

PROJECT HISTORY

Where is the Derrybrien Wind Farm Located?

Derrybrien Wind Farm is located in County Galway in the northern part of the Slieve Aughty Mountains Special Protection Area [004168] approximately 11 km due south of Loughrea, 12.7 km north northeast of Gort and 24 km west of Portumna. Galway City lies some 35 km to the northwest of the wind farm site. The wind farm site is in the south of the county approximately 4.6 km from the border with County Clare and 21 km from the border with County Tipperary in the southeast.

What is the Derrybrien Wind Farm?

The Derrybrien Wind Farm, which ceased commercial operation in 2022, consists of 70 turbines and associated infrastructure, including: access roads, hardstands, peat repositories, an on-site substation, an overhead power line, and the Agannygal substation which connects the wind farm to the national electricity transmission system. Derrybrien Wind Farm has three distinct elements.

They are:

- The Derrybrien Wind Farm Site (including the Derrybrien 110kV Substation)
- Derrybrien to Agannygal 110kV Overhead Line (OHL)
- Agannygal Substation.



WHAT IS THE HISTORY OF THE DERRYBRIEN WIND FARM?

1998-2001

Planning Permission was obtained.

October 2003

A peatslide event occurred. Engineering response implemented. Construction work was halted.

2006-2022

The windfarm was operational and producing renewable energy.

12th November 2019

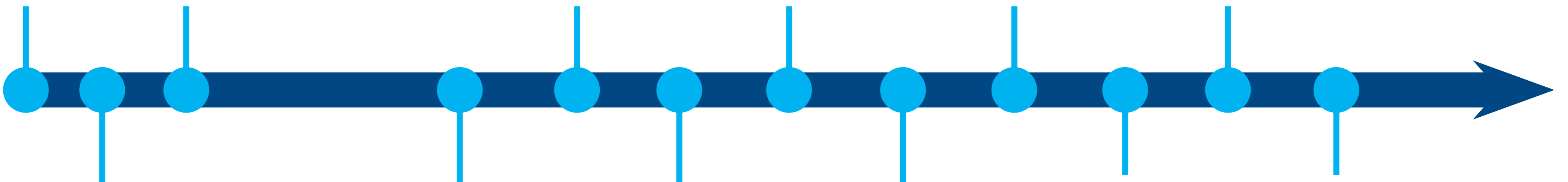
2nd Ruling: The CJEU found that Ireland had failed to take all measures to comply with 2008 decision.

21st August 2020

Application for Substitute Consent made to An Bord Pleanála.

March 2022

ESB announced that it was ceasing commercial electricity production at the Derrybrien Wind Farm site.



June 2003

Construction of the Windfarm commenced.

End of 2005

Construction work on the Wind Farm recommenced.

3rd July 2008

1st Ruling: CJEU (European Union court of Justice) found that Ireland failed to comply with the Environmental Impact assessment (EIA) directive.

23rd July 2020

On foot of the CJEU judgement and the legislative provisions set out under section 177B of the 2000 Act, Galway City Council directed Gort Windfarms Ltd. to seek substitute consent for the development.

4th February 2022

An Bord Pleanála refuses the Substitute Consent Application, meaning that the development is unauthorised. Commercial operation was paused.

June 2024

Galway County Council issued ESB with an enforcement notice.



WHAT IS PROPOSED FOR THE DERRYBRIEN WIND FARM NOW?

Decommissioning of the Derrybrien Wind Farm is necessary following the decision by An Bord Pleanála to refuse substitute consent for the wind farm in February 2022, making the wind farm an unauthorised development. The Derrybrien Windfarm Decommissioning Project' comprises two types of "development" which are set out as follows:

- the carrying out of physical works to decommission specific features of the existing Derrybrien Wind Farm Project (the "Prospective Development"); and
- the retention in situ of other specific features of the existing development (the "Retained Development").

What will be removed from the site?

The Prospective Development is summarised as follows:

- Enabling works to facilitate the decommissioning of the Derrybrien Windfarm.
- Decommissioning and removal of the Derrybrien Wind Farm and associated ancillary components. The decommissioning works include the removal of the above-ground structures only leaving certain features in situ.
- Decommissioning and removal of the Derrybrien Wind Farm grid connection comprising Derrybrien-Agannygal 110 kV Overhead Line (7.8 km) and Agannygal Substation connecting into the Ennis-Shannonbridge 110 kV Overhead Line.
- Reinstatement of the Ennis-Shannonbridge 110kV Line.

The decommissioning works will include:

- De-energising of the site, which will involve initial disconnection of turbines, low voltage (LV) components followed by disconnection of high voltage (HV) elements;
- Temporary widening of the Turbary Road and certain sections of turning heads;
- Controlled dismantling of 70 no. turbines (blades, nacelle, and tower) and 2no. anemometer lattice masts;
- Controlled removal of electrical equipment from Derrybrien substation and demolition of substation building.
- Destraining of the overhead line conductor.
- Removal of the overhead line infrastructure (34 no. double wood pole structures and 8 no. masts).
- Controlled removal of Agannygal substation and demolition of control building.
- Controlled removal of standby generator (bundled) and diesel tank, external lighting poles, lightning mast.
- Removal of palisade fencing surrounding the Agannygal substation.
- Reinstatement of the Ennis-Shannonbridge 110kV Line.



What will be retained at the site?

The features of the Retained Development, to remain in situ in perpetuity after the Prospective Development has been completed are listed below:

Derrybrien Windfarm including the Derrybrien 110kV Substation

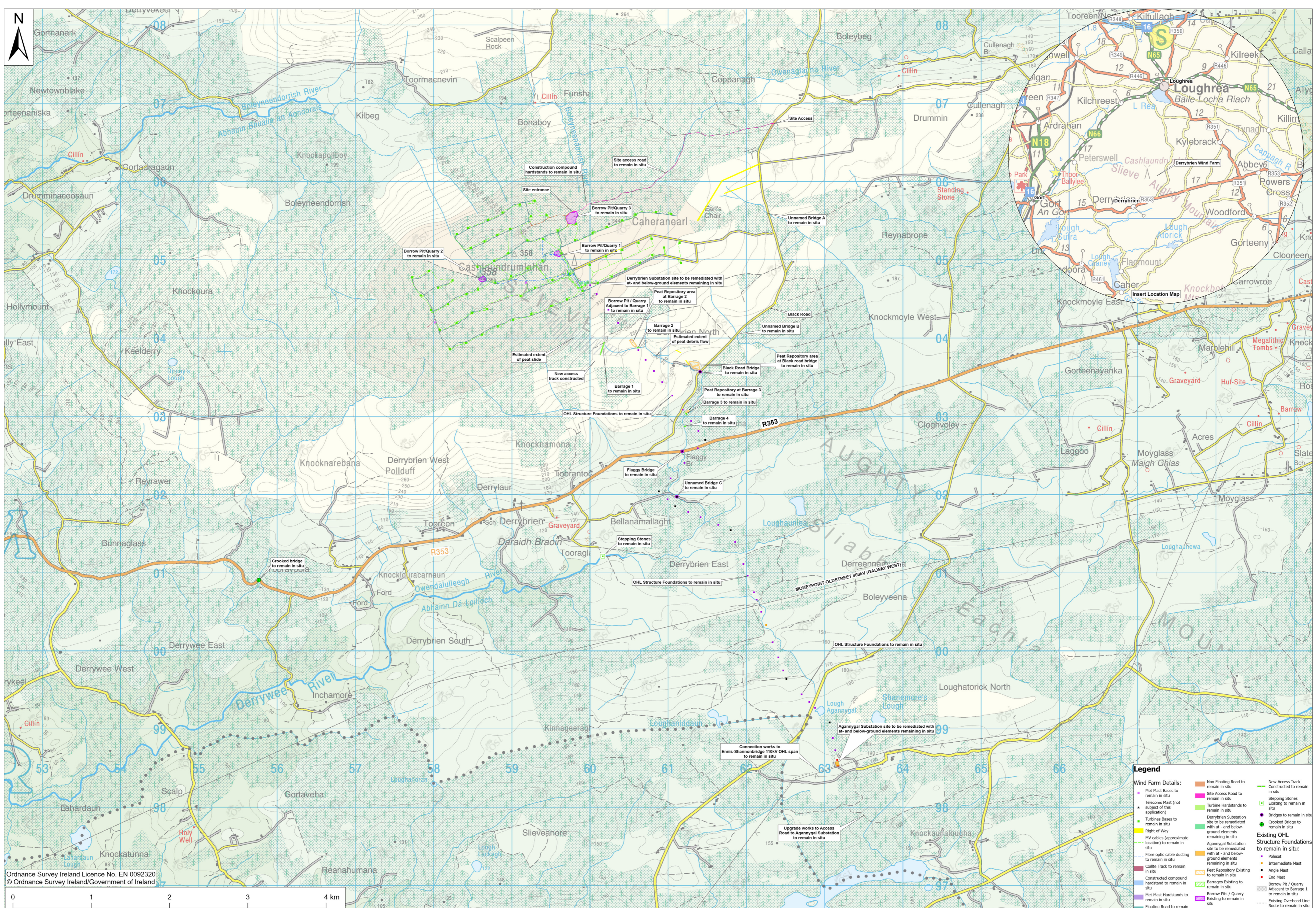
- Reinforced concrete foundations for 70no. wind turbines.
- Reinforced concrete foundations of structures within the Derrybrien Substation compound.
- Reinforced concrete foundations of 2no. Anemometer masts.
- Approx. 17.5km of access tracks and 70no. hardstand areas
- Underground Electrical and communications cabling.
- 3no. Borrow Pits / Quarries
- Naturalised Peat Repository areas
- Onsite Drainage Infrastructure.

Derrybrien to Agannygal 110 kV OHL and Agannygal 110kV Substation

- Concrete foundations for 34no. double wooden pole sets.
- Reinforced concrete foundations for 2no. end masts.
- Reinforced concrete foundations for 5no. angle masts.
- Reinforced concrete foundations for 1 no. intermediate mast.
- Reinforced concrete foundations of structures within the Agannygal Substation compound.

Off-site Features constructed in response to the peat slide

- Barrage 1 and Coillte Access Track:
- Barrage 2 and Repository Area:
- Barrage 3 and Repository Area
- Barrage 4
- Repository Area at the Black Road Bridge
- Minor repairs work to instream structures/bridges - at Black Road Bridge, Flaggy Bridge, the Farmer's Track / Culvert, Crooked Bridge and Stepping Stones.
- Minor borrow pits used to source material,
- Drainage works.





WHAT IS INCLUDED IN AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT?

An Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) will be prepared for this project as part of the prospective application. The EIAR contains an assessment of potential effects on the environment associated with the proposed decommissioning works. The EIAR provides technical information to An Bord Pleanála to support it in carrying out its Environmental Impact Assessment as part of the prospective element of the Derrybrien Windfarm Decommissioning Project.

A Remedial Environmental Impact Assessment Report (rEIAR) will also be prepared to assess effects on the environment that have already taken place as a result of the elements of the wind farm that will be retained. The rEIAR will accompany the application for the Retained Development. The rEIAR is to provide technical information to An Bord Pleanála to support it in carrying out its remedial Environmental Impact Assessment as part of the retained element of the Derrybrien Windfarm Decommissioning Project.

Structure of the EIAR and rEIAR Reports

The EIAR and rEIAR will be publicly accessible and will address the following environmental headings:

1. Introduction
 2. Background to the Proposed Development
 3. Consideration of Reasonable Alternatives
 4. Description of the Proposed Development
 5. Population and Human Health
 6. Biodiversity (Terrestrial and Avian Ecology)
 7. Biodiversity (Aquatic Ecology and Fisheries)
 8. Land, Soils and Geology
 9. Water (Hydrology and Hydrogeology)
 10. Air and Climate
 11. Noise and Vibration
 12. Cultural Heritage
 13. Landscape and Visual
 14. Material Assets (including Traffic and Transport, Telecommunications and Aviation)
 15. Risk of Major Accidents and Natural Disasters
 16. Resource and Waste Management
 17. Interactions of the Foregoing
 18. Schedule of Mitigation Measures
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WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Detailed environmental studies are continuing across the site including ecology, hydrology, noise, and landscape and visual assessments. These studies will be compiled into an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and Remedial Environmental Impact Assessment Report (rEIAR) which will accompany the respective planning applications. The Derrybrien Windfarm Decommissioning Project will also undergo the process of Appropriate Assessment; thus, the respective planning applications will also be accompanied by a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) and remedial NIS.

The results of these studies, along with feedback gathered through consultation with local communities and stakeholders, will be considered as part of the assessment process and in the preparation of the EIAR and rEIAR.

Consultations with An Bord Pleanála as part of pre-planning meetings

Gort Windfarms Limited plans to submit planning applications for the Derrybrien Windfarm Decommissioning Project.

Contact details:

Please visit our project website which we are keeping updated as the project progresses
www.derrybrienwindfarm.ie

We welcome your feedback on our proposals and encourage you to contact us with any questions, concerns or comments through our dedicated Community Liaison Officer through the details provided below:

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