An Coimisiún Pleanála

Pre-Application Consultation pursuant to Section 177E(1A) of the Planning and Development Acts, 2000-2021, as amended

Inspector's Report on ACP-324392-26

Proposed Development	Retention of historical industrial scale peat extraction, ancillary activities and associated works
Location	Derryhinch, Drumman, Derryarkin, Ballybeg and Toar Bogs, located within Counties Offaly, Westmeath and Meath.
Planning Authority	Offaly County Council Westmeath County Council Meath County Council
Prospective Applicant	Bord na Móna Energy Limited
Date of Consultation Meeting	2nd September 2026
Inspector	Jim Egan

1.0 Introduction

The Commission received a request on the 26th May 2026 from Tobin Engineering and Environmental Consultants, on behalf of Bord na Móna Energy Limited, to enter into pre-application consultations under section 177E(1A) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended. The Commission decided to grant this request from the prospective applicants.

One pre-application consultation meeting was held on the 2nd September 2026. The purpose of this report is to inform the Commission of the nature of the pre-application consultations undertaken, pursuant to Section 177E(1A) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended.

2.0 Site Location

The application site forms part of the Derrygreenagh Bog Group and comprises five bog units (Derryhinch, Drumman, Derryarkin, Ballybeg and Toar), generally located south of the M6 motorway and across the counties of Offaly, Westmeath and Meath. Townlands are as follows:

Offaly	**Westmeath**	**Meath**
Bunsallagh	Cornaher	Derryhinch
Derryarkin	Killavally	Baltigeer
Derrygreenagh	Pallasboy	
Knockdrin	Montrath	
Garr	Rathgarrett	
Corbetstown	Rahincull	
Carrick	Kiltotan and Collinstown	
Ballybeg	Farthingstown	
Croghanhill	Drumman	
Barrysbrook	Milltown	
Togher	Pass of Kilbride	
Toberdaly	Rattin	
Clonin		
Coolcor		
Derryiron		

The site boundary comes to which c. 2km of Rochfortbridge, Co. Westmeath to the north, c. 5.8km of Kinnegad, Co. Westmeath to the northeast and c. 1.6km of Rhode, Co. Offaly to the southeast.

The site area is stated to be c. 2,637ha.

The nearest European Sites are as follows:

- Raheenmore Bog SAC (Site Code: 000582), c. 1.2km to the south,
- Split Hills and Long Hill Esker SAC (Site Code: 001831), c. 1.4km to the west,
- Mount Hevey Bog SAC (Site Code: 002342), c. 7.4km to the northeast,
- Lough Ennell SAC (Site Code 000685), c. 9.4km to the northwest,
- River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC (Site Code: 002299), c. 9.9km to the northeast,
- Lough Ennell SPA (Site Code 004044), c. 9.4km to the northwest,
- River Boyne and River Blackwater SPA (Site Code: 004232), c. 9.9km to the northeast.

Milltownpass Bog NHA (Site Code: 002323) is located c. 1.6km to the northwest.

Lough Ennell pNHA (Site Code 000685), c. 9.4km to the northwest, Mount Hevey Bog pNHA (Site Code: 001584), c. 7.4km to the northeast, Royal Canal pNHA (Site Code: 002103), c. 9km to the northeast, Raheenmore Bog pNHA (Site Code: 000582), c. 1.2km to the south, Split Hills And Long Hill Esker pNHA (Site Code: 001831), c. 1.4km to the west and Rahugh Ridge (Kiltober Esker) pNHA (Site Code: 000918), c.1.5km to the south.

3.0 **Description of Proposal**

Retention of historical peat extraction works and associated ancillary activities works.

4.0 **Planning History**

Application Site

ABP-315436-22 Application for leave to apply for substitute consent; deemed withdrawn in January 2024, following commencement (December

2023) of the transitional provisions outlined in Section 41 of the Planning and Development, Maritime and Valuation (Amendment) Act, 2022.

Offaly Co.Co. ref. 22446 3 year permission granted in 2022 for the continued use of a wind guyed monitoring mast.

Immediate Surrounding Area

ABP-319023-24 Permission granted in April 2026 for a Combined Cycle Gas Turbine and Open Cycle Gas Turbine Thermal Power Plant, Electricity Grid Connection including 2 no. substations, and associated buildings, plant, site works, service and ancillary development.

The site straddles the subject pre-application consultation site.

ABP-309112-21 Permission granted in 2021 for retention and continuation of development. Works for an existing biomass facility on a site of 14.34 ha. This site will be operational until 2030.

Offaly Co.Co. ref. 20329 Permission granted in 2021 for retention and continuation (2030) of an existing biomass facility on a site of 29.17 ha.

Offaly Co.Co. ref. 19176 Permission granted in 2019 for the erection of a wind guyed monitoring mast.

5.0 Legislation

Any subsequent application for Substitute Consent will be lodged under the provisions of section 177E of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended and Part 19 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, as amended.

6.0 Prospective Applicant's Case

The prospective applicant stated that substitute consent is being sought for the following:

- Industrial scale peat extraction (milled peat)
- Use and maintenance of pre-existing ancillary supporting infrastructure and services to facilitate peat extraction activities (e.g., railway infrastructure, drainage infrastructure including drains, silt ponds and pumps), from 1988 to present day
- The implementation of operational environmental control measures associated with the above activities, inclusive of the IPC Licence measures (Ref P0501-01) which commenced from 2000 onwards to present day; and
- All associated site development and ancillary works.

7.0 Pre-Application Consultation Meeting

A Pre-Application Consultation meeting took place via Microsoft Teams on the 2nd September 2026. Representatives of the prospective applicant and An Coimisiún Pleanála were in attendance. An agenda was issued by An Coimisiún Pleanála prior to the meeting. The prospective applicant was advised in advance of the meeting that the consultation would relate solely to the administrative procedures around the lodgement of an application, and any associated requirements.

This report should be read in conjunction with the written record on file of the pre-application consultation meeting held with the prospective applicant. It is not proposed to repeat the contents of those records in detail here. The main topics discussed at the meeting were as follows:

- Description of development and relevant background
- The scope of any prospective application for Substitute Consent.
- Procedural advice with regard to any subsequent application.

8.0 Conclusion

The meeting concluded with An Coimisiún Pleanála representatives stating that they did not foresee the need for a further meeting but if requested by the prospective applicant, the request would be examined.

Following conclusion of the pre-application consultation meeting, the prospective applicant was furnished with a copy of the meeting record and provided with an opportunity to comment thereon. A response was received on the 30th September 2026 from Tobin Engineering and Environmental Consultants, on behalf of Bord na Móna Energy Limited, acknowledging the minutes, offering no further comment and advising that the prospective applicant will not be seeking to enter into any further pre-application consultations with regards a prospective substitute consent application.

I therefore recommend that the pre-application consultation process should be closed.

Jim Egan
Planning Inspector
15th October 2026