

# Planning for Renewables



## County Development Plans

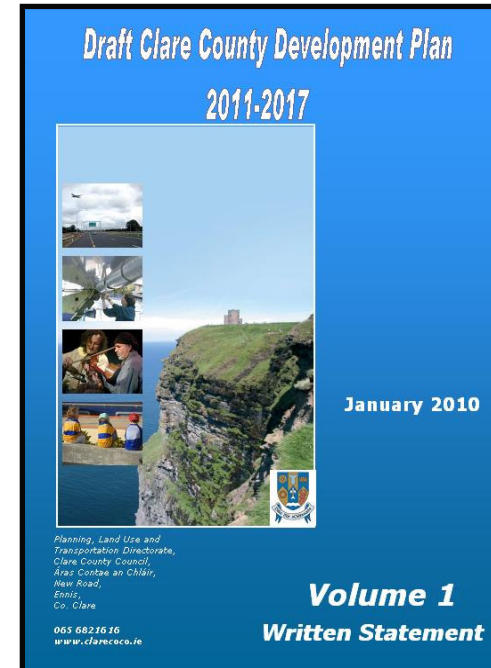
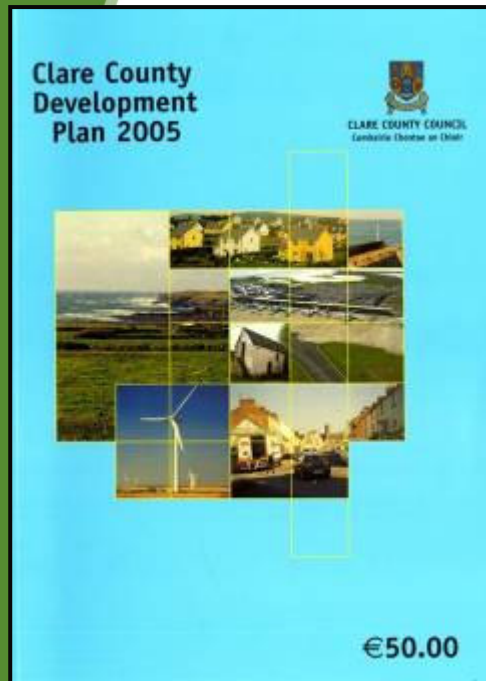
Brian McCarthy  
Senior Executive Planner  
Friday 28<sup>th</sup> May, 2010



# Planning for Renewables

- The Development Plan
- Evolution of Renewables Policy in County Clare
- Clare Wind Energy Strategy
- Issues

# The Development Plan



- The Development Plan is the **fundamental policy document** of the Planning Authority which sets out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of its functional area over a **6 year period**.
- **Members** of Town and County Councils make and adopt a Development Plan

## Development Plans – What they contain

- Development Plans comprise of a **written statement** supported by **maps** indicating the **development objectives** for the area in question, including a number of mandatory objectives.
- Guides **land-use policy and the assessment of planning applications** by the Local Authority and An Bord Pleanála

# Development Plans – What they contain

- Mandatory Objectives in a Development Plan
  - i. The provision or facilitation of the **provision of infrastructure** including transport, **energy** and communication facilities, water supplies, waste recovery and disposal facilities, waste water services, and ancillary facilities;
  - ii. The **conservation and protection of the environment** including, in particular, the archaeological and natural heritage and the conservation and protection of European sites
  - iii. Social, **community and cultural requirements** of the area and its population;
  - iv. The **preservation of the character of the landscape** including the preservation of views and prospects and the amenities of places and features of natural beauty or interest;
  - v. The **protection of structures**, or parts of structures, which are of special **architectural, historical, archaeological**, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest; and the **preservation of the character of architectural conservation areas**;
  - vi. The **zoning of land** for the use solely or primarily of particular areas for particular purposes

\*\* no reference to Renewable Energy

# Legislative Context

- 2000 – 2007 Planning and Development Acts
- 2004 Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations
- Article 6(3) and 6(4) of 92/43/EEC Habitats Directive
- 22 Government Guidelines
- EU Directives & Regulations
- EU & National Designated Nature Sites

European Sites  
for the Conservation and Protection of the environment  
including the archaeological and natural heritage



EU and National Legislation & Government Guidelines  
Habitats Directive : EIA Directive and Regulations  
2000 - 2007 Planning and Development Acts  
Note: 2009 Planning and Development Bill  
National Spatial Strategy  
Wind Energy Development Guidelines



2005 Clare Co. Development Plan  
Policy Documents for the Assessment of Planning Applications and Landuse Policy

# Evolution of Renewables in Clare County Development Plans



- 1967 Clare County Development Plan - Publication of first County Development Plan in Clare
- Since then 5 County Development Plans Adopted
- 1978 County Development Plan – emphasis on Tourism, Industrial Development, Agriculture and Preservation of Amenities. Reference to importance of Coastline & Shannon Estuary as a resource.

# Evolution of Renewables in Clare County Development Plans



1988 Clare County Development Plan - emphasis on Employment and job creation, Infrastructure Provision & protection of the Environment.

1989 E.C. Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations

1992 Habitats Directive

1996 EIA Requirement extended to Windfarms

1996 Government Guidelines on Windfarm Development

1. **Visual Impact** "*...one of the more important considerations in arriving at a decision on an application*"
2. **Noise**
3. **Radio & T.V. Interference**
4. **Ecology, Archaeology, Geology and Heritage** "*proposals on or near NHA's, World Heritage Sites, SPA, SAC... close scrutiny*"
5. **Safety**

# Evolution of Renewables in Clare County Development Plans



1999 County Development Plan – recognition of the importance of renewable energy in the future development of the county.

- *“...within the County itself there are a number of desirable locations for exploration of renewable energy resources . However, these locations are in some of the most **scenic areas** in the county. Exploitation of these natural resources must be reconciled with the need to preserve the high quality of this physical environment”*
- *Policy to permit the development of renewable energy resources in locations where such development will not have an undue visual or environmental impact. Considerations*
  - a) Visual impact b) Noise emissions c) Ancillary infrastructure d) Impact on natural environment e) Benefit to the area f) possible long and short term impact on the tourist industry g) Conform with EU Birds Directive;

# Evolution of Renewables in Clare County Development Plans



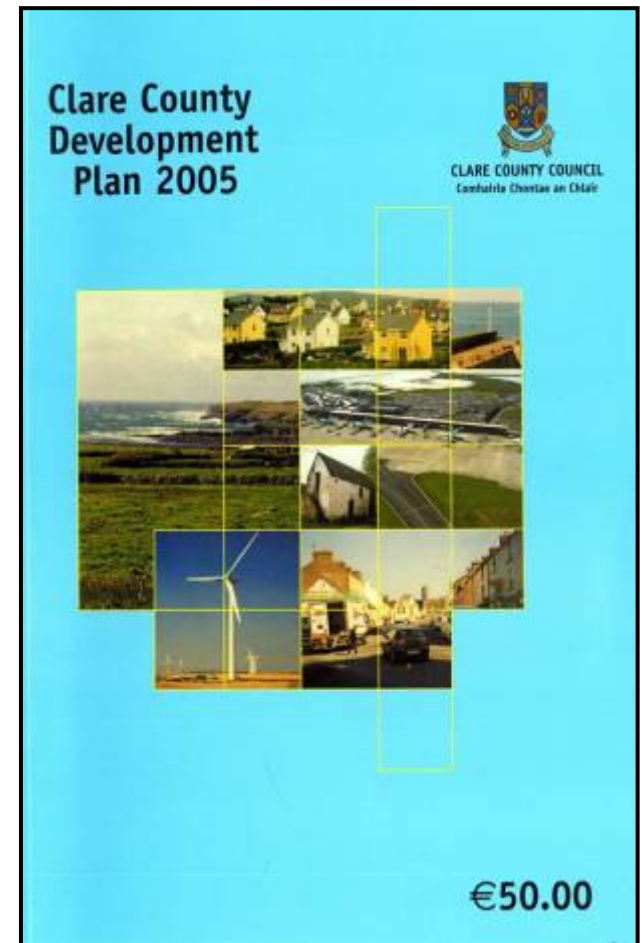
- 1999 Green Paper on Sustainable Energy – national target of 500MW from renewables
- 2000 Planning and Development Act “*proper planning and sustainable development*”
- 2000 National Spatial Strategy & National Climate Change Strategy
- 2002 National Biodiversity Plan

# 2005 Clare County Development Plan

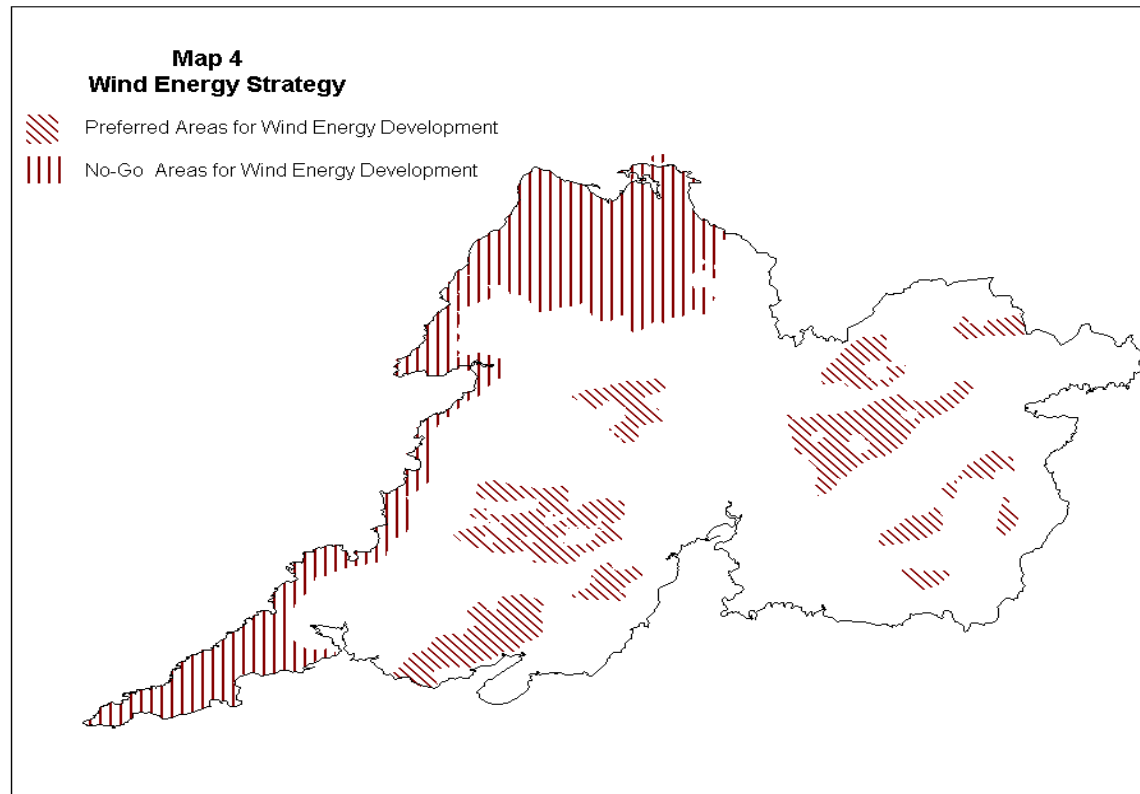
The Planning Authority will normally permit development to enable the production from renewable sources such as **wind, solar, geothermal and tidal power.**

Support for electricity distribution network ...  
powerful and reliable power supply

“The policy of the Planning Authority to seek the development of the wind energy infrastructure sufficient for the production of **50MW of electricity by the year 2010** through the identification of suitable areas. Proposal for the development of infrastructure for the production and distribution of electricity through harnessing of wind energy will be determined by reference to the **County Wind Strategy**”



# 2005 County Wind Energy Strategy



- Informed by Landscape Character Assessment (2004) ; Windfarm Development in Co. Clare Report (2003); County Development Board Strategy; Draft Wind Farm Guidelines
- Preferred Areas and No-Go Areas

# Evolution of Renewables in Clare County Development Plans

2000 – 2007 Planning and Development Acts.

2004 Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations

2006 Strategic Infrastructure Act (Planning and Development)

2006 Wind Energy Development - Guidelines for Planning Authorities

2006 Limerick/Clare Climate Change Strategy

2007 Planning Regulations – Exemptions for Micro-renewables

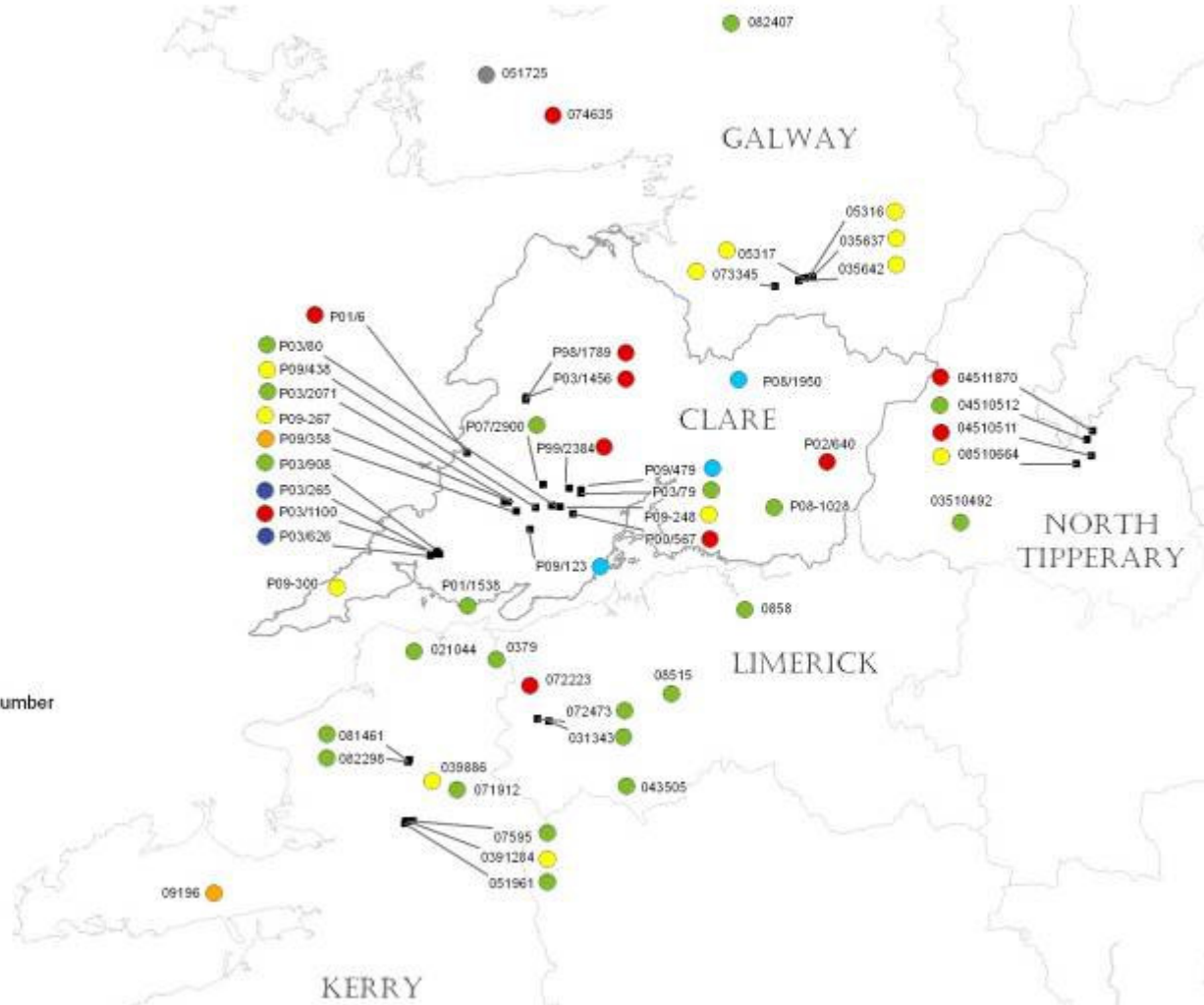
2009 Guidelines on Appropriate Assessment  
Article 6(3) and 6(4) of 92/43/EEC Habitats Directive

### Status of Planning Application

- Granted
- Extension of Duration
- Further Information
- Withdrawn
- Incomplete
- Appealed
- Refused
- Not Decided

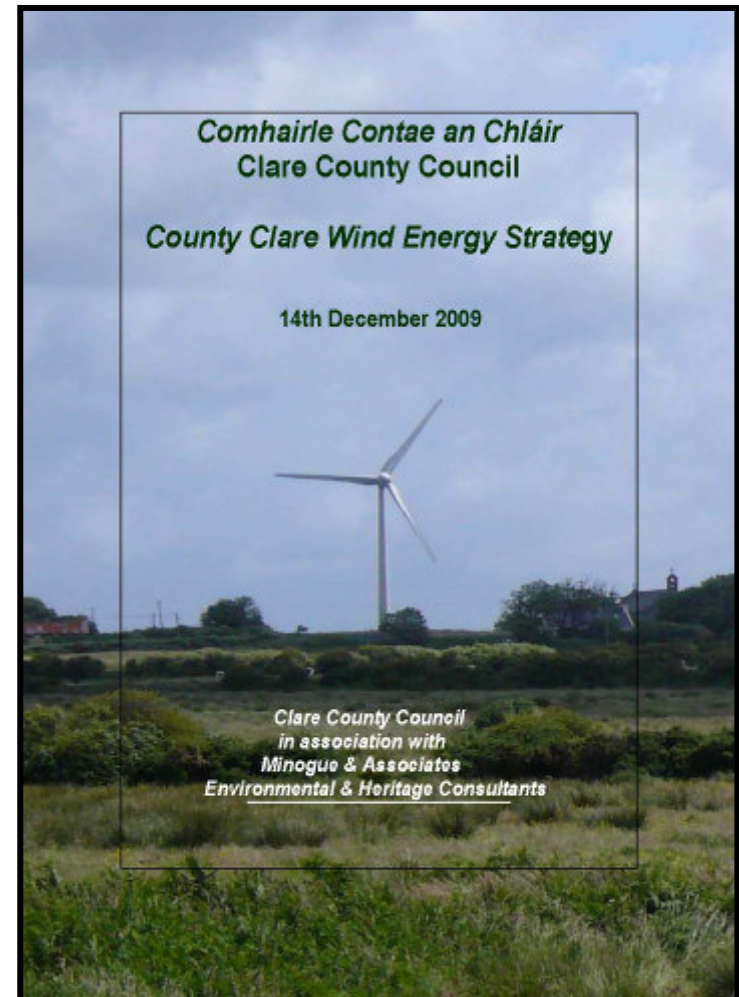
- Site of planning application  
Indicative of location - not precise

Associated numbers indicate Planning Application case number

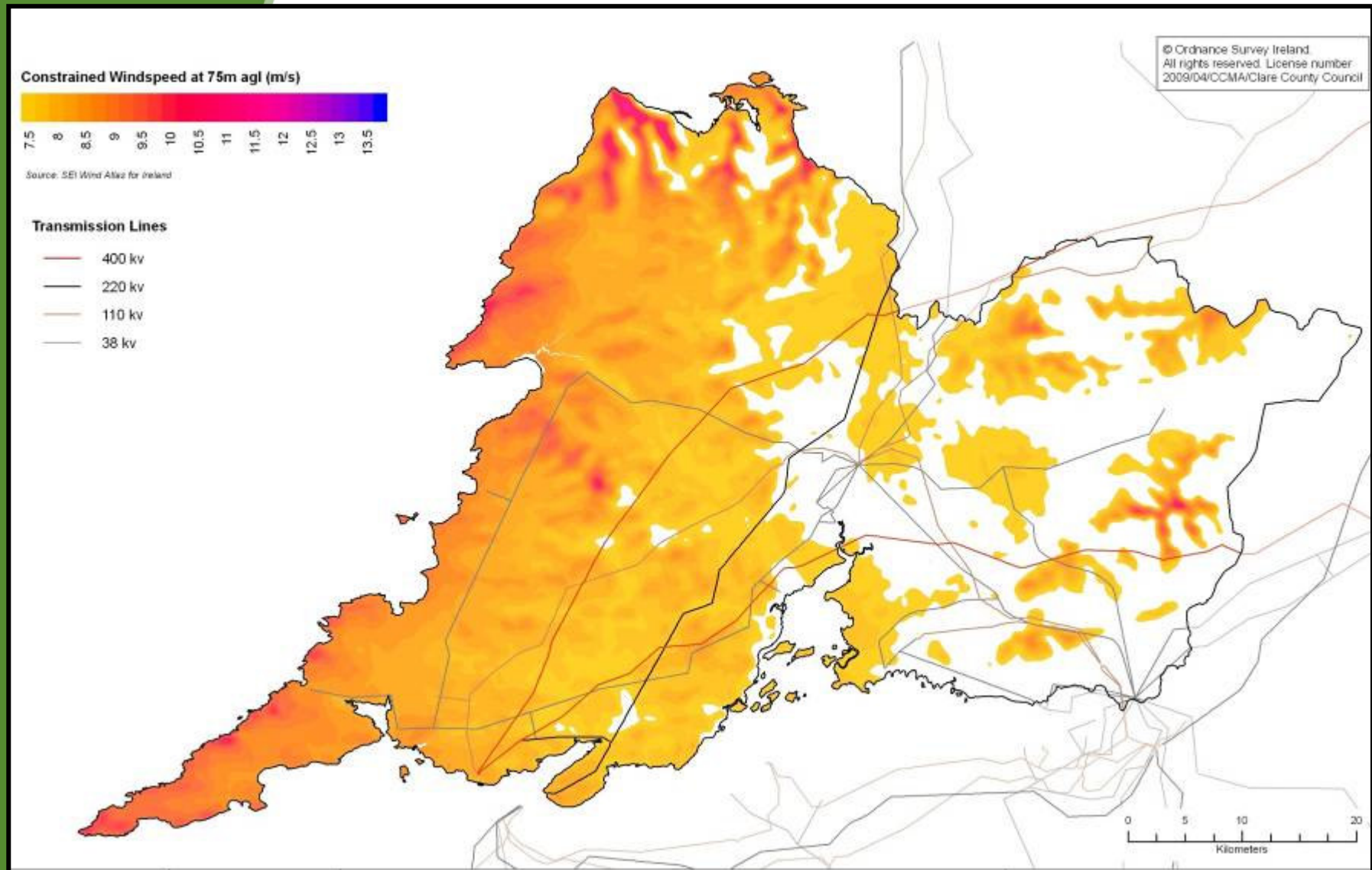


# Variation to 2005 County Development Plan - Clare Wind Energy Strategy

- Long Term Strategy (2017)
- Change in emphasis. Wind Speeds, Grid Connections, GIS, Slope Stability, Environmental Considerations or 'Restrictions?', Visuals
- Consultation with Public and Statutory Bodies
- Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Directive Assessment . High level "test" of policies and sites
- Identification of Strategic National and Regional Scale sites
- Inclusion of policies in favour of storage and distribution of energy
- Variation to 2005 Development Plan - Planning Policy and Local Authority positive response to change in economy and new renewable technologies



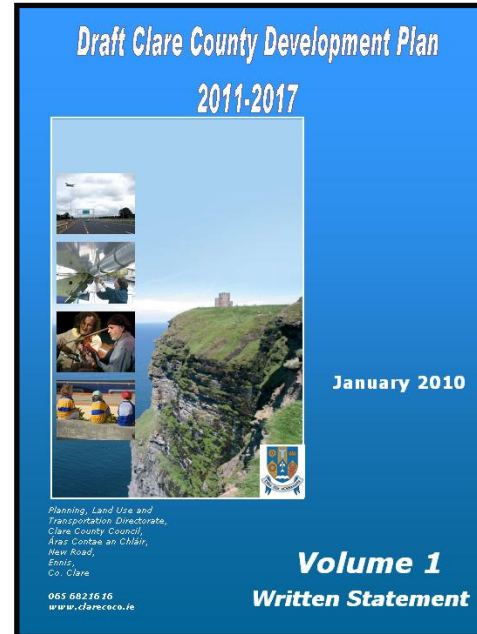
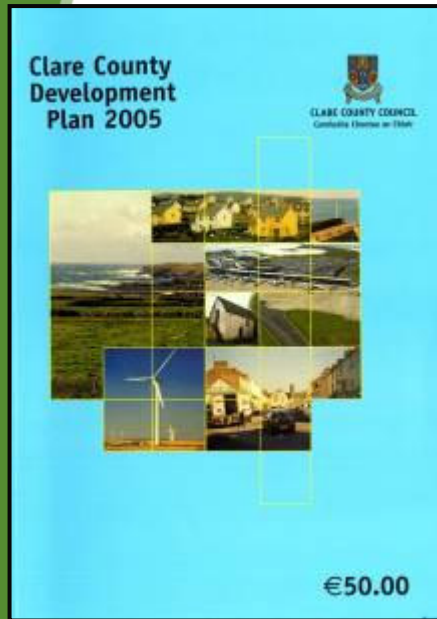
# Baseline data for Wind Energy Strategy 2009







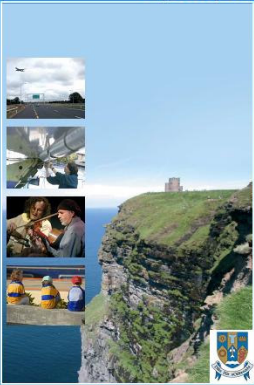
# Renewables and Development Plan – Next Step to 2017



Existing 2005 Development Plan will be replaced by February 2011 by the  
**Draft Clare County Development Plan 2011 – 2017**

- Significant emphasis on renewable energy as a key driver of economic development
- Protecting the environment, communities and in compliance with EU, National Legislation e.g. AA, SEA, Flood Risk
- More than wind energy – wave, biomass, heat. Energy Storage and Distribution

**Draft Clare County Development Plan  
2011-2017**



**January 2010**

**Volume 1  
Written Statement**

Planning, Land Use and  
Transportation Directorate,  
Clare County Council,  
Áras Contae an Chláir,  
New Road,  
Ennis,  
Co. Clare

065 6821616  
www.clarecoco.ie



**Draft  
Clare County Development Plan  
2011-2017**

**Volume 2  
Maps**


**January 2010**

Planning, Land Use and  
Transportation Directorate,  
Clare County Council,  
Áras Contae an Chláir,  
New Road,  
Ennis, Co. Clare

(065) 6821616  
www.clarecoco.ie

**January 2010**

**Draft Clare County Development Plan  
2011-2017**



**Volume 3**

(i) Draft Strategic Environmental Assessment  
(including Non-Technical Summary)  
(ii) Draft Habitats Directive Assessment  
(iii) Draft Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

Planning, Land Use and  
Transportation Directorate,  
Clare County Council,  
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065 6821616  
www.clarecoco.ie

**Draft Clare County Development Plan  
2011-2017**




**January 2010**

**Volume 4  
Record of Protected  
Structures**

Planning, Land Use and  
Transportation Directorate,  
Clare County Council,  
Áras Contae an Chláir,  
New Road,  
Ennis,  
Co. Clare

(065) 6821616  
www.clarecoco.ie

**Draft Clare County Development Plan  
2011-2017**



**January 2010**

**Volume 5  
Draft Wind Energy Strategy**

Planning, Land Use and  
Transportation Directorate,  
Clare County Council,  
Áras Contae an Chláir,  
New Road,  
Ennis,  
Co. Clare

# Draft County Development Plan 2011 - 2017

- Integration of Renewable Energy throughout landuse policy – building design, transport, environment & climate change, rural development, employment and industry, tourism.
- Renewable energy as a driver of economic growth, R&D. County Clare as a leader in production of sustainable and renewable energy for National and International consumption through Research, Technology Development and Innovation
- Promotion of Shannon Energy Valley

# Draft County Development Plan 2011 - 2017

- Specific Chapter on Energy and Renewables
- Dedicated Volume to Wind Energy Strategy
- County Clare will aim to achieve a minimum target of 550MV from wind energy by 2017
- Clare as a low carbon economy through making provision for the harnessing and storage of renewable energy
- County Clare is well positioned to becoming self-sufficient in renewable energy and will aim to identify areas that can become low carbon centres for commerce

# Renewable Energy Policies

## Low Carbon Economy



### Low Carbon Economy:

- Global economies are seeking to achieve low/no carbon outputs
- Seeks to develop Clare as a low carbon economy through making provision for the harnessing and storage of renewable energy

### Objective 10.1

*Promote Clare as a low carbon County by 2017 as a means of attracting inward investment to the County and Mid-West Region*

*To facilitate the development of renewable energy sources which will achieve low carbon outputs*

# Renewable Energy Policy



## **Renewable Energy:**

The council recognises the importance of developing renewable energy sources in the interest of delivering the National Climate Change Strategy, of achieving a low carbon economy and security of energy supply

## **Objective 10.2**

*“To encourage and to favourably consider proposals for renewable energy developments and ancillary facilities”*

# Renewable Energy Policies

## Wind Energy



### Wind Energy:

County Clare will aim to achieve a minimum target of 550MV from wind energy by 2017

### Objective 10.3

*“To promote and facilitate wind energy production in the County. Proposals for the development of infrastructure for production and distribution of electricity through harnessing of wind energy will be determined by reference to the County Wind Strategy”*



# Renewable Policies

## Wave/Tidal Energy

### Wave/Tidal Energy:

The White Paper on Energy (2007) has a target by 2020 that 500MW of electricity will be generated from ocean power

### Objective 10.4

*“To promote and facilitate wave and tidal energy production and to seek to undertake a study during the lifetime of the Plan to investigate ocean/wave energy production in County Clare with a long term objective of facilitating such development along the County’s coastline”*

# Renewable Energy Policies

## Hydroelectric Energy



Ardnacrusha, Ireland's largest hydroelectric power station  
Ennistymon – Falls Hotel

# Renewable Energy Policies

## Hydroelectric Energy

### **Hydroelectric Energy**

The undulating topography of the landscape and the numerous water bodies provides the opportunity to provide small-scale hydroelectric power stations within the County and compliments existing infrastructure, such as pump storage associated with wind farms.

### **Objective 10.5**

*“To facilitate the development of small scale hydroelectric power generation, in particular when developed in combination with other forms of energy infrastructure, such as wind farms”*

# Renewable Energy Policies

## Bioenergy



### Bioenergy:

- The Clare wood energy project is an initiative of the Clare Local Development Company Teagasc
- County's biomass resources could meet 12% of its heat energy target, as set out in the White Paper for Energy 2007

- Bioenergy Strategy & Action Plan for the Mid West Region

### Objective 10.6

*“To support and encourage the development of the bioenergy sector and facilitate its development for energy production, heat storage and distribution”*

# Renewable Energy Policies District Heating Systems



- Facilitate development of indigenous biomass industry
- Shannon Free Zone

## **Objective 10.9**

*“To facilitate district heating systems in new developments throughout the County”*

# Renewable Energy Policies

## Energy Storage



Key issue

Pumped Hydro-storage

Compressed Air

Battery storage of electricity

### **Objective 10.11**

*“To support and facilitate the development of secure and effective energy storage facilities at appropriate locations throughout the county”*

# Renewable Energy Policies Electric Powered Vehicles



## Energy Efficiency in Transport

- Smart Travel
- Integration of renewable energy into transport

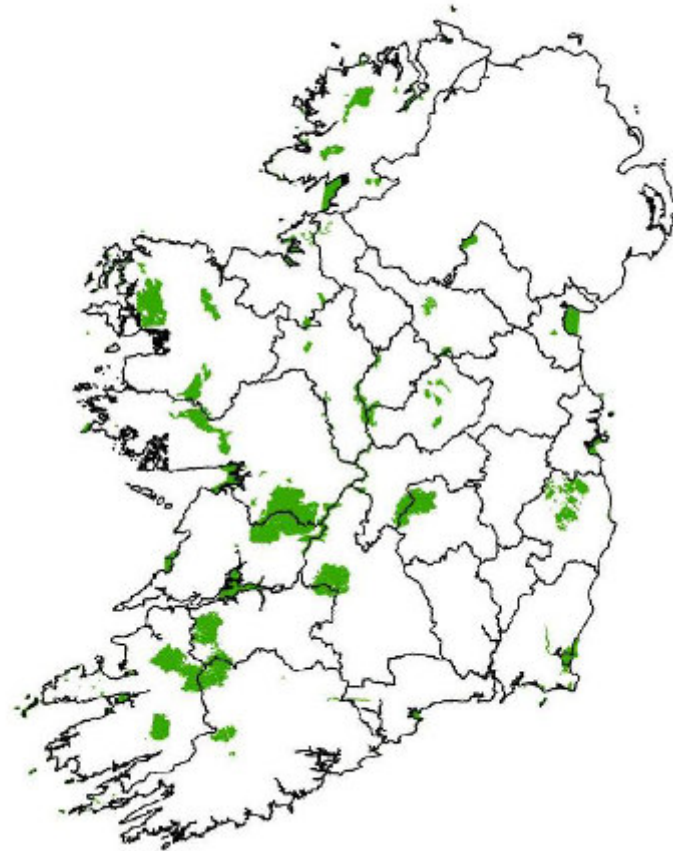
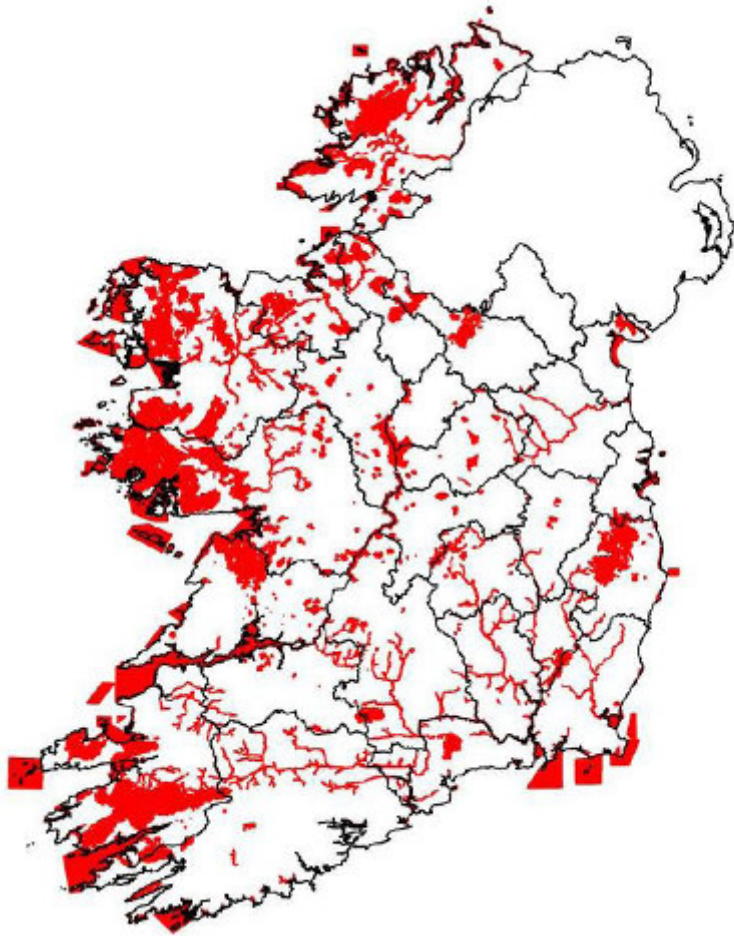
## Objective 10.13

*“To facilitate the provision of future installations for powering electric vehicles at appropriate developments”*

# Issues

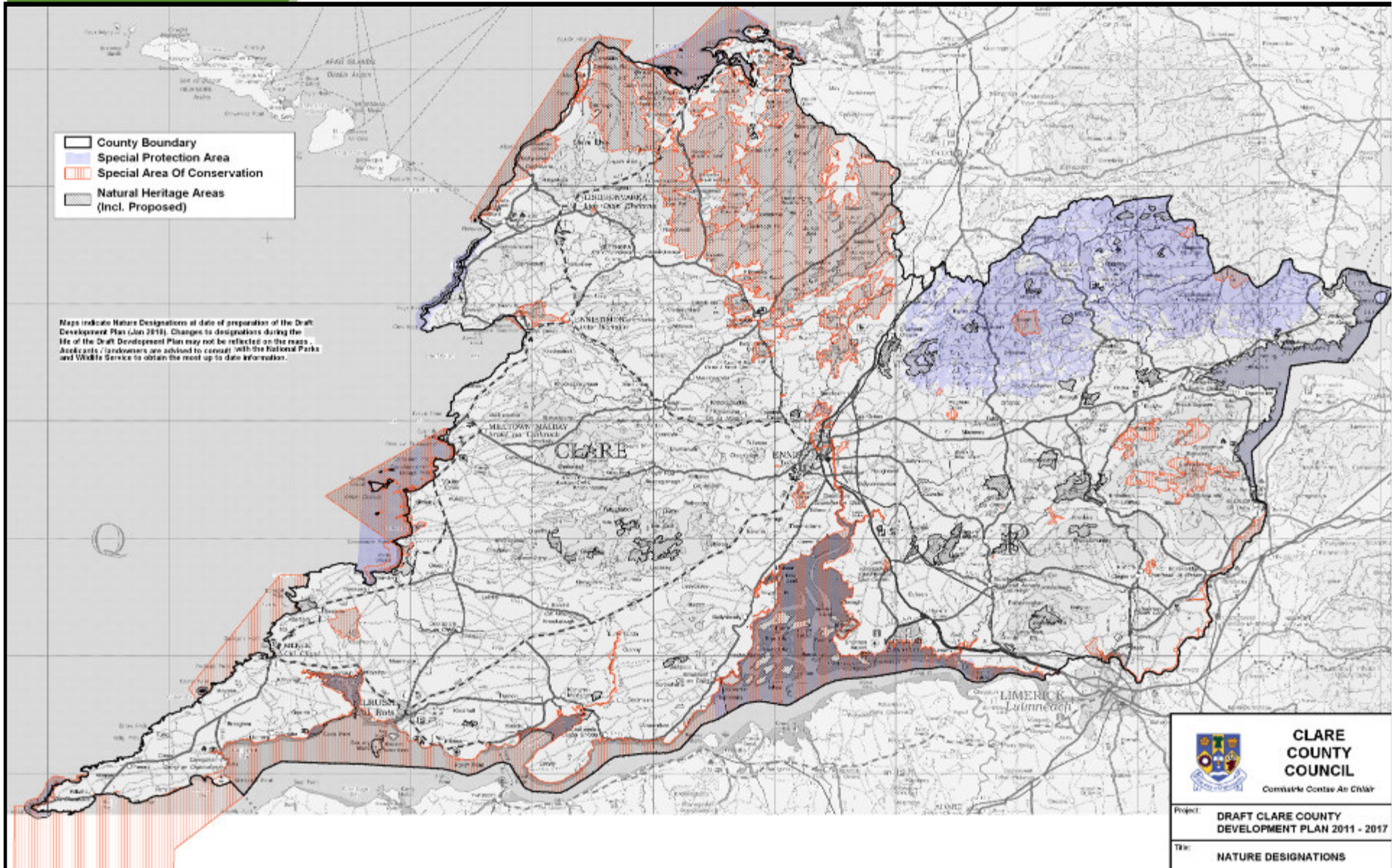
- Engagement and buy-in with local communities and stakeholders at all stages.
- Proactive policies - clarity to all
- Landscape - dynamic and evolving.
- Increase in influence/restriction of environmental issues e.g. S.E.A. Appropriate Assessment. Natura 2000 sites within 15km of site. Conflict in policy?

# SAC's and SPA's in Ireland



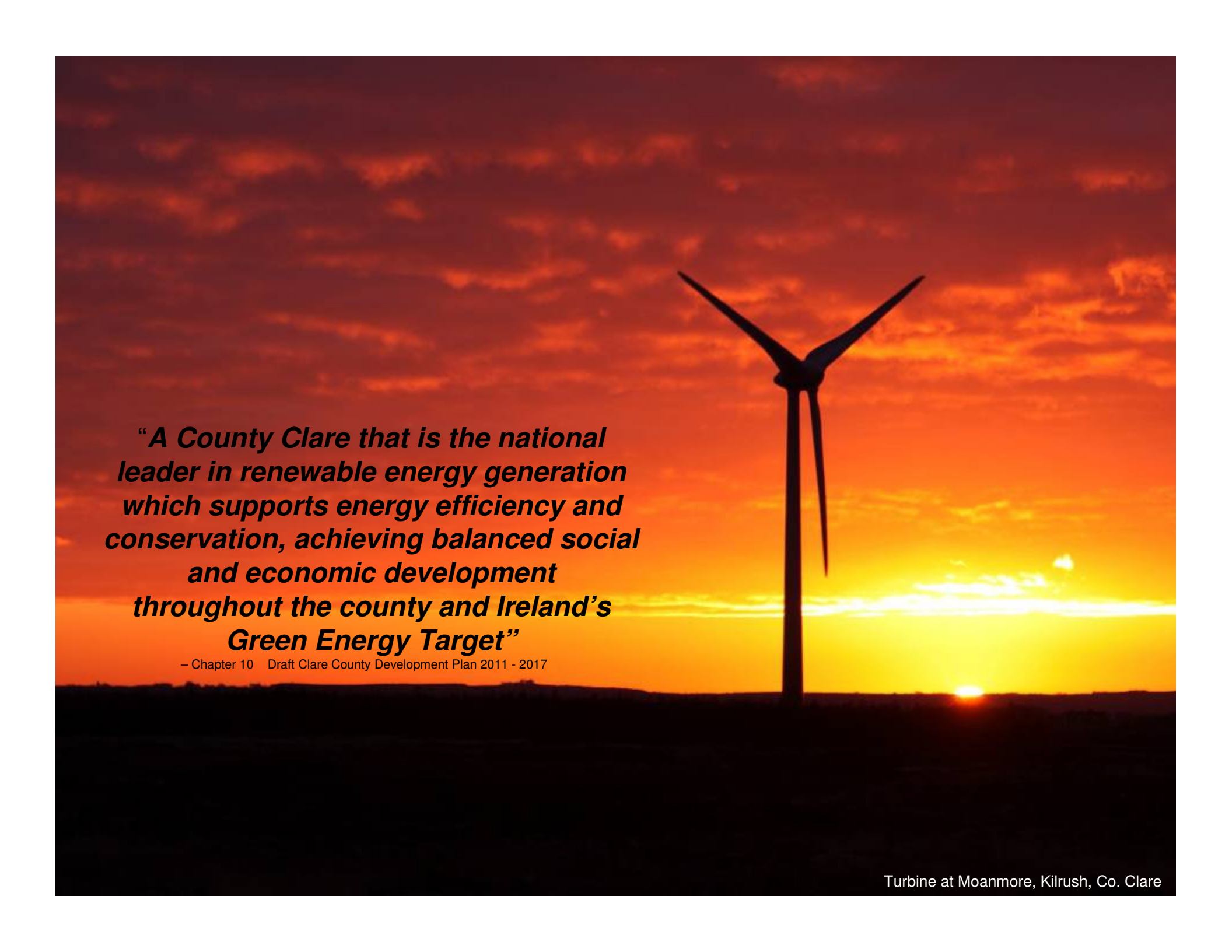
*“Natura 2000 sites that are more than 15km from the plan or project area depending on the likely impacts of the plan or project”*

DoEHLG Guidance on Appropriate Assessment 2009



# Issues

- Focus on Energy Storage and Distribution Infrastructure
- Renewables as a driver of economic growth and energy security
- Incorporate Renewable technology into all aspects of life, transport, building design



***“A County Clare that is the national leader in renewable energy generation which supports energy efficiency and conservation, achieving balanced social and economic development throughout the county and Ireland’s Green Energy Target”***

– Chapter 10 Draft Clare County Development Plan 2011 - 2017

Turbine at Moanmore, Kilrush, Co. Clare