

An
Bord
Pleanála

Inspector's Report

ABP-324133-26

Development

Proposed Rooaunalaghta Green Energy Project.

Location

located at Rooaunalaghta, County Mayo.

Planning Authority

Mayo County Council & Galway County Council.

Prospective Applicant

Rooaunalaghta Green Energy Limited.

Type of Application

Pre-Application Consultation under Section 37B of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended.

Date of Site Inspection

11th May 2026.

Inspector

Ronan O'Connor.

1.0 Introduction

Under the provisions of Section 37B of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended (PDA), Rooaunalaghta Green Energy Limited (the applicant) has made a pre-application request to An Coimisiún Pleanála (the Commission) as to whether the development of wind farm consisting of 13 no. wind turbines, 110 kV electrical substation and grid connection comprising a 33 kV underground cable connection (circa 8.3 km in length), and associated works, on lands located in located in Co. Mayo and in Co. Galway, constitutes Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID). The Commission is requested to determine whether the proposed development constitutes SID. The applicant is of the view that the proposed development constitutes SID.

2.0 Site Location and Description

The proposed site is located in the townlands of Rooaunalaghta and Cloughmoyne, County Mayo. The nearest settlements are Glencorrib, Shrule and Headford, which lie approximately 1.4km North-west of the site, 3km North-east of the site and 4.5km South of the site, respectively.

The proposed wind farm site is located within the townlands of Cloghmoyne, Carrowoughteragh, Toorard, Rooaunalaghta, Brodullagh South and Kinlough, County Mayo.

The proposed underground 33 kV grid connection route (GCR) traverses the townlands of Brodullagh South, Kinlough, Cloonbanaun, County Mayo, and the townlands of Largan, Joyce's Park, Shrulegrove, Carrowmore, Tonacooleen, Ralusk, Abbeytown, Ballinvoher, Killamanagh and Bunnasillagh, County Galway.

There is one location which requires small scale temporary additional works to accommodate oversize/abnormal load delivery to site (for turbine components) from Galway Harbour. This involves modifying a small area of footpath to support the vehicle in the townlands of Ballybaan Beg, within Galway City.

The wider area of the proposed wind farm site is rural in nature, with low density ribbon development along local roads. There is a working quarry to the north of the proposed wind farm site.

The majority of the proposed wind farm site is agriculturally improved grassland. Annex I habitats identified on site include Limestone pavements, Turloughs, European dry heaths, seminatural grasslands and scrublands facies on calcareous substrates.

In terms of proximity to European sites, the site borders the Cloughmoyne SAC immediately adjacent to the west. The proposed wind farm site is hydrologically linked to the Lough Corrib Special Area of Conservation (SAC) located approximately 2.9km to the west of the site. The site is within 20 km of Lough Corrib, Lough Mask and Lough Carra SPAs.

In terms of hydrology and hydrogeology, there are no EPA streams on the proposed wind farm site, but drainage channels occur to the south of the wind farm site, and the overall area is karstified. The Black River (Shrule) runs to the south and east of the wind farm site.

3.0 Prospective Development

A summary of the Proposed Development is as follows¹:

- 13 no. wind turbines with a blade tip height of 150 m, a rotor diameter of 136 m, a hub height of 82 m, and all associated foundations and hard-standing areas in respect of each turbine;
- Creation of two new site entrances onto the R334 Regional Road;
- Construction of two temporary construction compounds with associated temporary site offices, parking areas and security fencing;
- One borrow pit. All works associated with the opening, aggregate and spoil extraction, and decommissioning of the borrow pit;
- Construction of two temporary soil storage areas including associated drainage;
- Construction of new internal site access tracks to include passing bays and all associated drainage;
- Construction of a temporary new access track to connect to the adjacent operating quarry;

¹ Confirmed by way of closing letter, dated 14th September 2026.

- Construction of drainage and sediment control systems;
- Construction of new on-site control building;
- Construction of one permanent loop-in 110 kV electrical substation compound including
 - One control building containing worker welfare facilities;
 - Electrical infrastructure and grid ancillary services equipment
 - Parking
 - Lighting
 - Fencing
 - Wastewater holding tank
 - Rainwater harvesting equipment
 - Communications equipment and storage
 - Associated electrical plant
 - All associated infrastructure, services, and site works including landscaping
- All works associated with the connection of the proposed wind farm to the proposed 110 kV loop in substation, which will be via 33 kV underground cable connection (circa 8.3 km in length), including 6 no. watercourse crossings, and the onward connection from the substation to the existing overhead line via 110kV cables and steel lattice interface masts;
- All associated underground electrical and communications cabling connecting the wind turbines to the proposed wind farm control building;
- All associated infrastructure and services including site works and signage; Construction of a lidar unit, and associated foundation and hard-standing area;
- All related site works and ancillary development including site drainage, security gates, fencing, permanent and temporary signage, berms, tree / hedgerow / wall removal, landscaping, soil excavation and biodiversity mitigation and enhancements, including hedgerow and tree planting.

4.0 Planning History

Subject Site

None of relevance on the subject site.

Wider Area

With reference to the Mayo County Council Planning Portal and the Commission's GIS mapping, there are numerous planning applications for residential, and agricultural developments.

There are also a number of planning applications relating to the quarry to the north of the proposed site (at Carrowoughteragh, Shrile, Co. Mayo).

The closest wind farm application is the 'Shancloon Wind Farm' (the boundary of which lies approximately 4km to the east of this pre-application site), which is a RED III application (ACP-323699-25) for 11 no. turbine wind farm and associated infrastructure. At the time drafting of this report, a decision has not yet been determined.

Another current application with the Commission is Ref APB-319307-24, for 8 no. wind turbines and associated works, at Laurclavagh and adjacent townlands in Co. Galway (the boundary of which lies approximately 12.15 km to the south-east which is currently subject of a Further Information request².

Other applications of note include application PA Ref 2560709 which relates to works to uprate the existing Cashla - Dalton 110 kV overhead line, which runs for a total of 57.7 km through County Mayo and County Galway. The Mayo element was granted permission January 2026.

5.0 Wind Energy Policy (Local)

The relevant Development Plan is the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028 (as varied).

The strategy for wind energy in the County is set out in the Renewable Energy Strategy for County Mayo which was adopted on 13th July 2026.

With reference to the Mayo Renewable Energy Strategy, and with reference to the applicant's presentation dated 31st August 2026, 9 no. proposed wind turbines are located within an area deemed 'Unsuitable' [for wind farms] and 4 no. proposed wind turbines are located within an area deemed 'Open for Consideration' [for wind farms].

² <https://www.pleanala.ie/en-ie/case/319307>

6.0 Prospective Applicant's Case

The prospective applicant's case can be summarised as follows:

- The proposed development is strategic development as defined under the 7th Schedule of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended, given that the project comprises a windfarm which would have an output greater than 50 MW. The proposed windfarm will have a total output of 58.5 MW.
- The proposal satisfies all three of the criteria set out in section 37A(2) of the Act and therefore is strategic infrastructure development namely:
 - (a) The prospective applicant's case is that the proposed development satisfies the condition under section 37A(2) of the Act due to its scale and the power output in excess of 50MW which is considered to be of strategic economic and social importance to the region and the State.
 - (b) The prospective applicant's case is that the proposed development satisfies the condition under section 37A(2) of the Act due to its scale and the power output in excess of 50MW which is considered to be of strategic economic and social importance to the region and the State.
 - (c) The wind farm site is located predominantly within the administrative area of Mayo County Council, with minor elements of the Proposed Development proposed within the administrative area of Galway County Council.

7.0 Precedent

The following table outlines a sample of other SID pre-application determinations for wind farm developments of similar scales decided by the Board:

ABP Ref.	Location	Development Description	ABP Decision
321507	Galway	11 turbines. Output of total power output of between 61.6MW to 72.6MW.	Is SID
320703	Mayo	19 turbines. Output of 70.05MW	Is SID

319601	Waterford	15 turbines. Output of 85.5MW to 108MW	Is SID
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8.0 Pre-Application Consultation Meetings

3 no. pre-application consultation meetings were held between An Coimisiún Pleanála and the prospective applicant on following dates:

- 26th May 2026.
- 27th July 2026.
- 31st August 2026.

Full details of the meetings and matters discussed are contained in the Commission's records for the meetings.

The principal matters arising related to:

- Policy Context.
- Ecological Assessments including ornithological assessments.
- Links to European sites and potential impacts on same.
- Soils and Geology.
- Hydrology and Hydrogeology.
- Landscape and Visual Impact.
- Cultural Heritage.
- Noise and Vibration.
- Other Material Assets.
- Cumulative Impacts.
- Consultations.

9.0 Submissions of the Prospective Applicant

The applicant's submissions in relation to the pre-application, in the main, consist of the following:

- Cover letter dated 10th March 2026.
- PowerPoint presentations for each of the 3 no. meetings.
- Close-out letter dated 14th September 2026.

As expressed in the applicant's submissions (namely the cover letter, and the close out letter) the applicant confirmed that it is of the view that the proposed development constitutes SID.

Final details of the proposed development are set out in the close-out letter dated 14th September 2026, and I have summarised same in Section 3 above.

10.0 Legislative Context

Strategic Infrastructure Development

Section 37A of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) provides that an application for permission for any development specified in the Seventh Schedule shall be made directly to the Board if the proposed development would fall within one or more of the following paragraphs:

- (a) the development would be of strategic economic or social importance to the State or the region in which it would be situate,
- (b) the development would contribute substantially to the fulfilment of any of the objectives in the National Planning Framework or in any regional spatial and economic strategy in force in respect of the area or areas in which it would be situate,
- (c) the development would have a significant effect on the area of more than one planning authority.

Class 1 of the Seventh Schedule relates to energy infrastructure and includes the following category of development:

'an installation for the harnessing of wind power for energy production (a wind farm) with more than 25 turbines or having a total output greater than 50 megawatts'.

Environmental Impact Assessment

Section 37E(1) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended, requires that an application for permission for development in respect of which a notice has been served under section 37B(4)(a) shall be made to the Commission and shall be accompanied by an environmental impact assessment report (EIAR) in respect of the proposed development. Therefore, the submission of an EIAR is mandatory.

Appropriate Assessment

The site borders the Cloughmoyne SAC immediately adjacent to the west. The proposed wind farm site is hydrologically linked to the Lough Corrib Special Area of Conservation (SAC) located approximately 2.9km to the west of the site. The site is within 20 km of Lough Corrib, Lough Mask and Lough Carra SPAs.

11.0 Assessment

Section 37A(1): Is the development specified in the Seventh Schedule of the Act?

Based on the information contained in the prospective applicant's documentation, and elaborated upon at the pre-application consultation meeting, the proposed development would provide would comprise 13 no. wind turbines, the construction of a 110kV Substation and a 110kV 'loop-in' connection to the national grid via existing 110kV overhead lines. Overall, the proposed wind farm will have an estimated output capacity of 58.5 megawatts (MW).

Based on the proposed output, the proposed development would exceed the 50MW threshold for wind farms set out in Class 1 (Energy Infrastructure) of the Seventh Schedule of the Act.

The proposed development would therefore satisfy section 37A(1) of the Act.

Section 37A(2): Does the Proposed Development fall within one or more of Sections 37A(2)(a), (b), and (c)?

S.37A(2)(a) - strategic economic or social importance to the State or the region

In relation to same, I note that the proposed development will contribute to the transition to a low carbon, climate resilient and environmentally sustainable economy in line with national policies and objectives such as the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015 (as amended), Climate Action Plan 2024 (CAP 24),

Climate Action Plan 2025 (CAP 25), and Project Ireland 2040: The National Planning Framework, specifically National Policy Objective 55. I further consider the proposed development would involve significant capital investment in the region and will create employment opportunities relating to the construction, operation, and decommissioning of the development. Additionally, a Community Benefit Scheme will be put in place. All of these considerations will result in a positive impact on the economic profile of the subject area and investment in the region.

Having regard to the national and regional context, and the nature and scale of the proposed development, as outlined above, I am satisfied that the development would clearly be of strategic economic importance to the State and the region and would therefore satisfy the condition set out in section 37A(2)(a) of the Act.

S.37A(2)(b) - Fulfilment of NPF or RSES Objectives

It is submitted by the prospective applicant that the proposed development would contribute to the objectives of the National Planning Framework (NPF), specifically NPO 70 and NPO 71 and the provisions of the Northern and Western Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2020-2032 (RSES).

Having reviewed the NPF, I note the following relevant National Strategic Outcome 8 (NSO 8) and National Policy Objectives (NPOs) 70 and 71 which seek to encourage, facilitate and harness renewable energy sources including wind at appropriate locations within the built and natural environment to meet national objectives towards achieving a carbon neutral economy by 2050, and which support the development and upgrading of the national grid. I also note that Table 9.1 in the NPF allocates an additional onshore wind capacity of 1389 MW wind for the Northern and Western Region to be realised by 2030.

At a regional level, the Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Northern and Western Region 2020-2032 supports an increase in the amount of new renewable energy sources in the region, stating that the renewable energy needs of the region, in the form of wind, solar and biomass, will be likely to be met in rural areas.

The proposal to generate over 50MW of renewable energy by using wind as a resource would assist in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and would contribute significantly towards the achievement of a low carbon economy. In this regard, I am satisfied that the development would meet relevant NPOs of the NPF and would

serve to fulfil the relevant RPOs of the RSES. The development would therefore satisfy the requirement set out in Section 37A(2)(b) of the Act.

S. 37A(2)(c) - Significant effect on the area of more than one planning authority

The windfarm site is within the Mayo County Council administrative area, proximate to the boundary with Galway County Council. The substation is within the Galway County Council administrative area and the proposed grid connection traverses both the Mayo County Council administrative area and the Galway County Council administrative area. The project will be connected to the national grid and will provide renewable energy to the region and displace the emission from other less clean forms of energy generation.

I consider that the Board could reasonably come to the conclusion that the development would have a significant effect on an area of more than one planning authority. Accordingly, I am also of the opinion that the proposed development would also fall within the scope of section 37A(2)(c).

12.0 Recommendation

Based on the above assessment, it can be concluded that the proposed development would exceed the threshold set out in the Seventh Schedule of the Act and therefore satisfies the requirements of section 37A(1) of the Act. It can also be determined that the requirements of sections 37A(2)(a)(b) and (c) of the Act have been satisfied.

I recommend that the Board serve a notice on the prospective applicant, pursuant to Section 37(B)(4) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, stating that it is of the opinion that the proposed development constitutes a strategic infrastructure development within the meaning of Section 37A of the Act for the reasons and considerations set out below.

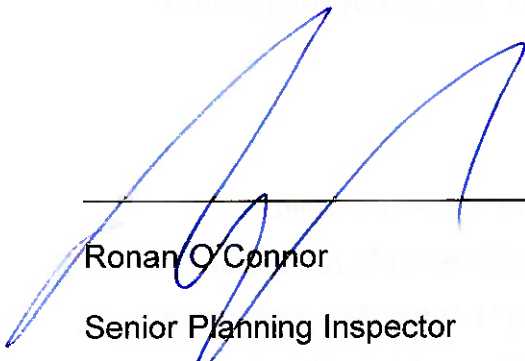
13.0 Reasons and Considerations

Having regard to the size, scale and location of the proposed windfarm and related development, and to the policy context, it is considered that the proposed development comprising the development of 13 no. wind turbines, 110 kV electrical substation and grid connection comprising a 33 kV underground cable connection (circa 8.3 km in length), and associated works, on lands located in located in Co.

Mayo and in Co. Galway constitutes development that falls within the definition of energy infrastructure in the Seventh Schedule of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, thereby satisfying the requirements set out in Section 37A(1) of the Act.

The proposed development is also considered to be of strategic importance by reference to the requirements of Section 37A(2)(a), 37A(2)(b), and 37A(2)(c) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. An application for permission for the proposed development must therefore be made directly to An Coimisiún Pleanála under Section 37E of the Act.

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.



Ronan O'Connor

Senior Planning Inspector

23rd September 2026

14.0 Appendix A: Prescribed Bodies

The following is a list of prescribed bodies considered relevant for the purposes of section 37E(3)(c) of the Act:

- Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage (Development Applications Unit)
- Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications
- Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media
- Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine
- Galway County Council
- Mayo County Council
- The Northern and Western Regional Assembly
- Transport Infrastructure Ireland
- An Taisce
- An Chomhairle Ealaíon
- Fáilte Ireland
- Heritage Council
- Inland Fisheries Ireland
- Office of Public Works
- Uisce Eireann
- Irish Aviation Authority
- AirNav Ireland,
- Health Service Executive
- Commission for Regulation of Utilities

Further notifications should also be made, where deemed appropriate.

15.0 Appendix 2: Schedule of Information to Inform Completeness Check

This Schedule of Information seeks to provide details which will facilitate An Coimisiún Pleanála in undertaking the Completeness Check required by Section 37JA of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended in order to process the application. It shall not be construed as comprising an assessment of the application documentation or a consideration of the merits of the proposed development.

Details of Proposed Development at Closure

Pre-Application Ref.	ABP-324133-26
Prospective Applicant:	Rooaunalaghta Green Energy Limited
Date of Final Meeting:	31 st August 2026
Number of Turbines:	13
Design Flexibility opinion:	No
Is Grid Connection Included:	Yes
Is a BESS included:	No
Accommodating works for TDR:	Yes

Information

Plans and Particulars	
Response Letter detailing Compliance with SIICC	Letter responding to all of the matters outlined below.
Public Notice	• Time Period for Consultation and Fee for Submissions • Standalone Website Address • EIAR and NIS referenced

	• Reference to Section 37JA • All townlands within the site boundary to be correctly referenced.
Prescribed Bodies	• Notification of All Prescribed Bodies and a copy of the correspondence sent to same.
Land Ownership	• Interest in land • Written consent of all other landowners (<i>Inc. legally binding agreement & land registry map if required</i>)
Design Flexibility	Design flexibility not sought
Fee	Relevant Fee
EIA Portal	Letter from Portal
Planning Statement	• Renewable Energy Designation Policy Statement • Statement outlining compliance with all relevant policies and objectives in the County Development Plan including a justification for material contravention of same if relevant. • Consultation overview • Community Benefit Fund • Planning history
Drawings	• Drawing Schedule • Site location map • Site layout plan • Plans, elevations, sections and cross-sections • Wayleaves shown • Grid Connection Route • Scales appropriate
EIAR	

No design Flex	One turbine type (blade tip height of 150 m, a rotor diameter of 136 m and a hub height of 82 m) and grid connection to be assessed.
Non-Technical Summary	Provided as a standalone section.
Introduction	• Legislative context • Scoping Consultation • Community Engagement Report • Methodology/methodologies for the assessment of the environmental factors and for the description and consideration of the significance of effects • Study Area(s) and justification for same. • Project Team (Author qualifications, experience and expertise) • Technical Difficulties/Limitations
Description of the Proposed Development	• Detailed description (all stages) of the characteristics of the proposed development including use of natural resources, production of waste, emissions & disturbances • Table of Turbine Location Details • Construction Environmental Management Plan • Decommissioning Plan • Waste & Resource Management Plan
Consideration of Alternatives	• Site selection & design process • Reasonable alternatives considered (Layout, scale, technologies, grid connection, turbine delivery, substation infrastructure, construction methodology etc)
Population and Human Health	• Population & Settlement Patterns • Economic Activity & Employment

	• Tourism & Amenities (Inc. recreational trails/waterways) • Human Health & Wellbeing (Reference Studies) • Property Devaluation/House Prices
Biodiversity	• Derogations (Obtained) • Ecological Impact Assessment • Biodiversity Enhancement Areas/Management Plan • Bat Surveys (to include): • Preliminary Roost Assessment Surveys, • Bat activity transect surveys, • Static bat detector deployments, • Emergence/re-entry bat roost, • Hibernation • Invasive Species Management Plan • Terrestrial Surveys (<i>Habitat & ecology (incl. protected flora, mammals, invertebrates, amphibians and reptiles, and invasive plant species)</i>) • Aquatic Surveys (<i>Habitat & ecology (incl. river/lake/pond habitat, macroinvertebrate, electro-fishing, fisheries)</i>)
Ornithology	• Surveys (<i>Vantage Point, Breeding & non-breeding, hinterland, Dusk, Walkover, Roost & Winter surveys</i>) • Connectivity with European Sites • Collision Risk Model (CRM) Assessment • Monitoring Programme • Cumulative Assessment

	• CIEEM (2024) are the appropriate guidelines instead of Percival (2003) to inform ornithological impact assessments
Noise and Vibration	• Baseline Noise Levels (Justification for sites used) • Map of all receptors within 4 x Tip of Turbines • Predicted Noise Levels • Proposed Noise Limits (cumulative) • Operational Noise Monitoring Proposal • Mitigation Strategy for Operational Amplitude Modulation and Tonal Noises • Cumulative Noise Assessment (<i>to include N5</i>)
Shadow Flicker	• Shadow Flicker Analysis • Wind Turbine Control Measures
Air and Climate	• Carbon Impact Assessment including Embodied Energy Assessment and Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment • Dust Generation/Emissions and Management • Vehicle Emissions and Management
Land, Soils & Geology	• Ground Condition Assessment (incl): ○ Ground Investigations Report (borehole logs and trial pit logs as Appendices) ○ Site Investigations Report ○ LIDAR Survey ○ On site precipitation monitoring and use of climate data ○ Ground and surface water monitoring (<i>using piezometers</i>) and in-situ hydraulic conductivity testing.

	○ Slope Stability Analysis (<i>Justification of model employed. Deterministic model recommended</i>) • Spoil Management Plan
Hydrology, Hydrogeology & Water Quality	• Hydrological Assessment • Hydrogeological Assessment • Karst Protocol • Hydrogeological Conceptual Model • Flood Risk Assessment • Surface water/Drainage Management Plan • Standalone Water Framework Directive Compliance Report • Emergency Response Plan • Water Quality Management Plan • Drinking Water Source (UE and GWSS) Assessment
Landscape & Visual	• Photomontages • ZTV Analysis (20km radius from development site) • Landscape Character Assessment • Viewpoint Assessment
Traffic & Transportation	• Turbine Delivery Route & Swept Path Analysis • Haul Route & Swept Path Analysis • Traffic and Transport Assessment • Traffic Management Plan (including Construction traffic) • Stage 1 Road Safety Audit • Design Report (TII requirements)
Material Assets	• Gas/ESB networks

	• Telecommunications Impact Study • Aviation Review Statement • Any other relevant material assets identified in consultation process
Cultural Heritage	• Heritage Impact Assessment & a Historic Landscape Character Assessment • Archaeological Impact Assessment
Major Accidents and Disasters	• Construction Stage • Operational Stage • Impact of Climate Change
Cumulative Assessment	Projects considered should be clearly identified and the location of the cumulative assessment clearly labelled within each Chapter as relevant.
Interactions of the Foregoing	Description of interactions between factors.
Compendium of Mitigation Measures	Intent expressed for the implementation of mitigation measures to be clearly set out as – ‘shall’. Commitments need to be expressed clearly and be specific.
Enhancement/Offsetting	Clarity between any measures for offsetting and enhancement
Compendium of Significant Effects	Chapter detailing all the pre-mitigation and post mitigation (residual) significant effects and magnitude/duration
Appendices	All appendices and sub appendices to be submitted in hard and soft copy. To include: • Glossary of Terms • Noise Survey Results & Calibration Certificates • Material Volume Calculations • Statement of Competency

	• Other relevant documents
AA Screening report	• Author qualifications, experience and expertise • Methodology • Zone of Influence (ZOI) and identification of relevant European Sites to be based on a Source-Pathway-Receptor Model using the precautionary principle
NIS	• Author qualifications, experience and expertise • Methodology • Collision Risk Modelling (CRM) • Biodiversity & Ornithology Surveys for QI & SCI species and habitats in accordance with Best Practice • Consideration of relevant Land, soils & geology reports/assessments* • Consideration of relevant Hydrological, hydrogeological & water reports/assessments* • Compendium of Mitigation Measures (<i>Intent expressed for implementation of mitigation measures – 'shall'</i>) * As stipulated above for EIAR.
Appendices	All appendices and sub appendices to be submitted in hard and soft copy.
Other Documents/Plans (To include):	
	• Site Entrances • Access Tracks • Wind turbines • Cable routes & connections

	• Substation (Compound & Buildings) • Meteorological Mast • Temporary construction compounds • Borrow Pits & Deposition Areas • Haul Route • Turbine Delivery Route • Surface Water Design • Wastewater • Potable Water • Decommissioning & Restoration
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