

 An Coimisiún Pleanála	Record of Meeting ABP-315157-22
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Case Reference / Description	Proposed development of Garryhinch Windfarm consisting of between 10 and 14 no. wind turbines with power rating of between 5.0MW to 7MW. Garryhinch Bog and Garrymore Bog, Co. Offaly and Co. Laois.		
Case Type	Pre-application consultation		
1st / 2nd / 3rd / 4th Meeting	2 nd Meeting		
Date	29 th January 2026	Start Time	11:30am
Location	MS Teams	End Time	1:30pm

Representing An Coimisiún Pleanála
Una Crosse (Assistant Planning Director) Chair
Enda Duignan (Senior Planning Inspector)
Emmet Smyth (Senior Environmental Scientist)
Paula Kearney (Senior Ecologist)
Ellen Moss (Executive Officer)

Representing the Prospective Applicant
Declan Byrne (SSE)
Laura Burke (SSE)
Helen Burman-Roy (SSE)
Sean Cunniffe (SSE)
Muriel Ennis (Bord na Móna)
Rita Mansfield (Fehily Timoney)
Brian Cronin (Fehily Timoney)
Jim Hughes (Fehily Timoney)

Introduction

The Commission's representatives referred to the correspondence received from the prospective applicant requesting this second meeting, as well as to the first meeting held on 10th February 2023.

The Commission's representatives also mentioned the general procedures for the pre-application consultation process referenced at the first meeting, which remain applicable.

Presentation made by the prospective applicant:

The prospective applicant set out their presentation, which is on the file. It was highlighted at the start of the presentation that the name of the prospective applicant had changed.

Discussion:

Matters including the following were discussed:

General Feedback on Presented Layout and Design:

- There was some discussion regarding the location of the site relative to the permitted Dernacart windfarm. Noting the proximity of the 2 no. entrances, it was questioned whether consideration had been given to the consolidation of the entrances and access tracks. It was noted that there are a number of residential receptors within close proximity of the permitted and proposed entrances, and it was advised that the potential for cumulative impacts should be carefully considered.
- In terms of access, the Commission's representatives noted that feedback from TII regarding the entrance from the N80 was critical. The prospective Applicant noted that scoping feedback had been received. However, it was stated that this feedback was very general.
- The Commission's representatives noted that site-specific plans and section diagrams of each watercourse crossing throughout the windfarm site should be provided. This shall include spot levels to clearly illustrate the relationship between the bridges and the new/existing access roads. The plans shall also

include details of the relevant mitigation measures required for the protection of water quality.

- The Commission's representatives noted the red line boundary must cover any area where HDD is required within the wind farm site and along the grid connection route.

Policy

- The Commission's representatives advised that a strong justification should be provided if it is proposed to contravene the County Development Plan.

IPC Licence

- In response to a question regarding the existing IPC Licence, the prospective Applicant noted that Condition 10 of the licence will not impact the development. Updated rehabilitation plans have been reviewed, and consultation with the Bord na Móna ecologist is ongoing. Minor drain blocking is required; no rewetting of the bog is proposed.

Ecology

The Commission's representatives noted the following:

- EIA and AA reporting should employ most up to date guidance for survey and assessment, with clear and concise reporting.
- Set out survey methodology guidelines followed and include assumptions, limitations, timings, duration. Any departures from standard guidance are clearly identified and explained. Note recent revisions in NatureScot guidelines with respect to Collision Risk Modelling, *Recommended bird survey methods to inform impact assessment of onshore windfarms* (NatureScot, 2025).
- Clearly identify ecological receptors and provide detailed rationale as to the selection of KERs brought forward to assessment.
- If required, derogation licences for Annex IV species to be obtained in advance of submitting the application.
- Further to the HES Peat Hydrology Study with regards to peat water levels and buffer zone to minimise impacts, how is this study informing the design of the access roads to minimise impacts on intact raised bog/high bog.

- Detailed proposals should be provided with respect to the borrow pits and peat storage areas with respect to dewatering, water management and pollution control. An assessment of potential risks associated with dewatering, including impacts to groundwater and sensitive habitats.
- Where possible, minimise the removal of linear vegetation on the turbine delivery route and grid connection route. Bat surveys are required and vegetation management to be conducted outside the Bird Nesting Season.
- Invasive species survey and management plan to include the wind farm site, turbine delivery route and grid connection route.
- Baseline aquatic ecology surveys should be completed upstream and downstream of the proposed river crossing. The results should be used to characterise existing conditions and to inform the scope and design of ecological monitoring during the construction phase.
- Otter, bat and breeding bird surveys should be conducted, in accordance with best practice guidelines, at water crossings within the wind farm site, and on the turbine delivery and grid connection routes.
- The impact assessment should address how habitats altered by wind farm construction and biodiversity enhancement measures may affect future wildlife use of the site and should identify measures to enhance biodiversity under post-construction conditions.
- Biodiversity Enhancement Management Plan will be cognisant of the IPC Licence Condition 10 - Draft Cutaway Bog Decommissioning and Rehabilitation Plans for both Garryhinch and Garrymore. The Plan should include monitoring and adaptive measures covering short, medium and long term.
- Cumulative/In combination effects from all relevant developments for the appropriate area should be considered.

Peat

- Low landslide susceptibility with extensive peat probing and ground investigation ongoing. The Commission's representatives noted that the site is largely mapped as low classification on the GSI geohazard mapper.
- The prospective Applicant confirmed that a peat and spoil management plan will be incorporated, with potential use of bare peat for deposition.

Noise

- The Commission's representatives queried the noise model being used and whether it was still the most up to date modelling for such noise.
- The prospective Applicant's presentation referred to the predicted cumulative noise meeting the WEDG limits. It was queried whether there were any exceedances regarding the proposed limits (day or night) at any of the SSNL's? If so, it was questioned what curtailment procedures would be put in place and how this would work into the day to day management. The Commission's representatives noted that this is something that would need to be robustly addressed as part of the Noise chapter.
- The Commission's representatives questioned if there were any low background noise environments below 30dB(A) found. If so, it was noted that a robust justification for the proposed limits should be presented.
- The Commission's representatives questioned whether a mitigation plan to address Noise character (AM and Tonal) would be included in the noise chapter which may arise due to complaints?

WFD

- The Commission's representatives noted that a full standalone WFD assessment will need to be provided, taking cognisance of the existing pressures across the site.
- It was noted that the construction of Water Crossings will need to comply with the relevant guidance (IFI).
- The Commission's representatives noted that it should be made clear what kind of treatment controls will be proposed borrow pits and peat deposition areas
- In terms of any discharge that was covered under the IPC licence, it was questioned whether will this be continued or how will this be addressed going forward and whether existing infrastructure be used?

Waste Importation

- The Commission's representatives noted that reference is made to the importation of 6F2 (65,493 m3) recycled aggregate from bricks mortar. The

prospective Applicant was advised to ensure that the requisite End of waste criteria (Art 28) has been met by the producer.

Next Steps

- The prospective Applicant noted that it was not envisaged that a further meeting is required.
- Consultation to remain open while statutory consultations are ongoing.

Conclusion:

The Commission's representatives advised that the onus is on the prospective applicant to request a further meeting or formal closure of the instant pre-application consultation process. The Commission's representatives advised that the record of the instant meeting will be issued in the meantime and that the prospective applicant can submit any comments it may have in writing or alternatively bring any comments for discussion at the time of any further meeting.

The Meeting concluded at 13:30.



Una Crosse

Assistant Director of Planning