

An  
Coimisiún  
Pleanála

## Commission Order ABP-320537-24

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**Planning and Development Acts, 2000 to 2022**

**Planning Authorities: Meath and Westmeath County Councils**

**(Associated application reference number: ABP-311565-21)**

**REQUEST** received by An Coimisiún Pleanála on the 12<sup>th</sup> day of August 2024 from Bracklyn Wind Farm Limited care of Galetech Energy Services of Clondargan, Stradone, County Cavan under section 146B of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, to alter the terms of a strategic infrastructure development, granted under ABP-311565-21 for a Wind Farm Development including nine turbines and all associated works at Ballagh, Billistown, Ballynacor and Bracklin, County Westmeath, and Coolronan, County Meath.

**WHEREAS** the Commission made a decision to grant the proposed development, subject to conditions, for the above-mentioned development by Order dated the 7<sup>th</sup> day of July 2022.

**AND WHEREAS** the Commission has received a request to alter the terms of the development, the subject of the permission,

**AND WHEREAS** the proposed alteration is described as follows:

- The applicant is proposing to alter the dimensions of all the permitted wind turbines and this may amend the electrical capacity, as follows;

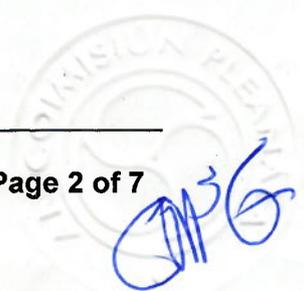
- A hub height from 104 metres approved to between 99 metres and 104 metres;
  - A rotor diameter from 162 metres approved to between 158 metres and 163 metres;
  - An overall tip height from 185 metres approved to between 179 metres and 185 metres;
  - Electrical capacity of the project is dependent on the wind turbine model installed but will result in an output from an approved 54MW to between 50MW and 64.8MW;
  - The applicant is proposing to install any wind turbine model whose configuration fall within the ranges specified above, and
- amendment to the wording of condition number 6, so that the condition reads as follows:

6. The turbines shall be between 179 metres and 185 metres in height, with a hub height of between 99 metres and 104 metres and a rotor diameter of between 158 metres and 163 metres in accordance with the range of turbine options assessed in the application documentation.

Prior to commencement of development, the developer shall submit to the planning authority a drawing of the final turbine design to be kept on file as part of the public record.

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

**AND WHEREAS** the Commission decided, in accordance with section 146B(2)(b) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, not to invite submissions or observations from the public in relation to whether the proposed alteration would constitute the making of a material alteration to the terms of the development concerned,



**AND WHEREAS** the Commission decided, in accordance with section 146B(2)(a) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, that the proposed alteration would not result in the making of a material alteration to the terms of the development, the subject of the approval,

**AND WHEREAS** having considered all the documents on file and the Inspector's report, the Commission considered that the making of the proposed alteration would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment or on any European Site,

**NOW THEREFORE** in accordance with section 146B(3)(a) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, the Commission hereby alters the above-mentioned decision so that the approved development shall be altered in accordance with the plans and particulars received by An Coimisiún Pleanála on the 12<sup>th</sup> day of August 2024, for the reasons and considerations set out below.

### **REASONS AND CONSIDERATIONS**

In coming to its decision, the Commission had regard to the following:

- (a) The nature and scale of the proposed alteration;
- (b) The documentation on file, and
- (c) The report of the Inspector.

Having regard to:

- the nature and scale of the wind farm development permitted under ABP-311565-21;
- the examination of the environmental impact, including in relation to European Sites, carried out in the course of that application;
- the limited nature and scale of the alterations when considered in relation to the overall permitted development;

- the location of the proposed alterations, within the footprint of the existing Bracklyn Windfarm site;
- the absence of any significant new or additional environmental impacts arising as a result of the proposed alterations; and
- the report of the Commission's Inspector, which is adopted,

the Commission was satisfied that the information before it was adequate to undertake a screening for appropriate assessment and a screening for environmental impact assessment in respect of the proposed alteration.

### **Appropriate Assessment: Stage 1**

In conducting a screening exercise for appropriate assessment, the Commission considered the nature, scale and context of the proposed alterations, the documentation on file including the Addendum Natura Impact Statement submitted with the application and the assessment of the Inspector in relation to the potential for effects on European Sites. In undertaking the screening exercise, the Commission accepted the analysis and conclusions of the Inspector.

The Commission concluded that, both by itself, and in combination with other development in the vicinity, the proposed alterations would not be likely to have significant effects on two number European Sites in view of their conservation objectives.

The Commission considered that the River Boyne and River Blackwater Special Area of Conservation (Site Code: 002299) and the River Boyne and River Blackwater Special Protection Area (Site Code: 004232) could be screened out from further assessment and that the Lough Derravarragh Special Protection Area (Site Code: 004043) required further investigation.

In reaching this conclusion, the Commission took no account of mitigation measures intending to avoid or reduce the potentially harmful effects of the development on any European site.

## **Appropriate Assessment: Stage 2**

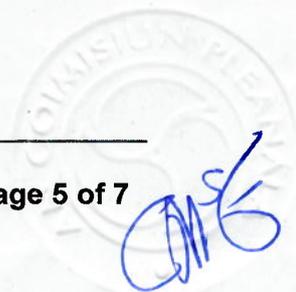
The Commission considered the addendum Natura Impact Statement and all other relevant documentation on the file and carried out an appropriate assessment of the implications of the proposed alterations for the Lough Derravarragh Special Protection Area (Site Code: 004043).

The Commission considered that the information before it was adequate to allow the carrying out of an appropriate assessment, as well as the report of the Inspector.

In completing the assessment, the Commission considered the likely direct and indirect impacts arising from the proposed development, both individually and in combination with other plans or projects, the mitigation measures which are included as part of the approved Bracklyn Wind Farm granted under ABP-311565-21, and the conservation objectives for the European Site.

In completing the Appropriate Assessment, the Commission accepted and adopted the Appropriate Assessment carried out in the Inspector's report in respect of the potential effects of the proposed development on the aforementioned European Site, having regard to the Site's conservation objectives.

In overall conclusion, the Commission was satisfied that the proposed development would not significantly affect the integrity of the Lough Derravarragh Special Protection Area (Site Code: 004043) or any other European site in view of the site's conservation objectives.



## Environmental Impact Assessment Screening

The Commission considered the potential environmental impacts that might arise due to the proposed alteration, both by itself and in combination with other development in the vicinity. Having regard to the characteristics of the receiving environment, the characteristics of the proposed alteration, and the submissions on file, the Commission is satisfied that the proposed alteration would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment. The Commission concurred with the analysis and conclusions of the Inspector in this matter. The Commission, therefore, concluded that the preparation of an environmental impact assessment report is not required, either by means of any mandatory requirement or following sub-threshold analysis.

Having regard to: -

- The parent permission granted under ABP-311565-21, which the subject alterations seek to amend;
- The modest nature and scale of the proposed alterations;
- The location of the proposed alterations, within the footprint of the permitted development site;
- The pattern of development in the surrounding area;
- The location of the development outside of any sensitive location specified in Article 109(4)(a)(v) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as revised;
- The guidance set out in the 'Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-threshold Development', issued by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (2003), and
- The criteria set out in Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as revised,

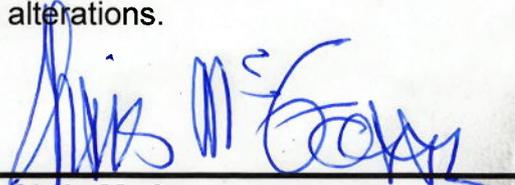
it is considered that, following the EIA Screening Determination, the proposed development would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment and that the preparation and submission of an environmental impact assessment report would not, therefore, be required.

### **Proper Planning and Sustainable Development**

Having regard to:

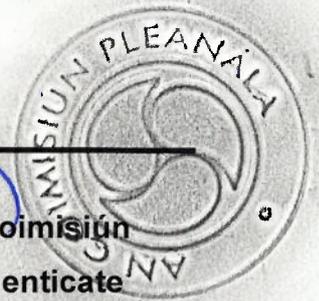
- the nature and details of the parent permission, ABP-311565-21;
- the character of the alterations, including their scale and form;
- the location of the proposed alterations, within the footprint of the existing permitted development site;
- the limited visibility of the proposed alterations outside the confines of the site;
- the absence of any significant new or additional environmental impacts arising as a result of the proposed alterations, including landscape or visual effects or effects on archaeology, and
- the report of the Commission's Inspector, which is adopted,

it is considered that the proposed alterations would not be material. In accordance with section 146B(3)(a) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, the Commission hereby makes the said alterations.



**Chris McGarry**

**Planning Commissioner of An Coimisiún  
Pleanála duly authorised to authenticate  
the seal of the Commission.**



Dated this 10<sup>th</sup> day of July 2025.