



An
Bord
Pleanála

Inspector's Report

ABP-318295-23- Addendum

Development

Construction of five wind turbines, meteorological mast, electricity sub station and associated site works. The application is accompanied by a Planning Report, Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and a Natura Impact Statement (NIS).

Location

Bilboa Wind Farm, Land at Boolyvannanan and Coolnakisha, Bilboa, County Carlow.

Planning Authority

Carlow County Council

Planning Authority Reg. Ref.

22/340

Applicant(s)

Boolyvannan Renewable Energy Limited.

Type of Application

Permission.

Planning Authority Decision

Grant Permission subject to conditions

Type of Appeal

Third Party

Appellant(s)

Justin & Susan Hayden & Mary Farrell.

Observer(s)	Wild Ireland Defence CLG, c/o Peter Sweetman & Associates. Shangri La, Newtown, Bantry. Co Cork Michael Monaghan, Johnsduffwood, Old Leighlin, Co Carlow. Michael Farrell, Coolnakisha, Leighlinsbridge, Co Carlow. Mary Farrell. Coolnakisha, Leighlinsbridge, Co Carlow. Justin Hayden & Susan Hayden, Coolnakisha, Old Leighlinbridge.
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Prescribed Bodies	Development Applications Unit, Department of Housing Local Government and Heritage. Health Service Executive, Environmental Health. National Office for Environmental Health Services. Kilkenny County Council Inland Fisheries Ireland I.F.I. Irish Water Irish Aviation Authority. I.A.A.
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Date of Site Inspection	24 th May 2024.
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Inspector	Bríd Maxwell
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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This is an addendum report to the Inspector's report in respect of ABP-318295-23 dated 28th June 2024.
- 1.2 The case, ABP-318298-23, relates to a third party appeal by Justin and Susan Hayden and Mary Farrell against a decision by Carlow County Council to grant permission for a windfarm development, Bibloa Windfarm, Co Carlow. The appeal was circulated to the applicant's agent, Arcus Consultancy Services Ltd., on 24th October 2023 however as this agent no longer represented the applicant at this time they were no longer in a position to respond to the grounds of appeal. The appeal was circulated to the current agent, ERM Consultants, on 4th September 2024 and a response submission was received on 13th September 2024.
- 1.3 This report considers the submission made and should be read in conjunction with the Inspector's report ABP-318295-23, dated 28th June 2024.

2.0 Background

- 2.1. The application involves permission for the erection of five wind turbines with turbine blade diameter of 117m, hub height 78m and overall height to tip of 136.5m, one permanent meteorological mast, access road and internal tracks, electricity substation, temporary construction compound, turbine laydown area, control building, 1 borrow pit, crane hardstanding, underground cabling, up to approximately 18 hectares of forestry felling and all associated site works, with an operational lifetime of 30 years. The proposed development has an anticipated output of approximately 22.5MW.
- 2.2. I refer the Board to Section 2.0 of the Inspector's report dated 28th June 2024 for a detailed description of the proposed works.

3.0 Applicant's Response to Grounds of Appeal

- 3.1 Regarding concerns raised in respect of impact on private well water quality, chapter 8 of the EIAR examined the impact on hydrology in detail. The assessment concluded that the development combined with the consented grid route would result in non significant cumulative effects. The nearest deep excavation (turbine foundation) is located approximately 780m from the most proximate dwelling which is of sufficient distance for potential chemical and sedimentation effects to dissipate and dilute. Appellants have been contacted and the applicant has offered to monitor wells during and after construction. Good construction practice, as set out in the CEMP, will minimise potential for chemical and sedimentation effects on the hydrological environment. (TA 4.1 CEMP). The 2022 EIAR concluded that no public or private water supplies would be impacted.
- 3.2 Regarding visual impact on the scenic ridge drive and the rural countryside it is noted that as part of the community fund it is intended to design and construct public amenity trail through the site.
- 3.3 Regarding the loss of forestry and consequent impacts on wildlife, it is noted that as lands are currently dedicated to monoculture sitka spruce, tree felling would be occurring regardless. Ecological surveys found the impact on local wildlife to be minimal. Supervision by suitably qualified and experienced personnel /ecological clerk of works will ensure that all mitigation measures are implemented.
- 3.4 Regarding proximity of turbines to houses the overall tip height of 136.5m and turbine location is as previously permitted. The only difference is the rotor diameter which has increased from 93m to 120m.
- 3.5 Regarding potential impact on flight paths, the Irish Aviation Authority have requested the attachment of fixed obstacle lighting.
- 3.6 Regarding noise and visual impact on residential amenity, it is not possible to entirely screen all turbines, however windfarms are a common feature in the Irish landscape and are essential in the achievement of the goal of 80% renewable energy by 2030. At present County Carlow has only 5.8mW of installed capacity, representing less

than 0.1% of installed national capacity. Bilboa windfarm is an integral part of Carlow's Renewable Energy Strategy. Regarding noise monitoring the applicant has proposed in consultation with the appellants to undertake noise monitoring at their properties.

4.0 Recommendation

- 4.0 I consider that no significant new information or comment has been made that would result in a different recommendation to that originally made. My recommendation to the Board is that permission be granted for the proposed development as per Inspector's report dated 28th June 2024. I recommend that the Board grant planning permission for the proposed development subject to the reasons and considerations as set out and subject to the conditions attached in accordance with the Draft Order.

I confirm that this report represents my professional planning assessment, judgement and opinion on the matter assigned to me and that no person has influenced or sought to influence, directly or indirectly, the exercise of my professional judgement in an improper or inappropriate way.

Bríd Maxwell
Planning Inspector
11 October 2024