

# OFFSHORE WIND PARK SET TO DOCK IN ARKLOW HARBOUR

Arklow Harbour has been chosen by SSE Renewables as its preferred base for an offshore wind park, which will help County Wicklow to achieve its goal of becoming a Centre of Excellence for the Offshore Renewable Energy sector. The decision was recently announced by the renewable energy firm at a virtual meeting with members of Wicklow County Council.

**S**SE Renewables has entered into land option agreements at Arklow Harbour’s South Dock to progress the development of its planned 520MW Arklow Bank Wind Park Phase 2 offshore wind farm.

These include an option to purchase an industrial yard which forms part of the site known locally as ‘The Old Shipyard’ on the South Dock for the development of offices and warehousing. The company is also planning to acquire an area of quayside at the South Dock for vessel berthing and pontoons.

The new base at Arklow Harbour’s South Dock, which will operate as a hub for SSE Renewables’, will be home to 80 full-time skilled employees who will be recruited to work on operations and maintenance.



*SSE Renewables’ Scottish wind farm (Beatrice off Wick) is of a similar size to the proposed Arklow Bank development.*

## A SPIN-OFF INVESTMENT

Former Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr Irene Winters, said the project will place Ireland well on its way towards achieving its objective of generating 70% of its energy from renewable sources by 2030.

“It provides great opportunities to build on Wicklow’s maritime traditions by providing skilled employment opportunities, training and development, and spin-off investment for both Wicklow and Arklow. This places us well on our way towards achieving our goal of developing County Wicklow as a Centre of Excellence for the Offshore Renewable Energy Sector,” she noted.

Cllr Pat Fitzgerald, Cathaoirleach of Arklow Municipal District, said that a project of this scale will contribute to a significant commercial uplift for the community as well as the creation of 80 jobs.

“The Arklow Bank Wind Park will open up enormous socio-economic potential for Wicklow as well as positioning the county as a leader in the wind energy sector. I look forward to seeing the project develop in the coming years and becoming operational in 2025.”

## CATALYST FOR REGENERATION

Describing the company’s announcement as “very positive news for County Wicklow”, Frank Curran, Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council, said that the Blue Economy is an important pillar in the county’s economic development strategy.

“The development of the Arklow Bank Wind Park and the decision to site the operations and maintenance base here will

act as a catalyst for the regeneration and renewal of Arklow Harbour and the entire town.

“This will dovetail with the development of the wastewater treatment plant, the flood defence scheme and other exciting developments announced by locally-based companies, and it will be transformative for the entire area,” he added.

Barry Kilcline, Director of Development at SSE Renewables, said that as the new home for their O&M base for Arklow Bank Wind Park, Arklow Harbour will play a vital role in the day-to-day running of the planned offshore wind farm.

## CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

“Around 80 full-time employees will be recruited in the coming years to operate and maintain the wind farm, ensuring we safely and reliably generate renewable energy to power half a million homes daily and meet Ireland’s carbon reduction targets,” he pointed out.

He said that Wicklow County Council has been very progressive in its support of Ireland’s emerging offshore wind energy sector, adding that as a result, County Wicklow is in pole position to become Ireland’s Offshore Energy Centre of Excellence.

“We greatly appreciate the support and advice of Wicklow County Council in progressing our plans for our entire project, and we look forward to working with the members and officials of the local authority to bring Arklow Bank Wind Park to fruition for the benefit of the entire county.”