



Planning and Development Acts 2000 to 2017

Planning Authority: Galway County Council

Planning Register Reference Number: 16/1211

Appeal by Ronan Browne and others care of Peter Sweetman and Associates of 14 Postnet, 113 Lower Rathmines Road, Dublin and by the Knockalough Community Group care of Charles Troy of Cnoc Swan, Moycullen, Galway against the decision made on the 26th day of October, 2016 by Galway County Council to grant subject to conditions a permission to Knockalough Wind Farm Limited care of McCarthy Keville O'Sullivan Limited of Block 1, G.F.S.C., Moneenageisha Road, Galway in accordance with plans and particulars lodged with the said Council.

Proposed Development: A ten year planning permission for the relocation of one turbine (Turbine number 4) of the previously permitted Knockalough Wind Farm (planning register reference number 14/1273). The proposed development will consist of the relocation of Turbine number 4, with a permitted maximum overall blade tip height of up to 131 metres, and associated infrastructure to a location northwest of its permitted position and the provision of additional internal access road and all ancillary works, all located in the townland of Knockalough, Moycullen, County Galway.

Decision

GRANT permission for the above proposed development in accordance with the said plans and particulars based on the reasons and considerations under and subject to the conditions set out below.

Matters Considered

In making its decision, the Board had regard to those matters to which, by virtue of the Planning and Development Acts and Regulations made thereunder, it was required to have regard. Such matters included any submissions and observations received by it in accordance with statutory provisions.

Reasons and Considerations

Having regard to the location of the site in an area designated 'Acceptable in Principle' in the Wind Energy Strategy adopted in the Galway County Development Plan 2015-2021, where it is the policy of the planning authority to maximise wind energy development and to the extant planning permission for the development of a windfarm on the site, it is considered that, subject to compliance with the conditions set out below, the proposed development by itself, or cumulatively with other wind farms in the area, would not seriously injure the residential or visual amenities of the area, would not pose an unacceptable risk to water quality or seriously injure the ecology of the area and would, therefore, be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Appropriate Assessment Screening

The Board noted that the proposed development is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European Site.

In completing the screening for Appropriate Assessment, the Board accepted and adopted the screening assessment and conclusion carried out in the Inspector's report in respect of the identification of the European sites which could potentially be affected, and the identification and assessment of the potential likely significant effects of the proposed development, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, on these European sites in views of the site's conservation objectives. The Board was satisfied that the proposed development, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, would not be likely to have a significant effect on the Connemara Bog Complex Special Area of Conservation (Site Code 002034), the Lough Corrib Special Area of Conservation (Site Code 000297) or any other European Site, in view of the sites' conservation objectives. Therefore, a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment and the submission of a Natura Impact Statement is not required.

Environmental Impact Assessment

The Board noted and adopted the Inspector's screening which concluded that an Environmental Impact Statement was not required as the development proposed, is of a class specified in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, as amended, and is sub-threshold. Having regard to criteria for determining whether a development would or would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment (Schedule 7 of the Regulations refers), the Board concurred with the Planning Inspector that the proposed development would not be likely to have significant additional effects on the environment and accordingly an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

Conditions

1. The proposed development shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the plans and particulars lodged with the application, as amended by the further plans and particulars received by An Bord Pleanála on the 17th day of May 2017, except as may otherwise be required in order to comply with the following conditions. Where such conditions require details to be agreed with the planning authority, the developer shall agree such details in writing with the planning authority prior to commencement of the development and the development shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the agreed particulars.

Reason: In the interest of clarity.

2. The conditions attached to the parent permission relating to the development of the overall wind farm granted by Galway County Council under planning register reference number 14/1273 shall continue to apply to this development.

Reason: In the interest of clarity and in the interest of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

3. The permission shall expire on the expiry date of the parent permission granted under planning register reference number 14/1273 which shall be the 5th day of October, 2025.

Reason: In the interest of clarity.

4. No micro-siting is permitted. The location of the proposed turbine shall not be altered without a prior grant of planning permission.

Reason: In the interest of clarity.

