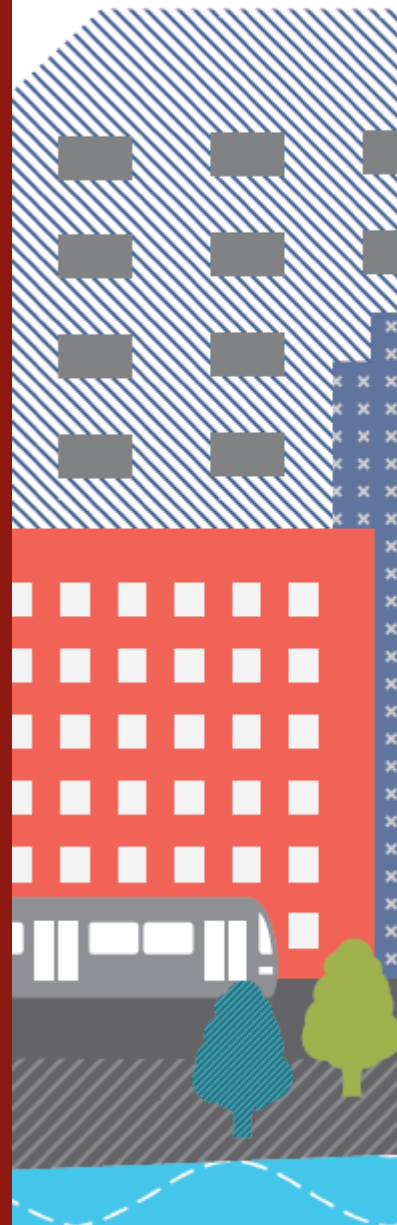


An
Coimisiún
Pleanála

**Renewable
Energy
Directive
(RED) III Information Guide**
For prospective applicants
and members of the public

Updated March 2026



About this guide

The following information provides a Guide for prospective applicants and members of the public in respect of the implications of the recent transposition of the RED III Directive as it relates to Strategic Infrastructure Renewable Energy Development which are submitted directly to **An Coimisiún Pleanála**.

This is a Guide only and prospective applicants should satisfy themselves that they are advised of the new process. This guide should be read in conjunction with the flow chart at the end of this document.

Version	Prepared by	Date
V1 updated	U. Crosse	30 September 2025
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1. What is RED III?

The original Renewable Energy Directive (2009/28/EC) – RED I - came into effect in June 2009 and was recast by RED II (EU 2018/2001), which came into effect in 2018 with a requirement to be transposed from June 2021. This was amended by the RED III Directive (EU/2023/2413), which entered into force on 20 November 2023. The RED III Directive has been transposed into Irish legislation by way of European Union (Planning and Development) (Renewable Energy) Regulations 2025 (S.I. 274 of 2025) with the majority of the provisions coming into effect on 7th August 2025.

As outlined in Circular CEPP1/2025 from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (15 August 2025), the Directive is broad ranging and includes provisions that aim to speed up the permit granting process for renewable energy projects by providing mandatory permit granting timelines for various types of renewable energy projects, as well as provisions concerned with environmental protection Directives and how they are applied to certain renewable energy projects.

European Union (Planning and Development) (Renewable Energy) Regulations 2025 (S.I. 274 of 2025), in addition to introducing mandatory permit granting timelines, also introduces a completeness check process which commences once the application is received (Section 4 below) and mandatory scoping for EIAR's (for applications lodged from 1 May 2026).

The Commission must also notify the Single Point of Contact (the SEAI) of receipt of applications for renewable energy development. The contact details are set out as follows:

Tel: 01 808 2278 Email: spc@seai.ie

Website: [Contact | Single Point of Contact for Renewable Energy | SEAI](#)

2. Applicable RED III Development Types

The provisions of the Regulations apply to **onshore** and **offshore** renewable energy development.

The Regulations define renewable energy as:

‘renewable energy’ means energy from a renewable non-fossil source, namely wind energy, solar energy (including solar thermal and solar photovoltaic energy), geothermal energy, osmotic energy, ambient energy, tide, wave and other ocean energy, hydropower, biomass, landfill gas, sewage treatment plant gas or biogas;

Furthermore, renewable energy development is defined as:

renewable energy development – “means development the purpose of which is to generate renewable energy from one or more than one renewable non-fossil resource, and includes the building of renewable energy plants and any co-located energy storage, and any works necessary for the connection of such plants or storage to the grid, but does not include relevant solar energy development, small-scale solar energy equipment development and small-scale non-ground source heat pumps”

While **An Coimisiún Pleanála is the consenting authority** for those development types listed in the Seventh Schedule of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, the types of development which come within the provisions of the Regulations is a matter to be determined by the relevant planning authority.

In this regard Circular CEPP 1/2026 dated 16 January 2026 provides that:

“the planning authority is the competent (permit-granting) authority and is responsible, in the first instance, for determining whether the proposal falls within those statutory definitions and is therefore to be processed as a RED III project,

including the application of the completeness check and relevant decision-making timelines”.

It is also stated that:

“The assessment of any proposed development against these statutory definitions (see above), and the determination of the applicable procedural pathway, remains a matter for the planning authority in each case.

As a general principle, developments that incorporate one or more technologies falling within the statutory definition of “renewable energy”, as outlined in section 1 of this circular, may constitute renewable energy developments and may therefore be subject to the relevant statutory decision-making timelines, including those provided for under RED III”.

Therefore, the applicability of the RED III provisions to proposed developments will be the subject of discussion at the Pre-Application Consultation meetings undertaken under Section 37B (see next section).

Section 182A – Electricity Infrastructure

Applications for approval made under Section 182A for electricity infrastructure, following Section 182E consultations, are **not** currently subject to the provisions of the Regulations as no amendment has been included in the Regulations to Section 182A. Therefore, there is no provision to undertake a completeness check of the application lodged.

3. Pre-Application Consultation Requests

The pre-application consultation request process will remain as it currently operates under the provisions of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 as amended for developments listed in the Seventh Schedule of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended.

Section 37B(3) of the Act provides that:

In any consultations under subsection (1), the Board may give advice to the prospective applicant regarding the proposed application and, in particular, regarding—

(a) whether the proposed development would, if carried out, fall within one or more of paragraphs (a) to (c) of section 37A(2),

*(b) **the procedures** involved in making a planning application and in considering such an application, and*

*(c) **what considerations**, related to proper planning and sustainable development or the environment, may, in the opinion of the Board, have a bearing on its decision in relation to the application.*

Having regard to the new completeness check requirement and the provisions of both subsections (b) and (c) above, the information and documentation required to facilitate the completeness check to process the application will form part of the discussion and advice provided in the pre-application process. A 'Schedule of Information to Inform the Completeness Check' will be provided with the SID Determination.

It should be noted that pre-application consultation requests where no pre-application meeting has been held following the coming into effect of the Regulations (6 August 2025) will not be provided with a Schedule of Information to Inform the Completeness Check. For such cases see the section on the Completeness Check below at Section 5.

Prospective applicants should also consider the following commentary in Circular CEPP1/2025 from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (15 August 2025):

“It is within the applicant’s control to ensure the application is complete in terms of the information submitted with the application, but also in terms of the quality of that information, including of plans and drawings and of the environmental assessments. It is critical that these matters are agreed with planning authorities and the Commission at pre-application stage, and the applicant uses the pre-application process to interrogate such issues in a thorough and in a systematic way. This will enable the identification of all relevant information necessary to accompany the application. It would also be advisable to make the application as soon as feasible following completion of the pre-application stage”.

4. Scoping

From 1 May 2026, any application lodged with the Commission for renewable energy developments are subject to mandatory EIA scoping.

Please note that an application submitted from 1 May onwards, even where the pre-application process has closed, will be required to undergo mandatory EIA scoping. As per Section 37D(1) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 as amended, a request for an opinion in respect of the scope of an EIAR can only be made once a Notice has been served to a prospective applicant under section 37B(4)(a).

This has not been amended by the new provisions set out in European Union (Planning and Development) (Renewable Energy) Regulations 2025 (S.I. 274 of 2025). This means that the pre-application stage must be complete before the scoping opinion can be requested.

The relevant fee is €5,000.

A Guide to EIA Scoping is currently being prepared by the Commission and will be published on the website in due course.

The legislative provisions as set out in the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended in relation to scoping as amended by S.I. 274 of 2025 are as follows:

37D.—(1) Where a notice has been served under section 37B(4)(a) in relation to proposed development, a prospective applicant may, “or, where the application is for renewable energy development or repowering development, shall” request the Board to give to him or her an opinion in writing prepared by the Board on the scope and level of detail of the information to be included in an environmental impact assessment report in relation to the development.

(2) On receipt of such a request the Board shall—

(a) consult with the requester and such bodies as may be specified by the Minister for the purpose, and

(b) after taking into account the information provided by the prospective applicant, in particular on the specific characteristics of the proposed development, including its location and technical capacity, and its likely impact on the environment, comply with the request as soon as is practicable.

(3) A prospective applicant shall, for the purposes of the Board’s complying with a request under this section, supply to the Board sufficient information in relation to the proposed development so as to enable the Board to assess the proposed development.

(3A) Where an opinion referred to in subsection (2) has been provided, the environmental impact assessment report shall be based on that opinion, and include the information that may reasonably be required for reaching a reasoned conclusion on the significant effects on the environment of the proposed development, taking into account current knowledge and methods of assessment.

(3B) Where the proposed development referred to in subsection (1) is renewable energy development or repowering development, and an opinion is given under this section, An Coimisiún Pleanála shall not subsequently extend the scope and level of detail of the information to be included in the environmental impact assessment report.

(4) The provision of an opinion under this section shall not prejudice the performance by the Board of any other of its functions under this Act or regulations under this Act and cannot be relied upon in the formal planning process or in legal proceedings.

5. Completeness Check Stage

Upon receipt of the application, the Commission will acknowledge receipt of the application and will outline that a notice in respect of completeness will follow within 45 days of receipt of the application. It is the acknowledgement of completeness of an application, which triggers the start of the permit-granting timelines.

The prospective applicant should satisfy themselves that they have the requisite documentation submitted to facilitate the Commission in the processing of the application at this stage.

The 'Schedule of Information to Inform the Completeness Check' will be informed by the pre-application request consultation process and a Schedule of Information to Inform the Completeness Check will be appended to the report prepared by the Inspector in respect of the pre-application process and included with the SID determination. Each Schedule of Information to Inform the Completeness Check is particular to the project to which it relates.

The time period within which submissions can be made by observers and prescribed bodies will be stated in the public notices. The planning authority's report must be submitted within 10 weeks from the date of receipt of the application.

As outlined above, it is important to note that the 'Schedule of Information to Inform the Completeness Check' will be addressed during the pre-application request consultation process. Where the SID determination was made in advance of this process, the following provides a guide in respect of the information and documentation which the Commission would require in order to undertake a completeness check of any RED III application.

Miscellaneous

Fee - €100,000

Application Form

Standalone website provided

Two hard copies and 8 soft copies

Interest of applicant in land

Public Notices

Is a full description of the proposed development provided

Is the location of the proposal provided

Is time period and fee for submissions/observations specified

Includes standalone website Address
 Is Section 37JA referenced
 Transboundary environmental effects (if applicable)
 If Design Flex Opinion provided, is this referenced (if applicable).
 Are the EIAR and NIS referenced
 Is site subject to an EPA licence or is an EPA licence required
 Are Notices in Irish (If proposal is located within the Gaeltacht)

Documentation – as applicable

Renewable Energy Designation Policy Statement
 Design Flexibility Compliance Statement
 Natura Impact Statement with Screening Report
 EIAR
 Appendices included
 Compliance with Article 94 and Schedule 6 of PDR
 Survey and methodology requirements clearly outlined
 Peat Stability/Landslide Susceptibility investigations undertaken as applicable.
 Derogations

DRAWINGS

Appropriate scales.
 Wayleaves shown

6. Application Stage

Once the application is deemed complete the permit granting timeline commences.
 The relevant timelines are as follows:

Type of Development	Permit Granting Timeline
Onshore	52 weeks
Onshore Repowering	30 weeks
Offshore	65 weeks
Offshore Repowering	52 weeks

The period within which submissions can be accepted from the Public, prescribed Bodies and the Planning Authority will end subject to the relevant timelines and notice period.

As is the current practice in relation to SID applications the applicant will be invited to make a submission on the submissions/observations/planning authority's report as submitted during the course of the application.

There will be limited opportunities within which the Commission can seek further information. A defined response time will be provided which will not be extended, save for exceptional circumstances. The permit granting timeline will not be extended nor can it be 'stopped' and restarted.

As currently applies, the Inspector will prepare a Report and Recommendation for the Planning Commission who will issue a Decision.

7. Public Participation

As outlined above, the time period within which submissions can be made by observers and prescribed bodies will be stated in the public notices for each application. The fee for making a submission is €50.

The public participation period will overlap the completeness check stage and the application stage (if the application is deemed complete).

If an application is deemed incomplete the submission and the fee will be returned. Any new application made on foot of the incompleteness will be given a new reference number, a new public notice will be required and the public participation period will commence once again with the time period for same set out in the new public notice.

8. Section 146B Alterations

Requests to alter SID decisions, section 146B requests, are also subject to the provisions of RED III where they apply to renewable energy development.

The completeness check stage (4) and application stage (5) processes outlined above are therefore applicable to the Section 146B request process.

Flowchart: Application Process - Onshore & Offshore

RED III - SID Renewable Energy Developments

