during the operational phase. Additional visualisations and discussion around these effects are presented in Figure 14-18 and Figure 14-19 in Section 14.7.3.2.2 of Chapter 14. The hardstand of turbine T06 will be visible from this viewpoint.</p> | | |
| Cumulative Context – | The permitted Bilboa Wind Farm will be evident in the left background of the image in combination with the Proposed Project. The proposed met mast will | | |

| | |
|---|--|
| Proposed View with Cumulative | <p>also be visible in the foreground of the image. Although not visible in the field of view presented (90 or 53.5), the turbines of the existing Gortahile Wind Farm are visible in the distance on elevated lands at the end of the small valley to the left (north) of the view.</p> <p>The permitted White Hill Wind Farm is located approximately 1.5km to the south-west of this viewpoint in the opposing direction. Visibility appraisals and turbine modelling determined that these permitted turbines are not likely to be visible from this viewpoint in a future receiving environment due to screening from an intervening hill and dense boundary vegetation in that direction – to the south-west.</p> |
| Cumulative Effects | <p>The permitted Bilboa Wind Farm is located North-East of the Proposed turbines and together, both developments appear coherent in the landscape. The Proposed turbines increase the horizontal extent of turbines in the view and some cumulative effects arise although they do not impact any key scenic sensitivities of the scenic route. The permitted Bilboa Wind Farm turbines appear appropriately set-back from the Proposed turbines and are consequently seen to be of smaller scale due to the distance from this viewpoint, providing a sense of separation with the Proposed Project.</p> |
| Assessment of Turbine Envelope Range | <p>As detailed in Section 14.1.3.2 of Chapter 14, additional photomontages are presented for this Viewpoint to show the turbine range, both scenario 1 – Maximum and then Scenario 2 – Minimum. These visuals show that there is barely a discernible difference between the different ranges. The difference is only just evident with the aid of a comparative wireline. Irrespective of which range is used, the determination of likely significant residual visual effects in this table will not be altered.</p> |
| Sensitivity of Visual Receptor(s) | <p>High sensitivity on account of Co. Carlow designated Scenic Route 7, as well as several residential receptors (approximately 6 No.) who will have similar views in the direction of the Proposed Project. Refer to Section 1.7.1 ‘Visual Receptor Sensitivity’ in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology.</p> |
| Magnitude of Change | <p>Moderate. The Proposed turbines are large features altering the character and composition of the view. The Proposed turbines do not comprise a large horizontal extent of the view and do not obstruct any landscape views. Whilst this viewpoint is in close proximity to the Proposed turbines, the intervening valley provides a sense of separation from this viewpoint and the Proposed turbines are not overbearing or dominant in this view. Some cumulative effects could potentially occur in a future receiving environment and are accounted for in this determination. For the definition of this rating, please refer to Section 1.7.2 ‘Magnitude of Visual Change’ in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology.</p> |
| Significance of Effect | <p>High × Moderate = Moderate = ‘Significant’ (EPA, 2022) <i>‘An effect, which by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity alters a sensitive aspect of the environment’.</i></p> <p>Refer to Section 1.7.3 ‘Visual Effects Assessment Matrix’ in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology.</p> |
| Mitigation Factors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ All turbine components are viewed above the horizon and do not obstruct any valuable landscape views of high scenic quality from this location; ➤ Although this is a designated scenic route, this is a short-range view of a working landscape comprising fields and commercial forestry and does not include distinctive or unique landscape features; |

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Several photomontages were captured on SR-7 in order to determine a location where the Proposed turbines are likely to be most visible. It was found that visibility of the Proposed turbines is localised to areas around this viewpoint (and Viewpoint 5), representing one of the only areas with open views towards the Proposed turbines on the scenic route; ➤ Whilst SR-7 is a designated scenic route, it is a local road of low traffic density and it is unlikely this route is highly valued for its tourism amenity; ➤ The Proposed turbines read coherently within the landscape, and are of acceptable scale with the intervening valley providing a sense of set back and separation from the road and residential receptors. ➤ Siting of Proposed turbines adheres to the recommended 500m set-back distance in the DoEHLG 2006 Guidelines and also the 4-times-tip-height set-back distance set out for residential visual amenity prescribed by the Draft DoHPLG 2019 Guidelines ; ➤ Visual effects will only arising as shown in the photomontage will only occur for a small number of residential receptors. ➤ The Proposed Project does not significantly impact on any highly sensitive scenic or landscape sensitivities in this from the designated scenic route. |
| Residual Visual Effect | <p>After considering all Mitigation Factors = ‘Moderate’ (EPA, 2022) <i>‘An effect that alters the character of the environment in a manner consistent with existing and emerging baseline trends’.</i></p> <p>Refer to Section 1.8 ‘Determining Residual Landscape and Visual Effects’ in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology.</p> |

1.4.15 VP15: Ridge (South Viewpoint)

| Viewpoint 15: Ridge (South Viewpoint) along Co. Carlow SR-7 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Viewpoint Description and Details | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Receptors on SR-7 in the townland of Ridge. ➤ The viewpoint is located approx. 850m South-West of the nearest Proposed turbine (T07). ➤ Grid Reference (ITM): E: 663,282; N: 667,365. ➤ No. of turbines visible (including blades/tips): 7 (out of 7). | | |
| LCA and Sensitivity | C-LCA 4 Killeslin Hills: Medium | Visual Receptors and Sensitivity | Residential Receptors in close proximity to the viewpoint: High SR-7: High |
| Description of ‘Existing View’ | <p>Shows a medium-range view from SR-7, looking across a landscape of agricultural fields and commercial forestry. Landform gently slopes up away from the field visible foreground. The viewpoint is situated at a higher elevation, allowing for views of the tops of the commercial forestry on the site. Prominent ridgelines form the background and which limit longer-ranging views. To the north-east (right of the view) landform and forestry obscures long ranging views to the Barrow Valley.</p> <p>Slightly longer ranging views are available to the north and north-west (left of the view). 7 No. turbines of the existing Gortahile Wind Farm are visible in this direction upon the distant ridgeline above the small river valley which follows a tributary of the River Dinin.</p> | | |

| | |
|---|---|
| Proposed Photomontage Description | <p>All 7 No. Proposed turbines are visible. The Proposed turbines are sited within commercial forestry, which screens the lower part of the towers. Proposed turbine T07 is located in closest proximity, and therefore is the largest and most prominent turbine from this viewpoint. The group of turbines (Proposed turbines and existing Gortahile Wind Farm turbines) are viewed as a relatively tight cluster with a small horizontal extent seen, this is due to the perspective of this view looking along the staggered linear layout from one end. Proposed turbine T01, T02, and T03 are located at the northern extent of the site (the other end of the staggered linear layout) and are consequently seen as smaller turbines from this perspective.</p> |
| Cumulative Context – Proposed View with Cumulative | <p>The permitted Bilboa Wind Farm is seen in the background of the photomontage directly beyond the Proposed Project while the existing Gortahile Wind Farm is viewed in the left background. The Permitted White Hill Wind Farm is located to the south-west of this viewpoint in an alternative field of view than is presented in the photomontage, the nearest permitted White Hills Wind Farm turbine is located approximately 1.4 km to the south-west of this viewpoint.</p> <p>The proposed Coolglass Wind Farm and its proposed met mast are shown in the 90 degree wireline view, but are not visible from this viewpoint due to screening by vegetation and other distant features of the landscape.</p> |
| Cumulative Effects | <p>In combination (simultaneous) views of the existing Gortahile Wind Farm and permitted Bilboa Wind Farm occur with the Proposed turbines. The Proposed Project therefore contributes to potential cumulative effects from this viewpoint. Cumulatively, all existing, permitted and proposed turbines are effectively absorbed in the landscape and do not effect any amenities of unique or distinctive scenic value.</p> <p>A photomontage of the permitted White Hill Wind Farm was produced from this exact viewpoint and was included as part of the LVIA included for the EIAR of the White Hill Wind Farm. That photomontage is seen in Viewpoint 11 (Figure 62) of that EIAR included as part of the planning application (PI Ref: PA01.315365). White Hill Wind Farm Viewpoint 11 shows that only one permitted turbine (WH T02) will be clearly visible, its hub is seen, but its lower components partially obscured by the localised landform. Only blades of the other permitted White Hill Wind Farm turbines will be visible. Whilst cumulative effects will be limited in this regard, some minor Combined in succession visibility will occur.</p> |
| Assessment of Turbine Envelope Range | <p>As detailed in Section 14.1.3.2 of Chapter 14, additional photomontages are presented for this Viewpoint to show the Proposed turbine range, both scenario 1 – Maximum and then Scenario 2 – Minimum. These visuals show that there is barely a discernible difference between the different ranges. The difference is only just evident with the aid of a comparative wireline. Irrespective of which range is used, the determination of likely significant residual visual effects in this table will not be altered.</p> |
| Sensitivity of Visual Receptor(s) | <p>High sensitivity on account of Co. Carlow designated Scenic Route 7, as well as several residential receptors (approximately 4 No.) who will have similar views in the direction of the Proposed Project. Refer to Section 1.7.1 ‘Visual Receptor Sensitivity’ in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology.</p> |
| Magnitude of Change | <p>Moderate. The Proposed turbines are large features altering the character and composition of the view. The Proposed turbines do not comprise a large</p> |

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| | <p>horizontal extent of the view and do not obstruct any landscape views. Some cumulative visual effects are likely to occur in a future receiving environment and are accounted for in this determination.</p> <p>For the definition of this rating, please refer to Section 1.7.2 'Magnitude of Visual Change' in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology.</p> |
| Significance of Effect | <p>High × Moderate = Moderate = 'Significant' (EPA, 2022) <i>'An effect, which by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity alters a sensitive aspect of the environment'.</i></p> <p>Refer to Section 1.7.3 'Visual Effects Assessment Matrix' in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology.</p> |
| Mitigation Factors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The view towards the Proposed Project does not comprise any landscape features of unique or distinctive aesthetic value; ➤ Although this is a designated scenic route, this is a relatively short-range view of a working landscape comprising fields and commercial forestry and does not include distinctive or unique landscape features; ➤ The Proposed turbine components are primarily viewed above the horizon and do not obstruct any long ranging landscape views; ➤ Several photomontages were captured on SR-7 in order to determine a location where the Proposed turbines are likely to be visible. It was found that visibility of the Proposed turbines is localised to areas around this viewpoint (and Viewpoint 3); The limited visibility in the direction of the Proposed turbines from SR-7 due to roadside screening is demonstrated and illustrated by mapping in the Route Screening Analysis presented in Section 14.3.3.1 of Chapter 14. ➤ Whilst SR-7 is a designated scenic route, it is a local road of low traffic density and it is unlikely this route is highly valued for its tourism amenity. ➤ Siting of Proposed turbines adheres to the recommended 500m set-back distance in the DoEHLG 2006 Guidelines and also the 4-times-tip-height set-back distance set out for residential visual amenity prescribed by the Draft DoHPLG 2019 Guidelines; ➤ The location of this viewpoint from the L3037 is one of the most open views of the Proposed turbines in this area. Other residential receptors along this road have more limited views towards the Proposed turbines due to roadside screening and residential dwellings having primary views looking in other directions, away from the site; ➤ The Proposed turbines are spaced appropriately in a staggered linear layout in response to the underlying field pattern, appropriate for transitional marginal landscape types adhering to the DoEHLG 2006 Guidelines and Draft DoHPLG 2019 Guidelines; ➤ Visual effects will only arising as shown in the photomontage will only occur for a small number of residential receptors. ➤ The Proposed Project does not significantly impact on any highly sensitive scenic or landscape sensitivities in this from the designated scenic route. |
| Residual Visual Effect | <p>After considering all Mitigation Factors = 'Moderate' (EPA, 2022) <i>'An effect that alters the character of the environment in a manner consistent with existing and emerging baseline trends'.</i></p> <p>Refer to Section 1.8 'Determining Residual Landscape and Visual Effects' in Appendix 14-1: LVIA Methodology.</p> |

RECEIVED: 07/05/2024



APPENDIX 14-3

PHOTOMONTAGE VIEWPOINT ASSESSMENT TABLES