

An
Bord
Pleanála

Observation on a Planning Appeal: Form.

AN BORD PLEANÁLA	
LDG- <u>079694-25</u>	
ABP- _____	
30 APR 2025	
Fee: € <u>50</u>	Type: <u>Chq</u>
<u>8.56</u>	By: <u>Pest</u>

Your details

1. Observer's details (person making the observation)

If you are making the observation, write your full name and address.

If you are an agent completing the observation for someone else, write the observer's details:

Your full details:

(a) Name

KARL JOHNSTON & MARIE O'DRISCOLL

(b) Address

BAUNMORE, CLARA, COUNTY KILKENNY

Agent's details

2. Agent's details

If you are an agent and are acting for someone else **on this observation**, please also write your details below.

If you are not using an agent, please write "Not applicable" below.

(a) Agent's name

N/A

(b) Agent's address

N/A

Postal address for letters

3. During the appeal process we will post information and items to you or to your agent. For this observation, who should we write to? (Please tick ✓ one box only.)

You (the observer) at the address in Part 1

The agent at the address in Part 2

Details about the proposed development

4. Please provide details about the appeal you wish to make an observation on. If you want, you can include a copy of the planning authority's decision as the observation details.

(a) Planning authority

(for example: Ballytown City Council)

KILKENNY COUNTY COUNCIL

(b) An Bord Pleanála appeal case number (if available)

(for example: ABP-300000-19)

ABP-322225-24

(c) Planning authority register reference number

(for example: 18/0123)

24/60210

(d) Location of proposed development

(for example: 1 Main Street, Baile Fearainn, Co Abhaile)

Kilmogor, Clara Upper, Mountnugent Upper, Mountnugent Lower, Ossoryhill, Feathallagh, Churchclara, Rathgarvan or Clifden, Clarabricken,

Coolgreany, Coolcullen, Reevanagh, Scart, Highrath, Ballysallagh,
Ballynamona, Coan East and Cloneen, County Kilkenny

Observation details

5. Please describe the grounds of your observation (planning reasons and arguments). You can type or write them in the space below or you can attach them separately.

See attached letter

Supporting materials

6. If you wish, you can include supporting materials with your observation.

Supporting materials include:

- photographs,
- plans,
- surveys,
- drawings,
- digital videos or DVDs,
- technical guidance, or
- other supporting materials.

Fee

7. You **must** make sure that the correct fee is included with your observation. You can find out the correct fee to include in our Fees and Charges Guide on our website.

This document has been awarded a Plain English mark by NALA.

Last updated: April 2019.



Baunmore
Clara
Co. Kilkenny

25th April 2025

An Bord Pleanala
64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: *Appeal Reference No. ABP-32225-24*
Applicant: EDF Renewables Ireland Limited

We wish to make the following observation in relation to the above mentioned appeal. We confirm that we made an observation to Kilkenny County Council at the time of the initial application for this development (Kilkenny County Council Reference No. 24/60210).

We have read the letter of appeal dated the 7th of April 2025 from MKO to An Bord Pleanala on behalf of the Applicant.

At the outset we should say that a large part of the opening pages of that letter appears to consist of a summary of the history of the initial application to Kilkenny County Council and a restatement of the procedure which was followed in relation to that application. For some reason the letter also sees fit to set out An Bord Pleanala's legal obligations in relation to the appeal which is something, we would have thought, of which the Board is well aware.

The actual grounds of appeal appear to be set out on pages 20-46 of the letter and we will confine our observation to these pages.

The application to Kilkenny County Council was for permission to connect the proposed Seskin Windfarm to the National Electricity Grid at a 110 kv substation in County Kilkenny.

1. The County Council's first reason for refusing the application was quite simply that it was premature to grant an application to connect the Windfarm in question to the National Grid because Carlow County Council had already refused permission to construct the Windfarm in the first place. In point of fact we made this particular point to Kilkenny County Council in our observation to them dated the 7th of June 2024 a copy of which we enclose. The County Council's reason for refusing the application on this basis seems quite straightforward but in their grounds of appeal the Applicants have sought to identify two separate factors which they believe deemed the proposed grid connection to be premature. The first of these is the refusal by Carlow County Council to grant permission for the construction of the Seskin Windfarm in the first place. This is quite clearly stated in the first of Kilkenny County Council's reasons to refuse the application for the grid connection. However the Applicant then goes on to identify a supposed second factor in Kilkenny County

Council's decision which they suggest to be the absence of a plan led strategy and guidance for the connection of multiple private grid connections to the National Grid. Nowhere in the County Council's reasons for refusal is there any reference to this supposed factor and it is difficult to see how the Applicant can extrapolate this from this reason for refusal.

In the letter of appeal the Applicant then goes on for four pages to give a dissertation on the topic of concurrent Planning applications and the absence of a plan lead strategy for private connections to the National Electricity Grid. While this may be of interest from an academic point of view the fact is that it has no relevance to the first of Kilkenny County Council's reasons for refusing the application.

The only statement of significance which we can see in these pages is in the opening paragraph on page 21 where the Applicant acknowledges that the application to construct the Seskin Windfarm has been refused by Carlow County Council. Having acknowledged this to be the case it is difficult to see how the Applicant can then say that the application to connect the same Windfarm to the National Grid is not premature. Clearly, an application to connect the Windfarm to the Grid cannot be considered unless and until the application to construct the Windfarm has been granted.

In the same paragraph the Applicant refers to "a real possibility" that the application to Carlow County Council would be granted, presumably by An Bord Pleanala. With respect "a real possibility", is not enough. There is also a very real possibility that the application to construct a Windfarm will be refused by An Bord Pleanala as it was by Carlow County Council. In fact, if the application to Kilkenny County Council to connect the Windfarm to the National Grid had been granted and the application to actually construct the Windfarm was ultimately turned down by An Bord Pleanala then this would have led to a farcical situation in which the Applicant would have been granted permission to connect a non-existent Windfarm to the National Grid!

Clearly Kilkenny County Council had no choice but to refuse the application on this ground alone. In fact, the making of the application to connect the Windfarm to the National Grid before permission for the Windfarm had even been granted is a complete waste of the valuable time and resources of Kilkenny County Council in the first instance and now of An Bord Pleanala by reason of the appeal.

2. In relation to Kilkenny County Council's second reason for refusing the application and in particular the detrimental impact on the environment, traffic safety, architectural heritage and the amenities of local residents and road users generally, we would repeat the observation which we made to Kilkenny County Council in this regard at the time of the original application.

The application relates solely to the connection of the proposed Seskin Windfarm to the National Grid and does not refer to any other Windfarm or Solar Farms. The proposed Windfarm is located entirely in County Carlow but practically all of the proposed route for the connection to the National Electricity Grid is located in County Kilkenny. The route is approximately 20 kilometres in length and passes through 18

separate townlands in County Kilkenny. Clearly the proposed development will cause significant disruption to the local communities and the townlands where the works are proposed and will involve the digging up of narrow country roads along a distance of approximately 20 kilometres effectively blocking the use of these roads by the local communities for a considerable period of time. We understand that this period may extend to up to 54 days in some instances. It is also likely to cause significant damage to these rural roads.

The work will also lead to traffic disruption including school traffic to the local primary school including school buses and potentially the emergency services. We understand that the access of some residents to their homes will also be blocked during the course of the proposed works.

As residents of the area we are concerned about the presence of large lorries and machinery on these narrow country roads for a period of up to two years. We are also concerned about the disruption to the flora and fauna in the vicinity of the extensive roadworks which are planned.

The purpose of the application is to facilitate the development of a Windfarm in County Carlow and there does not appear to be any benefit whatsoever to the local communities in Kilkenny which will be disrupted by the proposed works.

3. In relation to Kilkenny County Council's third reason for refusing the application, this is a technical matter which Kilkenny County Council regarded as significant and we would simply confirm our support for Kilkenny County Council's reasons for refusing the application on this ground and to repeat our observations in relation to the second ground for refusal above.

Finally, as we pointed out in our observation to Kilkenny County Council, there is an electricity substation in Bagenalstown, County Carlow which is considerably closer to the proposed Windfarm at a distance of approximately 13 kilometres. We fail to understand the logic of attempting to run these cables and wires through approximately 20 kilometres of rural roads mainly in County Kilkenny when a connection to the National Grid is available in Bagenalstown in County Carlow which is only 13 kilometres from the proposed Windfarm. If the construction of the Windfarm is eventually permitted then, given the level of disruption to the local community which is involved it would appear to be far more practical and far less disruptive to connect the proposed Windfarm to the National Grid at the substation in Bagenalstown rather than the Kilkenny substation.

Yours faithfully



Marie O'Driscoll &
Karl Johnston

Baunmore
Clara
Co. Kilkenny

7th June 2024

Planning Department
Kilkenny County Council
County Hall
John Street
Kilkenny

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: *Planning Application: 2460210*
Applicant: EDF Renewables Ireland Limited

We wish to make an observation in relation to the above mentioned Planning Application.

We note that the proposed development will consist of, inter alia, all works associated with the connection of the proposed Seskin Wind Farm to the National Electricity Grid via underground 38kV electrical cabling within the public road corridor to the existing Kilkenny 110kV substation and includes the provision of joint bays, communication chambers and earth sheath links along the underground cabling route.

We are residents of the Clara area and will be affected by the proposed works.

We note that the application relates solely to the connection of the proposed Seskin Wind Farm to the National Grid and does not refer to any other Wind or Solar Farms. We further note that the proposed Wind Farm is located entirely in County Carlow but that practically all of the proposed route for the connection to the National Electricity Grid is located in County Kilkenny. The route is approximately 20 kilometres in length and passes through 18 separate townlands in County Kilkenny.

At the outset we would point out that the application relates to the connection to the National Grid of a proposed Wind Farm. We understand that an application has been made to Carlow County Council for the development of that Wind Farm but that there is considerable opposition to the proposal and a number of observations have been lodged with Carlow County Council by concerned parties.

In those circumstances we would submit that the application to connect the proposed Wind Farm to the National Grid is premature and that any such application should not be considered until a decision has been made by Carlow County Council in relation to the application to develop the Wind Farm in the first place. Obviously if the application to

develop the Wind Farm is refused by Carlow County Council then the application to connect it to the National Grid will have been a complete waste of everyone's time.

Clearly the proposed development will cause significant disruption to the local communities in the townlands where the works are proposed and will involve the digging up of narrow country roads along a distance of approximately 20 kilometres effectively blocking the use of these roads by the local communities for a considerable period of time. We understand that this period may extend to up to 54 days in some instances. It is also likely to cause significant damage to these rural roads.

The work will also lead to traffic disruption including school traffic to the local primary school, including school buses, and, potentially, the emergency services.

We understand that the access of some residents to their homes will also be blocked during the course of the proposed works.

As residents of the area we are concerned about the danger of the presence of large lorries and machinery on these narrow country roads for a period of up to 2 years. We are also concerned about the disruption to the flora and fauna in the vicinity of the extensive roadworks which are planned.

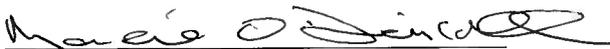
The purpose of the application is to facilitate the development of a Wind Farm in County Carlow and there does not appear to be any benefit whatsoever to the local communities in Kilkenny which will be disrupted by the proposed works.

Furthermore, there is an electricity substation in Bagenalstown, County Carlow which is considerably closer to the proposed Wind Farm at a distance of approximately 13 kilometres. We fail to understand the logic of attempting to run these cables and wires through approximately 20 kilometres of rural roads mainly in County Kilkenny when a connection to the National Grid is available in Bagenalstown in County Carlow which is only 13 kilometres from the proposed Wind Farm.

Given the level of disruption to the local community which is involved it would appear to be far more practical and far less disruptive to connect the proposed Wind Farm to the National Grid at the substation in Bagenalstown rather than the Kilkenny 110kV substation.

We enclose a cheque for €20 in payment of the fee for this observation.

Yours sincerely



Marie O'Driscoll and Karl Johnston



