



# Arklow Local Area Plan Submission - Report

<b>Who are you:</b>	State Body
<b>Name:</b>	Electricity Supply Board
<b>Email Address:</b>	[REDACTED]
<b>Reference:</b>	ARKLAP-135009
<b>Submission Made</b>	March 29, 2024 2:56 PM

## Topic

Compact Growth - Housing – Population Growth

### Submission

Please see attached PDF document for Detailed submission.

## Topic

Economic Opportunity – Tourism - Shops & Services - Community Facilities

### Submission

Please see attached PDF document for Detailed submission.

## Topic

Heritage – Biodiversity- Green infrastructure- Climate Action- Energy

### Submission

Please see attached PDF document for Detailed submission.

## Topic

Infrastructure - Sustainable Movement – Transportation

### Submission

Please see attached PDF document for Detailed submission.

## File

ESB SUB ARKLOW LAP ISSUES - ISSUED.pdf, 0.23MB



02 April 2024

## Re: ESB Submission to the Pre-Draft Arklow Local Area Plan

A Chara,

This submission by Electricity Supply Board (ESB), 27 Lower Fitzwilliam Street, Dublin 2, is in response to an invitation by Wicklow County Council for submissions to the Pre-Draft Arklow Local Area Plan (LAP). ESB is a landowner and employer in Arklow with property and infrastructural assets throughout the area serving Arklow and its hinterland.

ESB acknowledges the aim of the Draft LAP to set out a development strategy for Arklow guided by a vision statement and strategic goals set out for the sustainable development of the town over the life of the Plan. We welcome the recognition that the LAP has a key role in climate action, by including measures to adapt to climate change and transitioning to a low carbon and climate resilient town.

ESB is embracing new technologies that are revolutionising the energy industry, including smarter electricity networks. We are investing in sustainable energy solutions that harnesses the power of solar, wind, wave, storage and green hydrogen to provide a cleaner future. Our objective is to develop and connect renewables to decarbonise the electricity system by 2040.

### *ESB Networks*

ESB Networks provides an essential service building and maintaining the electricity networks in Arklow and throughout Co. Wicklow. It is responsible for constructing all the sub-transmission, medium and low voltage electricity network infrastructure in the county and for managing this infrastructure which is owned by ESB. The ESB Depot, located at Castle Park, Arklow is required to support the delivery by ESB of capital works programmes and operational activities in an energy efficient and cost-effective manner where key performance targets and emergency response times can be delivered. Good access to the main road networks and areas of potential growth is essential to provide an economic service and to meet emergency response times for Arklow and its environs. ESB Networks has an obligation, under licence from the Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU), to respond to all faults within one hour. To meet response timelines, ESB requires speedy access to the engineering centre for tools and equipment and to the adjoining road networks for travel to the fault location.

In this regard, ESB would support a Land Use Zoning objective appropriate for the established existing statutory industrial use on its lands at Castle Park, Arklow. ESB supports its continued use as a Depot used to service the electricity transmission infrastructure for Arklow, namely the 2 no. 38kV stations located on the eastern and southern fringes of the town, the 110kV station located on the north-eastern outskirts of Arklow Town, and the 220kV station North of Arklow, among the other infrastructure assets in its hinterland. ESB strongly supports appropriate Land Use Objectives across its infrastructural assets, which protects the integrity of its high voltage stations. There has been ongoing capital investment and modifications at various locations around the country to meet changing operational requirements. It is important that proposed Land Use Zoning and Policy Objectives can facilitate ESB restructuring these facilities to meet operational needs while also conforming to the Council's long-term vision for compact growth and ensuring the continued consolidation of the town.

ESB is determined to work alongside Local Authorities to build an electrical infrastructure that can accommodate the future demand of the population. ESB would welcome opportunities to future proof delivery of electricity infrastructure through greater collaboration between ESB and Wicklow Co. Co when the appropriate opportunity arises. Early engagement at design stage of key public infrastructure projects, e.g., new roads, public realm upgrades, and greenways, offer opportunities to provide ducting/underground cabling

in the most economically efficient way and limit disruption to local services. Please contact the local ESB Office in Castle Park, Arklow to ensure input from ESB Networks at an early stage of project design.

### *Electricity Generation*

Mirroring Government objectives, by 2030 ESB will develop an additional 4 GW of new onshore and offshore wind and solar PV renewable assets to add to our 1 GW of renewables operating today. By 2030, 63% of our electricity will come from renewable sources and will be a net zero producer of electricity by 2040. ESB remains committed to completely transforming our generation portfolio, replacing old, inefficient plant with a mixture of renewables and high-efficiency gas capacity.

As acknowledged in the Issues Paper, the provision of adequate infrastructure is critical to facilitate and sustain growth, with the Port identified as a critical piece of infrastructure. As recognised in the current Wicklow CDP, the emergence of opportunities to exploit offshore energy potential have developed significantly in recent years and will continue to do so as technology advances in this sector. CPO 12.62 in the Plan supports the potential for facilitating offshore renewable energy development at Arklow Port.

The creation of a new industry presents a major opportunity for economic growth on the Irish coastline and Arklow has the potential to be at the centre of that development. However, strategically located port facilities and land based supporting infrastructure will be required to support the ambition of harnessing the energy of the marine area. The Draft LAP should seek to reinforce supporting objectives and targets to ensure the development of this key supporting ancillary onshore infrastructure at Arklow is delivered to support this emerging industry. The need for infrastructure to support the assembly, deployment, and maintenance of the offshore energy structures should also be recognised.

### *ESB eCars*

ESB eCars builds, owns, and operates Electric Vehicle Charging Networks for public use in Ireland (ROI), Northern Ireland (NI) and Great Britain (GB). Our public charging network comprises of over 2,000 charge points with a customer base of 85,000 at the end of 2022. Approximately 75% of all EV drivers in Ireland are eCars customers. Twenty-one new High-Powered Charging (HPC) hubs have been commissioned in ROI with a further 20 in various stages of construction. These hubs are primarily located on motorway or primary routes and will provide 100km of range in six minutes. In the Climate Action Plan (2023) the Irish Government has set stretching targets for EV adoption in Ireland in order to address energy demand and emissions from transport.

To help meet this increase in electric vehicles, ESB, with the support of the Government's Climate Action Fund, is rolling out high power charging hubs across the country. These hubs will be capable of quickly charging between two and eight vehicles simultaneously and will facilitate vehicles travelling longer distances across Ireland's National and Motorway routes. In this regard, ESB welcome all initiatives to increase the rate of provision of charging points for electric cars as set out under CPO 12.7 & 12.8 in the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028.

### *Conclusion*

Investment in infrastructure is crucial to the economic and social well-being of our country. Such investment creates jobs, stimulates economic activity and provides modern, efficient facilities to provide the services that people need including healthcare, education and community services amongst others. There is a significant multiplier effect from investment in infrastructure which means that it stimulates growth in the local economy. This investment in infrastructure is also necessary to support EU and national policy on Climate Change adaptation and mitigation.

ESB, is building a truly sustainable company by investing in smart networks, renewable energy and modernising the generation portfolio. Sustainability, both within the company and in the services we provide, is integral to our corporate strategy. We are committed to reducing carbon emissions and addressing long-term concerns over future fuel supplies. ESB is implementing energy strategies that support the transition of Ireland to a low-carbon and ultimately post-carbon economy to become a competitive, resilient, and sustainable region. We request that due consideration is given to the issues raised in this submission, most particularly, that the Draft Local Area Plan includes clear policies in relation to:



- Ensuring that the long-term operational requirements of existing utilities are protected. The importance of existing infrastructure and the level of operational activities ongoing at our high-voltage substations within Arklow are protected.
- The Draft LAP should contain planning policies which protect the county's future capacity for the development of energy infrastructure whilst encouraging the sustainable development of renewable energy resources, including landside developments for offshore wind.
- The implementation of the latest standards through Wicklow CPD - CPO 12.8, will facilitate growth in charge point infrastructure, to ensure it becomes a comprehensive network of public and domestic charge points with open systems and platforms accessible to all supply companies and all types of electric cars.

If we can be of any further assistance, or if you wish to clarify any of the points raised, please do not hesitate in contacting the undersigned.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Keith O'Brien', written over a thin horizontal line.

**Keith O'Brien | Spatial Planner | Group Property | Engineering & Major Projects | ESB**  
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