White Hill Wind Farm Electricity Substation & Electricity Line

Environmental Impact Assessment Report

Annex 1.8: Community Consultation Report

White Hill Wind Limited

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110 kV Electricity Substation & Electricity Line
Community Consultation Report – December 2024

This report was prepared to outline the engagement undertaken with the local community in respect of the proposed White Hill Wind Farm 110 kV electricity substation and electricity line. The project team have engaged with local residents, businesses and locally elected representatives in the area.

The report outlines the community engagement initiatives undertaken by our project Community Liaison Officer (CLO) and wider project team prior to the submission of the planning application. It also outlines the key issues identified during the consultations, which we are seeking to address.

1. Project Website

The project team has published information about the substation and grid connection on the White Hill Wind Farm website (www.whitehillwindfarm.ie). Previous communications with residents and local stakeholders have been communicated on this website for updates on the wind farm and associated site developments. The website remains a crucial communication channel for keeping the public informed and up to date.

The website provides details on clinic locations, dates, times, and instructions on how to book a personalised appointment with the project team. For those unable to attend on scheduled clinic days, we have extended the option of arranging a visit or scheduling an alternative appointment date.

This dedicated website also includes information about the White Hill Wind Farm, which has already received planning permission.

After the planning application is submitted, the website (www.whitehillwindfarmsubstation.ie) will host the submitted planning application in compliance with statutory planning application requirements.

2. Notification of Local Community

To inform local residents about the White Hill Wind Farm 110 kV electricity substation and electricity line planning application, the team distributed information and contact details to households within approximately a 1 km radius of the proposed substation site. Over two days (1st and 2nd August 2024), the CLO visited homes, answering questions on the doorstep, gathering contact details for follow-up communications, and leaving information brochures. Where possible, households received a flyer about the proposed development (see Appendix A), which included an invitation to a clinic event held on the 28th and 29th of August 2024 at the Lord Bagenal Inn, Leghlinbridge, Co. Carlow. Householders were encouraged to discuss the project and share event details with neighbours.

The project brochure (see Appendix B) contained the following information:

- Project overview
- Map of proposed substation location
- Photomontage of existing and proposed infrastructure
- Planning Application Information
- FAQs
- Project contact details

3. Print Advertisement of Community Information Event

The clinic information event at The Lord Beagnal Inn, Leighlinbridge, Carlow, was advertised in the Kilkenny People on 21st August 2024 and the Carlow Nationalist on 13th August 2024. The notice informed the local community of the date, time and venue and provided contact details for the CLO (see Appendix C).

4. Local Radio Advertisement

In advance of the public information event, the project team advertised clinic information on the local radio station, KCLR96FM (see Appendix D). This advert was run 42 times between 14th & 27th August 2024. This advertisement included the date, time and venue and provided contact details for the CLO.

5. Notification of Local Elected Representatives

The project team members contacted local TDs and Councillors and sent a copy of the invitation to attend the public information event.

6. Notification for Local Residents By Posters

Furthermore, project team members posted informational posters (see Appendix E) throughout the local area, including…

- Post Offices
- Local shops, pubs and butchers
- Petrol station

7. Public Information Clinic Event

The project team hosted the clinic information event at the Lord Bagenal Inn, Leighlinbridge, Co. Carlow, on Wednesday, 28th August, and Thursday, 29th August 2024. Although clinic appointments were not fully booked prior to the event, the team anticipated potential walk-ins on the day. In total, approximately 17 people attended, engaging the project manager, Community Liaison Officer, and planning consultant with a variety of questions.

The Lord Bagenal Inn was selected as a suitable venue due to its facilities, availability, and close proximity to the proposed development. Both the project team and local residents were familiar with the location, having previously used it for White Hill Wind Farm planning application consultation events.

Large maps and photomontages were displayed for attendees, with a large television screen provided to showcase these materials and engineering drawings in greater detail. The project team also utilized Google Earth files to help residents visualize the proximity of their properties to the proposed development.

The project team on hand to answer questions included planning consultant, project manager and community liaison officer. The main queries raised during the information session, as recorded by the project team at the event, were:

1. Construction access
2. Construction duration
3. Height and number of lightning and pylon masts
4. Grid connection and road works
5. Visual impacts
6. Noise
7. Proximity to houses
8. Property valuation

9. Health

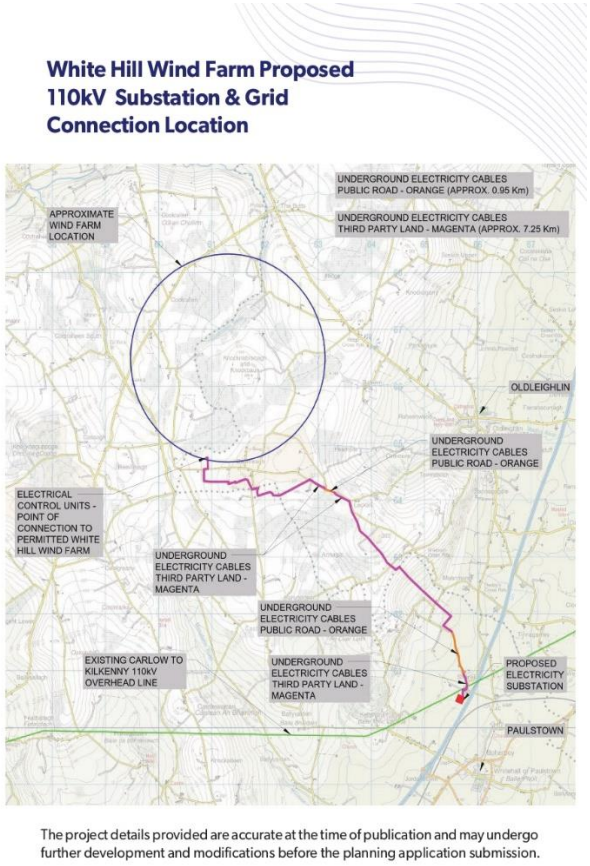
8. Follow-up Engagement

Residents were asked to provide contact details on initial contact so that the project team could contact them with answers to their queries and follow-up information if required. Attendees interested in receiving project updates were the relevant contact details.

9. Conclusion

The White Hill Wind Farm 110kV electricity substation and electricity line project team has taken significant steps to engage with the local community. Through a combination of face-to-face consultations, digital outreach, and traditional media advertising, the team ensured that local residents and stakeholders were informed and given the opportunity to provide feedback. The concerns raised during the consultation process are being actively addressed as part of the ongoing planning and design stages. The project team remains committed to maintaining transparent communication and fostering a collaborative relationship with the community as the project progresses.

Appendix A - Flyer



The project details provided are accurate at the time of publication and may undergo further development and modifications before the planning application submission.

Appendix B – Brochure

White Hill Wind Farm

110kV Substation & Grid Connection

storm

GE VERNOVA

GALETECH
ENERGY DEVELOPMENTS

Dear Householder,

Galetech Energy Developments are reaching out to inform you about our plans for a 110kV transmission substation in the townland of Shankill, Co. Kilkenny. The proposed White Hill Wind Farm 110kV substation and grid connection will enable the export of renewable energy from the White Hill Wind Farm project into the national grid. This initiative is a significant step towards helping Ireland achieve its goal of 80% renewable electricity by 2030, thereby reducing reliance on fossil fuels and enhancing the security of our energy supply.

Enclosed with this letter is an information brochure providing an overview of the proposed substation development. We expect to submit a planning application in the coming months. Should you have any questions or require further information, please do not hesitate to contact our project team.

Yours sincerely,

James Carville
Project Manager
Galetech Energy Development

Contents

1. Meet the team

Galetech Energy Group

Galetech Energy Developments (GED) are part of the wider Galetech Energy Group, an Irish-owned renewable energy company with our headquarters located in Stradone, Co. Cavan. Our multi-jurisdictional team comprises over 130 people, and our expertise spans the entire renewable sector, including development, construction, and operation.

GED has been involved in the delivery of in excess of 500 MW of renewable energy developments on the island of Ireland and has a global development pipeline of over 3 GW, including onshore and offshore wind, solar and battery energy storage developments.

GE Verona

GE Vernova Inc. (NYSE: GEV) is a purpose-built global energy company that includes power, wind, and electrification segments. Building on over 130 years of experience tackling the world's challenges, GE Vernova is uniquely positioned to help lead the energy transition by continuing to electrify the world while simultaneously working to decarbonise it. GE Vernova helps customers power economies and deliver electricity that is vital to health, safety, security, and an improved quality of life. GE Vernova is headquartered in Cambridge, Massachusetts, U.S., with approximately 75,000 employees across 100+ countries around the world.

Storm

Storm is a Belgian developer of renewable energy projects. Storm employs 75 full-time professionals and has been delivering sustainable energy projects in Belgium, since 2008.

In addition to its core market in Belgium, Storm is actively involved in developing renewable energy projects in Ireland since 2009.

Since 2009, Storm has partnered with Galetech and GE to develop over 300 MW of onshore wind projects in Ireland.

GALETECH ENERGY DEVELOPMENTS

GE VERNOVA

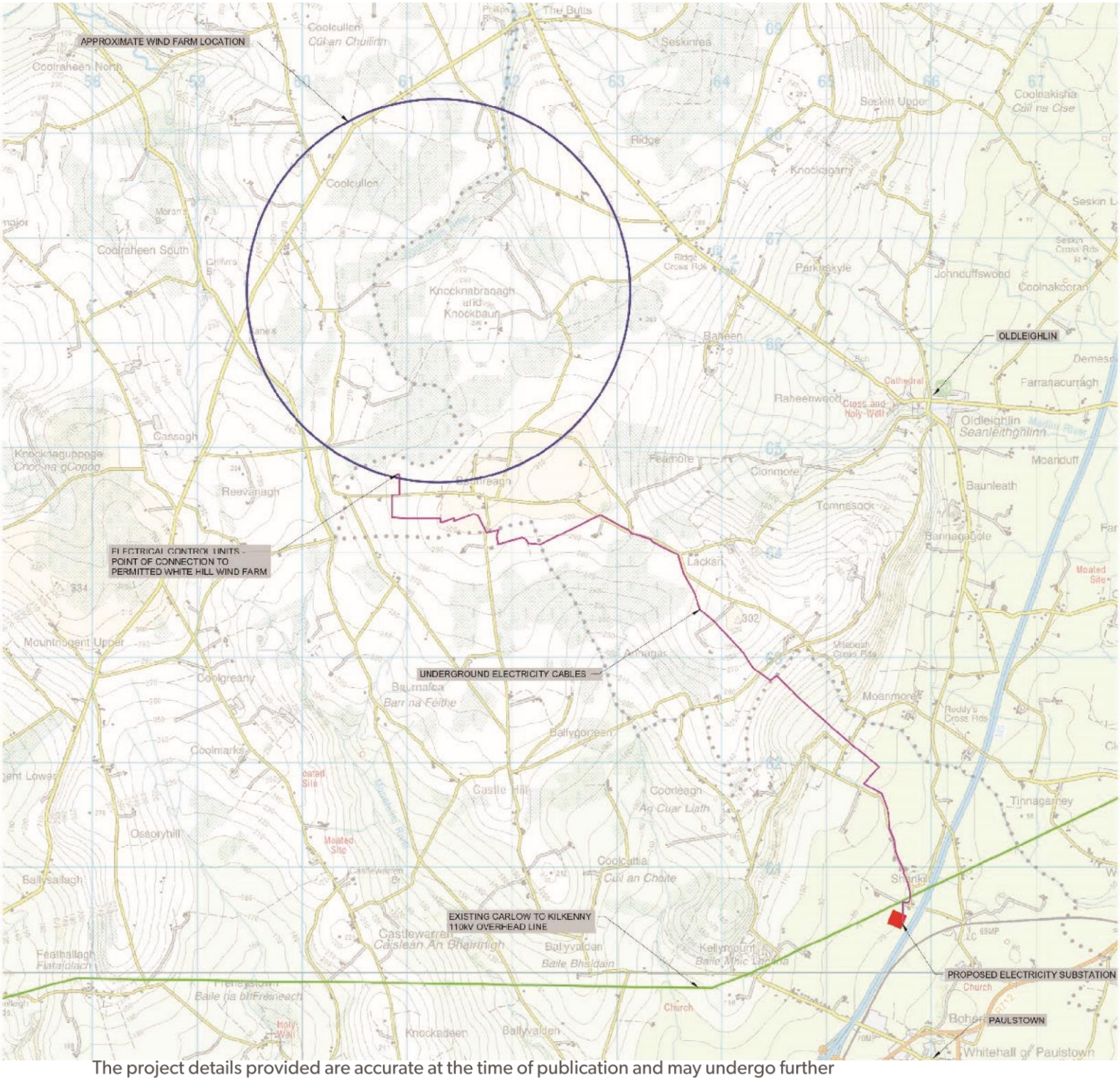
storm

James Carville
Project Manager
Galetech Energy Developments

Malachy Magee
Land Management/ Community Liaison
Galetech Energy Developments

Deirdre Keegan
Community Liaison
Galetech Energy Developments

2. Proposed Substation Location



The project details provided are accurate at the time of publication and may undergo further development and modifications before the planning application submission.

About the Site

The site for the proposed 110kV substation has been selected through an extensive identification process, where multiple locations were subjected to rigorous environmental and technical evaluations. The chosen site and the route for the underground electricity line were selected based on the following considerations:

Absence of European-Designated Nature Conservation Sites: The site does not overlap with any areas designated for nature conservation at the European level.

General Absence of Sensitive Flora and Fauna: The site has a minimal presence of sensitive plant and animal species.

Absence of Complex Geologies: The substation site is free from complex geological formations that could complicate construction.

Absence of Substantial Watercourses and Flood Risk: The site is not near significant watercourses and has a low risk of flooding.

Absence of Particular Landscape Designations or Sensitivities: The location is not within areas of particular landscape designation or sensitivity.

Avoidance of Cultural Heritage Features: The site footprint avoids any significant cultural heritage features.

Separation Distance to Residential Dwellings: There is an adequate setback distance from residential properties, ensuring minimal impact on local communities.

Ease of Access: The site is easily accessible, facilitating construction and maintenance activities.

Proximity to Existing Kellis - Kilkenny 110kV Overhead Transmission Line: The site is conveniently close to the existing transmission line, which will streamline the connection process.

3. Description of Development

The proposed White Hill Wind Farm 'loop-in loop-out' 110kV Substation and grid connection will connect to the existing Kellis-Kilkenny 110kV overhead transmission line and will comprise:

- 2 no. electrical control units located at the permitted White Hill Wind Farm.

- Approximately 8.5km of underground electricity line (33kV) located predominately within private lands and partially within the carriageways of local public roads.

- **Electricity Substation comprising:**
  1. A hardcore surfaced compound enclosed by security fencing and gates.
  2. Electrical plant and equipment.
  3. 2 no. electrical control buildings.
  4. 2 no. interface masts approximately [illegible] high and 110kV [illegible]
  5. [illegible] existing Kellis Kilkenny [illegible] transmission line.

  Associated site development including site entrances, access track, groundworks/excavations, drainage infrastructure [illegible] and scaping.

4. Location of Images For Photomontages

The project details provided are accurate at the time of publication and may undergo further development and modifications before the planning application submission.

Photomontage of proposed White Hill Wind Farm 110kV Substation

Wireframe of proposed White Hill Wind Farm 110kV Substation

The project details provided are accurate at the time of publication and may undergo further development and modifications before the planning application submission.

5. Planning Application Information

A planning application for the proposed White Hill Wind Farm 110kV Substation and Grid Connection will be submitted Q3/Q4 20024 .

Currently, we are in consultation with An Bord Pleanála (ABP) to determine whether the project will be classified as a Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID). If designated as a SID, the planning application must be directly submitted to ABP.

Once the planning application is lodged with ABP, all associated documents will be available for public viewing at the following locations:

- Carlow County Council Offices
- Kilkenny County Council Offices
- Offices of An Bord Pleanála
- An Bord Pleanála Online Planning Portal
- Project Website:

www.whitehillwindfarmsubstation.ie

6. Frequently Asked Questions

Why is this substation necessary?

The proposed White Hill Wind Farm 110kV Substation will facilitate the export of renewable energy generated by the White Hill Wind Farm to the national grid. By integrating this renewable energy source, the substation plays a crucial role in helping Ireland achieve its Climate Action targets. It reduces our reliance on fossil fuels and enhances the security of our energy supply.

How big is the substation site?

The footprint of the White Hill Wind Farm 110kV Substation compound will cover approximately 14,300 square meters, (about 3.5 acres). The substation will be connected to the White Hill Wind Farm development via approximately 8.5 kilometers of underground cable.

What about visual impact?

The retention of existing hedgerows and boundary vegetation at the substation site except for where the site entrances are located and strategically vegetated mounding, will support the screening of potential residential views of the proposed substation. The site will also benefit from additional landscape planting post construction, infill existing hedgerow boundaries with appropriate native species in addition to the planting of new hedgerows. Furthermore, the proximity and elevated position of the M9 motorway to the east side of the substation naturally screens out residential views of the facility.

Will new overhead lines be created?

No additional overhead lines will be installed for the proposed White Hill Wind Farm 110kV Substation. Two Cable Interface Masts, approximately 16 meters high, will be erected adjacent to the substation. These masts will facilitate the connection to the existing Kilkenny to Kellis 110kV overhead line. Furthermore, the entire 8.5km of cable connecting the wind farm to the substation will also be underground.

How close to properties will the substation and new infrastructure be?

The nearest residential property is approximately 170m from the main substation site.

Do substations pose health risks to humans or animals?

Some people are concerned about the electric and magnetic fields (EMFs) generated near electricity lines and cables. When electric current flows, it produces EMFs, which are found at the extremely low frequency end of the electromagnetic spectrum. These EMFs occur in homes, workplaces, and anywhere electricity is used. Health and regulatory authorities generally agree that extremely low frequency EMFs do not pose a health risk.

Is there audible sounds from a substation?

The proposed electricity substation will typically be operational continuously and, therefore, the predicted noise level at the nearest NSL has been assessed . The following extract from the EirGrid Evidence Based Environmental Studies Study 8: Noise – Literature review and evidence-based field study on the noise effects of high voltage transmission development (May 2016) states the following in relation to noise effects associated with 110kV substation installations:

"The survey on the 110kV substation at Dunfirth indicated that measured noise levels (LAeq) were less than 40dB(A) at 5m from each of the boundaries of the substation. This is below the WHO night-time free-field threshold limit of 42dB for preventing effects on sleep and well below the WHO daytime threshold limits for serious and moderate annoyance in outdoor living areas (i.e. 55dB and 50dB respectively). Spectral analysis of the data recorded at this site demonstrated that there were no distinct tonal elements to the recorded noise level.

To avoid any noise impacts from 110kV substations at sensitive receptors, it is recommended that a minimum distance of 5m is maintained between 110kV substations and the land boundary of any noise sensitive property."

The proposed substation will have comparable noise emissions to the 110kV unit discussed above and considering the distance between the substation and the nearest NSL (approximately 165meters), noise from the operation of the proposed substation is unlikely to be audible above existing background level at the nearest NSL. It is therefore concluded that noise emissions from the operation of the proposed electricity substation will be negligible, imperceptible and long-term, and will not be significant.

Will the Substation Be Lit Up at Night?

Construction will be scheduled to occur during daylight hours to minimise disturbance to wildlife. If artificial lighting is needed during construction, it will be temporary and directional, illuminating only the active work areas. Once the substation is energised and operational, it will not be lit up at night. However, emergency lighting will be installed to allow for emergency access outside of daylight hours.

Will there be a fence around the substation?

A 2.6m high palisade fence will be installed around the substation compound with an additional 1.4m high post and rail fence positioned 3m along the outer perimeter boundary.

What safety measures will be in place?

Safety is at the core of the development and construction of all our projects. The substation will be built to EirGrid and ESB Networks standards and will be subject to a rigorous design review process prior to the commencement of construction. The purpose of these design specifications and reviews is to ensure the safety of both the public and operational staff working in the substation.

How long will construction last?

Construction of the substation will take approximately 14 - 18 months. This will start with the initial site preparation works for access, followed by the construction of the substation compound and installation of the associated electrical equipment before the final commissioning and energisation stage.

What About Construction Traffic?

A traffic management plan will be implemented to manage construction traffic effectively during the project. Our construction and community engagement team will work closely with local residents and businesses to minimize disruption. Additionally, a temporary construction road will be built to divert construction traffic away from the three houses closest to the substation site.

How often will maintenance be carried out?

Scheduled maintenance is generally completed on a monlthy basis, with more intensive maintenance scheduled annually.

What are the next steps?

We are engaging with the local community to provide residents living near the proposed White Hill Wind Farm 110kV Substation site with project information and an opportunity to ask questions and have their say. Our Community Liaison team will be visiting homes and delivering information in the immediate area. We will also be holding a public information evening so that members of the public can drop in to meet the project team and find out more about the project. Residents can also contact our Community Liaison Officer by email or by telephone. Once submitted, the planning application documents will be available to view at the following locations:

- Carlow & Kilkenny County Council offices
- The Offices of An Bord Pleanála
- An Bord Pleanála Online Planning Portal
- Project website:

www.whitehillwindfarmsubstation.ie

7. Working With Communities

At Galetech, we believe in the power of partnership. By engaging closely with local communities, we strive to build a brighter, cleaner future together. Our ethos is rooted in fostering relationships and collaboration, working hand in hand with communities to develop renewable energy projects.

Visit our community hub on our website, *www.galetechgroup.com/community-hub* to explore examples of our interactions with local communities. Together, let's create a cleaner, greener, and more sustainable world.


Cush Wind Farm
RELAY
AROUND THE
PARISHES
25TH JUNE


Community Benefit Fund
Carrickallen
Wind Farm
Community Benefit Fund 2022
GALETECH
Energy Developments
GREENCOAT
RENEWABLES

storm

GE VERNOVA

GALETECH
ENERGY DEVELOPMENTS

Appendix C – Advert for Newspapers

Carlow Nationalist:

NEWS 13

Lots in store for Tullow Show 2024

By Suzanne Pender

THE COUNTDOWN is on and it won't be long until visitors once again flock to Tullow Agricultural Show at its Copperidge showgrounds on Sunday 18 August.

As well as being a great family day out, Tullow Agricultural Show is a wonderful example of how vital a community can succeed when everyone pulls together and turns out. For all involved, they should be very proud of another brilliant show day on the horizon.

This year's show promises to be jam packed with many sights to see and experience. Competition entries are now open and the prize list has been published to encourage exhibitor numbers are up on last year.

The Tullow Show's hard-working committee cannot wait to see and for some lucky judges to taste – everybody's invited!

With the biggest crowd ever expected to descend on the town, the committee advises coming early on the day to avoid any disappointment and given the unpredictable weather, it's probably best to pack both the sunscreen and the raincoat.

Highlights to look forward to on the day include cookery demonstrations by Ryan Turner the Chef at 1pm and 3pm, with Maggie Rudkowski, The Cool Food School at 2pm and Prep Like a Chef – Shauna O'Toole at 12 noon.

Children's entertainment with Joe the Magician is at 1.30pm, 2.30pm and 3.30pm and there's a chance to enter Little Mr Tullow at 2pm and Little Ms Tullow at 3pm.

LIVE MUSIC

Of course there will be live music and dancing from David James and Band at 4pm, Stacey Breen and Ryan Turner Band at 1.30pm and 2pm music in the Yarn Arms Bar on site at the Showgrounds, the Tullow petting, first beat at 1pm and the final at 4.30pm, along with the most appropriately dressed lady and best dressed man competitions.

Make sure to visit the Copperidge Craft Village, Wynne's Food Pavilion, the dog show and the Tullow Show Tent for all the action taken on the day, the vintage section and the All-Ireland Sheep Shearing Championships final.

In the 78 years since the show was established, it has continued to grow and evolve into an exciting display of both local and nationwide exhibitors and has been a chance for the community of Tullow to come together annually to take pride in the best Co Carlow has to offer, a tradition being continued into the 21st century and onwards.

BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER

Established just one year after World War II came to an end, the show was set up as a way to bring people together again and make an excuse for all to try their luck at winning a prize – whether that be for their strawberry jam, best homegrown turnip or exhibiting their prized animals. The town and community of Tullow has always come together and take pride in the best Co Carlow has to offer. It is wonderful to see this tradition being continued today.

The Tullow Agricultural Show Committee 2019, can't wait to see you there on Sunday 18 August.

Admission to the show is €15 adults, children students OAPs, children under 12 are admitted free. Tickets to the show are now also available to purchase online at www.tullowagriculturalshow.com

Kilkenny People

NEWS 9

Jenkinstown in top five most visited Irish parks

Sam Matthews

A wood in Kilkenny is the fourth-most visited Coillte Park (non-ticketed) according to the latest figures published.

Jenkinstown Woods drew 81,610 visitors in 2023, Kennoxre Park in Monaghan continues to be ranked number one with 357,834 visitors in 2023.

It comes as Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys announced funding of €3 million to develop and upgrade visitor and recreational amenities at Coillte Forest Parks across Ireland.

Local Fine Gael TD John Paul Phelan says he's not surprised by new data from Coillte which shows that Jenkinstown is among the top four most visited, non-ticketed Coillte Parks in the country.

"Jenkinstown is a fabulous amenity and a great place for a walk with family and friends. It is always immaculately maintained and features a variety of walks, tailored to different groups and abilities," he said.

"Jenkinstown, in fourth position on the table, ranks just behind Donadea Forest Park, County Kildare, Tirknock Recreation Area, County Dublin and the most visited Coillte Park, Rossmore Forest Park, County Monaghan. Having such a fabulous park so close to Kilkenny city makes it a great magnet for locals and for visitors to the city alike. I congratulate everyone who has made it such a hit with the public."

Minister Heather Humphreys said people want to enjoy the great outdoors.

"We have seen a huge surge in visitor numbers to our forest parks in recent years and I want to see that continue. I'm delighted that my Department is working collaboratively with Coillte so that we can upgrade and improve the experience for visitors," she said.

"If you want to take a break and get some peace and quiet – there is nothing quite like a walk in the forest. There are so many hidden gems on our doorstep in Ireland and I would encourage people to get out and explore them."

Imelda Hurley, Coillte CEO, said Coillte was delighted to welcome an estimated 16 million visits to recreational areas from across Ireland and indeed, further afield.

"Getting out in nature has proven positive benefits for people's wellbeing and we look forward to further developing our recreational amenities for everyone to enjoy," she said.

Funding boost for several Kilkenny forests and woods

Mary Cody

Funding of over €30,000 has been announced to improve popular outdoor recreational areas in Kilkenny.

Castlemorris, Jenkinstown, Ballyrathan, South Leinster Way and Woodstock Gardens are to benefit.

The funding is designed for the upgrade of visitor and recreational amenities as part of a €3million nationwide package by Minister Heather Humphries.

The funding for County Kilkenny has been welcomed by local TD John McGuinness said.

"This is very positive news for Kilkenny as these amenities are widely used by locals and visitors alike, and worthy of any investment that will help to enhance the visitor experience while upgrading the facilities.

"The investment is part of a strategic partnership between the Department of Rural and Community Development and Coillte to maintain and manage existing trails in Coillte forests, and to develop new recreation opportunities," he added.

The allocated funds will go towards works including the upgrading of trails and maintenance and repair works.

Local Fianna Fail TD John McGuinness

Appendix D – Radio Advert

Radio Version

White Hill Wind Farm is holding information clinics by appointment only to discuss plans to submit a planning application for a 110 kV substation and 8.5 km of underground grid connection to facilitate the export of renewable energy from White Hill Wind Farm into the national grid . Join us at The Lord Bagenal Inn, Leighlinbridge, Co. Carlow, on Wednesday, August 28th from 11 AM to 8 PM, or Thursday, August 29th from 10 AM to 8 PM. To book an appointment, contact our Community Liaison Officer at clo@whitehillwindfarm.ie, visit whitehillwindfarm.ie, or call 1800 140 240. We look forward to meeting you.

White Hill Wind Farm Project Team

Appendix E - Poster

A sample of poster locations: