

Oatfield Wind Farm



Who are we

The Ørsted vision is a world that runs entirely on green energy. Ørsted develops, constructs, and operates offshore and onshore wind farms, solar farms, energy storage facilities, renewable hydrogen and green fuels facilities, and bioenergy plants. Ørsted is recognised on the CDP Climate Change A List as a global leader on climate action. Ørsted's international headquarters are in Denmark, the country where we built the world's first offshore wind farm in 1991. Since then, we've expanded into onshore wind, solar power and energy storage, while pioneering the renewable technologies of tomorrow, such as green hydrogen, across Europe, North America and Asia.

Ørsted's Ireland and UK onshore headquarters is based in Cork City, from where we operate a 360 MW portfolio of onshore wind farms in local communities across the island. It's our ambition to grow our capacity significantly over the next decade to support the Irish government's emission reduction targets. To achieve this, we aim to develop more than 600 MW new onshore assets, repower existing assets, and grow our presence in Ireland's nascent energy storage market.

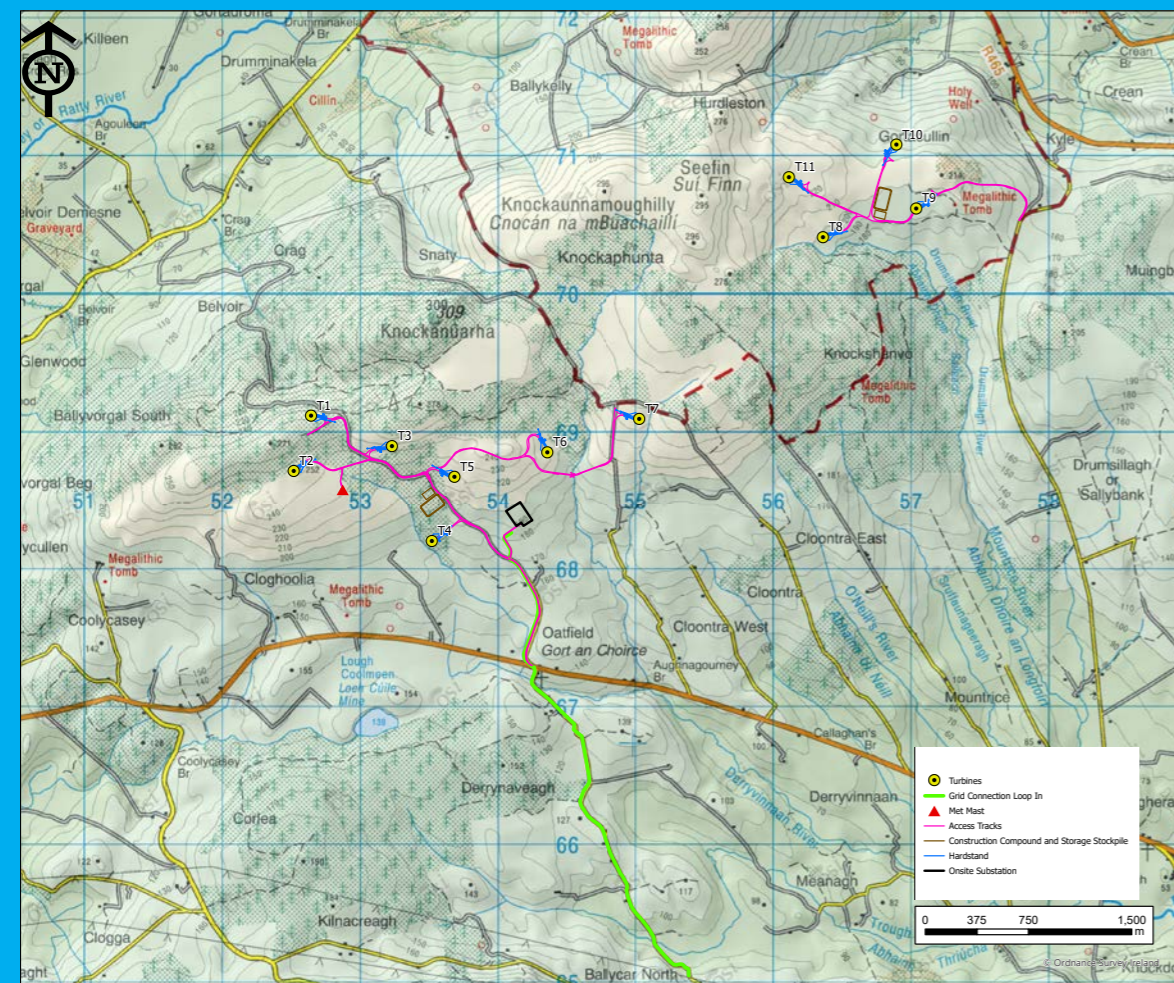


Introduction

As outlined in our last newsletter and at the community event, we are exploring the potential to develop a wind farm in the Oatfield and Gortacullin areas, located to the northeast of Sixmilebridge, County Clare. Since our last update, we have finalised the design of the wind farm and the environmental assessment of the project and are intending to submit the application in early December. In putting together this design we have considered community feedback and that of the planning and statutory consultees including Clare County Council, An Bord Pleanála and the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

Project Overview

The proposed project consists of an 11-turbine wind farm. The turbines will have a tip height of up to 180m, a rotor diameter of up to 150m and a hub height of up to 110m. The turbines will be linked by new access tracks and upgraded existing tracks. The project will include an onsite 110kV substation and a grid connection to the national electricity grid. The project will also include a turbine delivery route, which is used to transport turbine components from the port of entry to the site.



Constraints led design approach

A constraints led approach is best practice when designing a wind farm and that is how Oatfield has been designed. Various environmental sensitivities within the project study area are identified and from that, suitable areas are chosen where turbines may be located. This is called the developable area. A variety of surveys are carried out to further refine the suitable areas for turbine placement. Please see below some of the surveys and considerations that fed into the design of Oatfield.

- Terrestrial habitat surveys
- Aquatic surveys
- Bat surveys
- Ornithological surveys for a variety of birds including hen harrier, kestrel, peregrine, barn owl etc
- Mammal surveys

Data collected from these surveys strongly influenced the wind farm design. Careful consideration has been taken to limit or avoid any impacts on sensitive areas.

Landscape and visual

Landscape and visual impacts have been considered throughout the design process. Macroworks modelled the theoretic visibility of the wind farm on the wider landscape. They have produced some visual representations of what the proposed wind farm will look like from various viewpoints. A landscape and visual assessment of the final design layout will be included in the planning application, accompanied by a series of visualisations known as photomontages. These will show the wind farm in the existing landscape, allowing people to see how the wind farm could look within the landscape.

Residential Amenity

The turbine locations have been positioned to maintain a setback from nearby houses of at least 720m. This is to reduce potential impacts from visuals, noise and shadow flicker.

Other Design Considerations

There were many other considerations that fed into the design of the wind farm, all of which can be found in the EIAR, including:

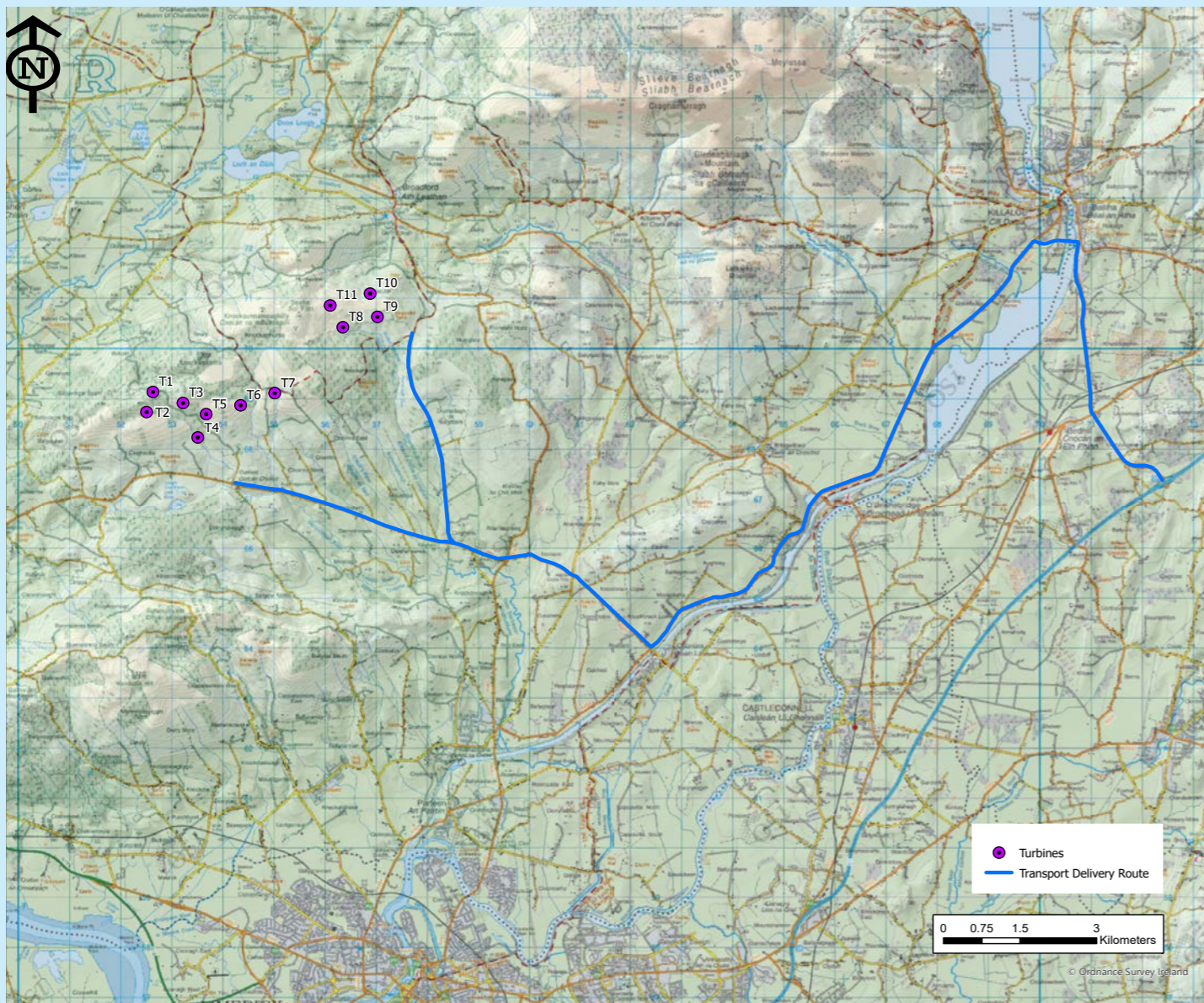
- Noise surveys
- Setback from rivers and streams
- Setback from public roads
- Setback from registered archaeological monuments

Ecology

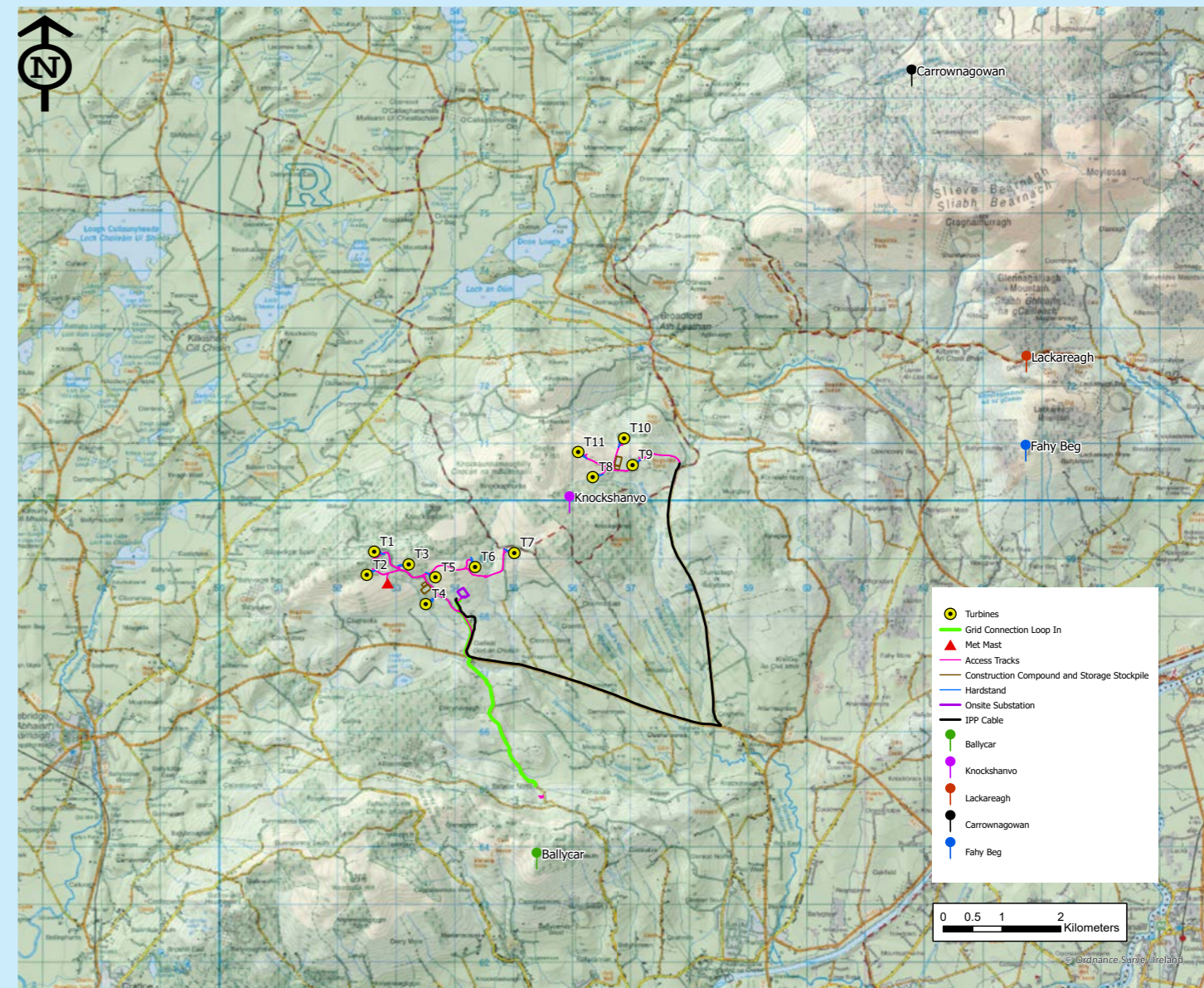
Ecological data has been collected through a variety of surveys, including:

Turbine Delivery and Site Access

The turbine delivery route will start at Foynes Port in Co. Limerick, travelling eastwards along the N69. It will cross the Shannon using the new bypass bridge currently under construction to the south of Killaloe towards O'Briens Bridge and onto the Oatfield site. The site will be accessed via the R471 and the R463.



Wind Farms in the locality



Benefits to the Local Community

The Oatfield Wind Farm Project will offer a number of benefits to the local community, particularly through the community benefit fund.

Community benefit fund

The current government guidelines for the Renewable Energy Support Scheme (RESS) requires that a community benefit fund is put in place for all renewable energy projects contracted through RESS. The community benefit fund is valued at €2/MWh per year from the first year of operation of the new wind farm. This means that for every megawatt hour the wind farm produces, €2 is contributed to the fund. This would result in a substantial benefit fund being made available. For example, a 50MW project would provide approximately €280,000 per annum to the community benefit fund.

When qualifying for RESS, a projects community benefit fund is usually managed by an independent organisation, who set up a local committee which decides on how and to whom the funds are distributed.

If the project does not enter into or qualify under a future RESS process, Ørsted remain fully committed to facilitating an annual Community Benefit Fund.

Species and Habitat Management

As part of the planning application, Ørsted will submit information outlining our plans to protect and restore important habitats around the wind farm and our measures to enhance biodiversity. At Ørsted, we always aim to build and operate in harmony with nature. Our ambition is to deliver a net positive biodiversity impact from new projects commissioned from 2030.

The Planning Process

We are aiming to submit the planning application in December of this year, provided we don't encounter any delays outside of our control. The Oatfield website will be updated to show the exact date of submission, including a link to the planning application, Environmental Impact Assessment Report and associated documentation. The application will be submitted directly to An Bord Pleanála as the project is of a scale to be deemed Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID). Under current legislation, a wind farm project of scale is one capable of generating electricity in excess of 50 Mega Watts (MW).

An Bord Pleanála is the national body that decides to grant permission or refuse permission for major infrastructure projects that are important to either Ireland, the region or the local area.

Once the application is lodged, members of the public will be able to submit observations to An Bord Pleanála, which will be considered as a part of the decision-making process. The application documents will be available online at oatfieldplanning.ie, and physical copies will be available at the offices of An Bord Pleanála and Clare County Council.



Meet the Team

Fiona Maxwell and Patrick McMorrough

Fiona and Patrick are Ørsted's Project Managers for the proposed Oatfield Wind Farm project. They are responsible for bringing renewable energy projects from their initial conception, through the Environmental Impact Assessment and planning process to consent.



Aidan Stakelum and Alan Barry

Aidan and Alan are responsible for developing community engagement strategies and stakeholder management plans to engage with new communities on Greenfield projects, as well as drafting communications material with the project development teams including drafting of leaflets, booklets, websites, social media and communications updates on project progress.



Contact Us

We welcome all engagement and interaction with you on all aspects of the proposed Oatfield wind farm project.

You can contact us by email: **astak@orsted.com**,
alanb@orsted.com

Or call a member of the project team on:

Aidan: **0861037437**
Alan: **0861030464**

Or write to us at: **Ørsted Floor 5, City Quarter, Lapps Quay, Cork City, Ireland**

Visit the project website at: **<https://orsted.ie/renewable-energy-solutions/oatfield>**

