An Coimisiún Pleanála (formally An Bord Pleanála),

64 Marlborough Street,

Dublin 1,

D01 V902

Lorraine Quinn & Others

Drehid

Carbury

Co. Kildare

14th August 2025

AN COIMISIÚN PLEANÁLA
LDG- 082070-25
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14 AUG 2025
Fee: € 50 Type: CASH
Time: 11:23 By: HAND
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ABP Ref: 322843

To Whom it may concern

We wish to object to the below proposed development which will consist of the following:

11 wind turbines, On-site 110kV substation and loop-in connection to the Kinnegad-Rinawade line

Turbine delivery route (TDR).

A proposed 4 km amenity and recreation trail for public use.

Located in north County Kildare on a mix of private and public agricultural/forestry lands.

This project involves two separate planning applications (Wind Farm 322845 and Substation 322843), despite being part of a single integrated development which are both similar except for a little rewording in places. This should be considered as project splitting, as it undermines full public scrutiny.

Drehid Wind Farm is located within the same general area as the previously proposed Maighne Wind Farm—which was refused by An Bord Pleanála in 2017.

This site is closely associated with the previously quashed Drehid Wind Farm 2018 application (PL09.306500). Despite changes, the current application recycles the same site and concept with minor modifications.

Our concerns are especially relevant given the area's previous experience with infrastructure strain during past energy projects.

The proposed Drehid Wind Farm comprising of 11 wind turbines, associated access infrastructure, a 110 kV substation, and grid connection should be refused on the grounds of significant and inadequately mitigated environmental impacts.

Given the fact that this developer has re-submitted a similar application as the previous ones, (Original was part of the Maighne Wind Farm ABP REF PA0041 & The second application was for North Kildare Wind Farm KCC REF 181534/ Appealed to ABP Ref: 306500 and now we have the Drehid Wind Farm which is quite similar except, minus a couple of turbines and using an alternative delivery route for the turbine components and an

We the community still have serious concerns for the impacts on hydrology in the area, thus impacting on protected species and leading to implications in sac areas located along the water courses that feed from rivers and streams which are part of the River Boyne catchment area which includes the River Figile and the Blackwood River and also multiple minor streams and artificial drains.

This developer Statkraft /Coillte and the private landowners have shown total disregard to the community some of whom would have lodged objections on both previous applications highlighting our concerns. One could only deem this new application as complete and utter harassment of our local community.

County Development Plan policies and constraints are cited as inputs into the site selection process – Yet we will see throughout the EIAR how the developer picks either the Kildare Wind Energy Strategy (2017–2023) Plan or the Kildare County Development Plan (2023–2029), depending on which piece of legislation offers the best support for their argument – The Kildare County Development Plan (2023–2029) should have been adhered to at all times

– Therefore the complete application should be deemed invalid

Non-Technical Summary - Lacking specific information (322843)

A Non-Technical Summary is a mandatory component of an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) under the EU EIA Directive and Ireland's Planning and Development Regulations). Its primary function is to clearly and concisely summarize the key findings of the EIAR in plain, non-technical language so that the general public and decision-makers can understand the environmental effects of the proposed development

The Non-Technical Summary is a critical component of the EIAR under both the EIA Directive (Directive 2011/92/EU, as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU) and the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended. It must be a standalone, accessible, and objective summary of the EIAR's findings, written in plain, non-technical language for the benefit of the public and decision-makers.

This Non-Technical Summary fails to comply with these legal standards in the following respects:

1. **Use of Technical and Legal Jargon**
   The Non-Technical Summary repeatedly uses technical terminology and planning references without adequate explanation. Examples include: "loop-in/loop-out connection", "Arc Suppression Coil", "Enduring Connection Policy", "carbon payback using the Scottish Windfarm Carbon Assessment Tool"

These terms are inaccessible to the general public, defeating the purpose of a "non-technical" summary and fails to meet Article 5(1)(h) of the EIA Directive which requires the summary to be in "non-technical language".

2. Absence of a Cumulative Impact Summary

The Non-Technical Summary contains no plain-language summary of cumulative environmental effects arising from this project in combination with other developments (e.g. Drehid Waste Facility, North Kildare Solar Farm, or the recently approved Cadamstown solar projects).

Cumulative effects are a mandatory consideration under Annex IV of the EIA Directive. Their absence from the NTS undermines the completeness and transparency of the assessment.

3. Promotional and Biased Language

Sections of the Non-Technical Summary adopt an advocacy tone, particularly regarding the project's compliance with national energy targets and the community benefit scheme. Examples include:

"*Statkraft is at the forefront...*"

"*The Proposed Development is critical...*"

"*Climate change is a 'threat multiplier'...*"

Descriptions of the community fund imply benefit entitlement without clear governance or delivery mechanisms.

The tone of the Non-Technical Summary should be neutral and factual to support objective public review not one of entitlement

4. Incomplete Alternatives Assessment

The summary of alternatives is skewed toward justifying the developer's chosen option, with minimal environmental comparison between grid connection options or alternative sites. The "do-nothing" alternative is mentioned only in passing

Here the Non-Technical Summary fails to adequately summarise "reasonable alternatives studied" which is a core requirement under Annex IV, Point 2 of the EIA Directive.

5. No Embedded Maps or Visuals

While the Non-Technical Summary refers to Figure 1-1, no maps or diagrams are embedded in the NTS. Members of the public are expected to cross-reference separate documents. This undermines transparency and readability.

The Non-Technical Summary should contain basic site location and layout maps to allow the public to understand the development context without navigating technical volumes.

6. Overemphasis on Policy at the Expense of Impact

Just over ten pages of the Non-Technical Summary are devoted to quoting national and EU policy justifications, while some environmental effects (e.g. peat disturbance, drainage impacts, lighting intrusion, residual noise exceedance at involved properties) are downplayed or omitted. This distorts the intended balance of the Non-Technical Summary as it must summaries environmental impacts, not act as a policy justification.

Inadequate and Misleading Reference to the Kildare County Development Plan in the Non-Technical Summary

The Non-Technical Summary references the Kildare County Development Plan (2023–2029), but it does so selectively, mainly to justify the development, rather than to objectively assess compliance across all relevant planning policies

Need for the Development - It refers to Chapter 7, Section 7.5 of the CDP, which lists "*53.5 MW of permitted wind farm developments*" in County Kildare.

The Non-Technical Summary argues that 48 MW of this total is actually attributed to the Drehid Wind Farm, and that the figure is outdated because the previous permission was quashed by the high court

It claims that without Drehid, the actual permitted capacity in Kildare is just 5.5 MW, and therefore "The Proposed Development is critical" to meeting Kildare's target of 107 MW by 2030. The developer is clearly trying to justify yet another flawed application in order to gain permission for a development that is unsuitable in this region for numerous reasons

Section 4.3 – Kildare County Development Plan 2023–2029 -

A specific subsection is dedicated to outlining CDP objectives. It lists several policies, including:

1)Reduce GHG emissions, promote renewables (incl. wind), and green infrastructure.

2) Reduce GHG emissions, promote renewables (incl. wind), and green infrastructure.

3) Develop a Sustainable Energy Climate Action Plan (SECAP) for Kildare.

4) Encourage wind energy in suitable areas, subject to biodiversity protection

5) Support CAP 2021 target to double onshore wind to 8 GW by 2030

The Non-Technical Summary uses these policies to argue that the proposed development aligns with the CDP's objectives but yet it only focuses only on CDP objectives that support wind energy and fails to mention or discuss CDP policies that may be relevant to:

Biodiversity protection, Peatland conservation, Landscape character areas, Drainage/flooding, Recreation/amenity, Cumulative impact management or Noise or setback policies

Misleading Use of "Permitted" Capacity

The Non-Technical Summary implies that Drehid should still count toward the CDP's 53.5 MW figure, even though the previous permission was quashed in the High Court. This completely misrepresents the current legal planning status.

While it references CDP energy policies, the Non-Technical Summary does not assess whether the Drehid site specifically complies with the following:

Landscape sensitivity ratings, Wind energy strategy mapping, Proximity to environmentally sensitive sites or rural amenities

In its current form, the Non-Technical Summary fails to use clear accessible language, fails to present key environmental impacts neutrally, fails to Summaries cumulative impacts, fails to Clearly compare alternatives, fails to Include visual aids or maps, fails to maintain a balanced tone

Natura Impact Statement

A Natura Impact Statement is a crucial part of a planning application when a proposed development may affect a Natura 2000 site — that is, a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) or Special Protection Area (SPA) designated under the EU Habitats Directive or Birds Directive.

The Natura Impact Statement is required under Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive and is implemented in Ireland through the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (as amended).

Project Description should include full details of the proposed development (location, nature, scale, timing), Site layout maps and drawings, Construction and operational phases and ancillary works (e.g., access roads, drainage, borrow pits) It should list and map all SACs and SPAs that could be affected

Description of the qualifying interests and conservation objectives of each site.

Existing habitats and species in and around the development area.

Surveys (e.g., bird, mammal, aquatic, habitat, bat, etc.) and seasonally relevant data.

Description of ecological linkages (e.g., hydrological connections, commuting routes).

Direct, indirect, secondary, cumulative, short-term, medium-term, long-term, permanent and temporary impacts.

Both during construction and operation - Consideration of in-combination effects with other plans or projects should be Specific, enforceable, and detailed measures to avoid or reduce impacts.

Must be clearly distinguished from general good practice or non- Natura-related mitigation.

Implementation and monitoring proposals.

Assessment of remaining impacts after mitigation.

Must demonstrate beyond reasonable scientific doubt that no adverse effect on site integrity will occur.

We have found numerous vague/general measures are present throughout the Natura Impact Statement

"*Best practice measures will be adopted during construction..*" – repeated throughout (e.g., Section 4.3).

"*Where practicable, works will be scheduled to avoid periods of heavy rainfall.*"

"Monitoring of discharges will be carried out as required." (Section 4.2.2)

These measures are non-specific and not clearly enforceable.

Lack concrete detail (e.g., no site-specific methods, timelines, or accountability).

Use soft language like "*where possible*", "*if required*", "*best practice*", which undermines their reliability for legal compliance under Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive.

This document appears to blend screening and NIS stages, relying heavily on mitigation from the start.

The following four species are not mentioned anywhere in the Natura Impact Statement: Lapwing (Vanellus vanellus), Curlew (Numenius arquata), Barn Owl (Tyto alba), Yellowhammer (Emberiza citrinella) yet all four of these species were recorded in the baseline ornithological surveys. Are Red-listed birds of conservation concern in Ireland. Are potentially impacted by construction and operational phases. The absence of any discussion of these species in the Natura Impact Statement may represent a serious oversight, particularly given that the purpose of the NIS is to assess likely significant effects on species and habitats of conservation concern, including those not confined to European sites.

The Natura Impact Statement submitted as part of the Drehid Wind Farm application fails to consider the potential impacts on several nationally significant Red-Listed bird species that are confirmed as present within or adjacent to the proposed development area. While the Hen Harrier (Circus cyaneus) is briefly acknowledged in relation to its Special Conservation Interest status for a designated SPA (Slieve Bloom Mountains), the NIS omits any reference whatsoever to the Lapwing (Vanellus vanellus), Curlew (Numenius arquata),

Barn Owl (Tyto alba), and Yellowhammer (Emberiza citrinella)—all of which were recorded during the baseline ornithological surveys submitted with the EIAR.

These species are included on Ireland's Red List due to severe population declines and are highly vulnerable to habitat loss, disturbance, and fragmentation—all potential impacts associated with wind farm construction and operation. The absence of any assessment or mitigation for these species in the NIS is a serious deficiency that undermines the adequacy of the screening and impact conclusions presented.

Under Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive and the EIA Directive, the absence of consideration of relevant sensitive species invalidates this NIS due to lack of scientific completeness.

The Natura Impact Statement mentions bats only briefly: It notes that a bat survey was conducted (Bat Conservation Ireland, 2022) but provides no detailed results or analysis.

It states that no special conservation interests in the relevant European sites relate to bats. It therefore does not consider bats to be a qualifying interest for the Habitats Directive screening.

Multiple bat species were detected, including Leisler's bat, Common pipistrelle, Soprano pipistrelle, Nathusius' pipistrelle, Brown long-eared bat, and Myotis species.

The site's coniferous and mixed woodland blocks — including those earmarked for felling for turbine bases, roads, and cable routes — were identified as commuting and foraging habitat, with some trees showing low to moderate bat roost potential.

Several turbine locations, access routes, and cable corridors will require permanent removal of forest stands. The felling footprint overlaps areas where bat activity was recorded, including woodland edges and internal tracks used as commuting corridors

Mitigation proposed by developer

"Pre-felling bat roost checks on trees with moderate or high potential

Seasonal restrictions on felling (outside maternity season, generally May–August).

Retention of habitat corridors where feasible.

Installation of bat boxes to "compensate" for any roost loss."

Insufficient survey resolution: The survey did not include aerial inspections or internal cavity checks for trees with potential, so possible roosts may remain undetected.

Underestimation of habitat importance: Even without roosts, removal of foraging/commuting habitat can significantly impact local populations — especially in a forest block of this size.

Fragmentation risk: Felling will break continuous canopy corridors used for commuting, increasing predation and energy costs for bats.

Legal protection overlooked: All bat species and roosts (occupied or not) are protected under the Wildlife Acts and Habitats Directive Annex IV. Destruction of habitat and commuting routes may constitute disturbance or degradation of resting places, requiring a derogation licence.

Mitigation uncertainty: Bat boxes have poor uptake rates compared with natural roosts and do not replace lost woodland structure in the short term.

Cumulative effects not assessed: If other local forestry operations or developments are also removing woodland, cumulative habitat loss could be significant but is not robustly considered.

They will "*clear existing trees/scrub around 10 of 11 turbines (T1, T2, T4–T11) to create a vegetation-free buffer*"; T3 is the only one that does not need felling to meet the minimum buffer (they quote 75.8 m). They also say a larger 90 m buffer previously recommended in 2019 is not required now, because "*none of the turbine locations are above low/moderate risk for Leisler's bat.*"

All Irish bat species are listed on Annex IV of the EU Habitats Directive and are strictly protected under the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011–2023 and the Wildlife Acts 1976–2023. It is an offence to deliberately kill, capture, disturb, or destroy the breeding/resting places of bats, regardless of population status or proximity to designated sites. The EIAR acknowledges that the site supports Leisler's bat, Common pipistrelle, Soprano pipistrelle, Nathusius' pipistrelle, Brown long-eared bat, and Myotis species.

Failure to maintain the precautionary approach – reduction of turbine/vegetation buffer from 90 m to 75.8 m despite continued felling across most turbine sites.

Inadequate roost detection survey effort – absence of aerial or internal cavity checks in high-potential trees.

Loss and fragmentation of protected species habitat – significant removal of woodland used for foraging and commuting without robust connectivity analysis.

Insufficient mitigation – reliance on bat boxes without proven equivalency or monitoring commitments.

Risk of non-compliance with strict protection provisions under the Habitats Directive and Wildlife Acts.

In light of these issues, the proposal **fails to demonstrate that no offence will occur** under national and EU wildlife law, and does not meet the precautionary standards required in the presence of Annex IV species.

Although the report proceeds as a full Natura Impact Statement its failings include:

Dismissed early based on proposed mitigation (e.g., drainage and pollution control). Treated as non-significant due to mitigation, rather than assessing worst-case impacts before mitigation — which is contrary to legal requirements

> *"Once appropriate mitigation measures are implemented, the proposed development will not have a significant impact..."*

Mitigation cannot be used to screen out likely significant effects — the assessment should assume no mitigation at screening.

Survey coverage and updates are weakly supported. The document does not include site-specific ecological field data. It references desk studies and third-party sources but lacks original surveys (e.g., for water quality, aquatic species, protected species near watercourses). There is no clear date range for data acquisition or evidence of recent field verification.

Without current, seasonally appropriate surveys, the NIS risks relying on incomplete or outdated information, which is contrary to the Habitats Directive requirement for "best scientific knowledge in the field

Section 4.5 – In-Combination Effects, where the NIS briefly addresses cumulative impacts from other plans and projects but does so without in-depth analysis.

"The potential for significant in-combination effects with these developments is considered low."

This statement is not analytical — and doesn't meet legal standards for a robust in-combination assessment.

This approach does not satisfy the legal requirements of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive, which demands a robust, evidence-based, and objective analysis of in-combination effects. The omission undermines the integrity of the Appropriate Assessment process and calls into question the legal validity of any planning decision based on this NIS.

Reliance on this Natura Impact Statement would render any subsequent Appropriate Assessment procedural and substantively flawed, and any consent granted on such a basis would be subject to non-compliance with the requirements of Article 6(3)

Chapter 1 - Introduction

There is no substantive difference between the · "Chapter 1 – Introduction (wind farm) & Chapter 1 - Introduction substation

Previous 12-turbine wind farm proposal (2018) was approved but later quashed via Judicial Review due to "inadequate particulars of design".

Changes include removal of one turbine and switch from using the Dunfierth substation to an on-site substation for grid connection.

One would assume that as this is the 3rd application in the same area that the developer would have conducted a thorough examination of the site, the surrounding areas, the potential impacts from both the proposed windfarm and other approved developments on the boundary areas of the site and of the communities concerns previously raised. Unfortunately, that is not the case as we will highlight throughout our submission

This appendix provides administrative and procedural support for the main EIAR. The main EIAR Chapter 1 is informative but it does not meet legal EIAR submission standards alone without its supporting appendices

The Introduction claims this to be a valid EIAR, but the necessary cumulative project list, scoping correspondence, and expert verification are all offloaded to appendices in Volume III — potentially making public and statutory review impossible without full context

C-463/20, European Commission v Ireland requires that EIAR's be sufficiently comprehensive and understandable at the time of public consultation

While Chapter 1 states" *alternatives were assessed*," it gives no detail — which is a legal requirement in the EIA Directive- Breach of Article 5(1)(d) of Directive 2014/52/EU — alternatives must be "described with an indication of the main reasons for the option chosen."

The EIAR separates the wind farm, substation, and delivery route for assessment, but refers to the whole as a "Proposed Development" throughout. This risks confusion, especially where the substation is a SID under Section 182A, while the wind farm is under Section 37A

This fragmentation obscures the cumulative impacts, especially regarding grid connection, land use, and traffic management.

It may constitute the issue of "project slicing" / "project splitting", which is prohibited under EU law (e.g., Commission v Ireland, C-392/96).

The wind farm cannot operate without the substation and grid loop-in to the Kinnegad-Rinawade 110kV line. These components are assessed somewhat separately in structure but there are indications of fragmentation in how the EIAR is presented and the permissions are sought

EU case law consistently prohibits: Artificial subdivision of projects and staged approvals used to avoid full cumulative assessment and this principle is now firmly embedded in both the EIA Directive (2011/92/EU as amended) and Irish law via the Planning and Development Act 2000, as well as the EPA Guidelines (2022).

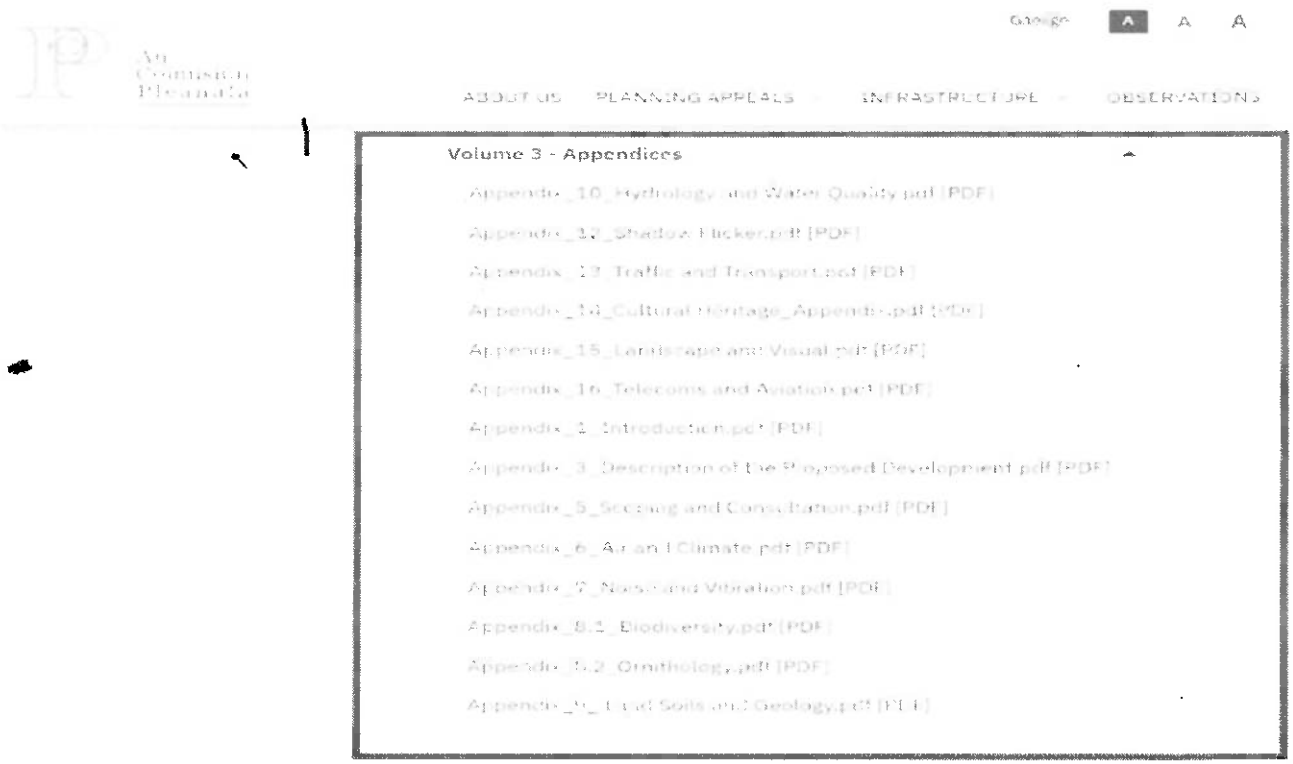
Cumulative impact assessment (Appendix 1.2) is legally mandatory under Article 3 and EU case law (Sweetman, People Over Wind).

Deficient documentation under the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, Schedule 6.

"As established in O'Grianna v An Bord Pleanála [2014] IEHC 632, a wind energy project that excludes its grid connection from assessment constitutes impermissible project splitting. The Drehid Wind Farm proposal includes an on-site substation and loop-in connection essential to the project's function. Therefore, all components must be treated as a single project within one comprehensive and legally valid EIAR. Any attempt to separate or defer grid connection or turbine delivery logistics undermines the integrity of the EIA process and renders the application legally vulnerable.

Chapter 2"Need for the Development, Site Selection and Assessment of Alternatives Considered

No Appendix 2 submitted - Not available to compare / check



This chapter constantly references other chapters and assumes the presence of supporting appendices - No supporting appendix. it is clearly not sufficient as a standalone document in the context of a full EIAR. Therefore, it diminishes the EIAR and fails to satisfy the requirements of Article 5(1)(d) and Annex IV of Directive 2011/92/EU (as amended by 2014/52/EU), it fails to meet those standards

The deficiencies in Chapter 2 — including its reliance on absent appendices and other chapters, its failure to present comparative environmental data in a self-contained manner, and its omission of critical figures and tables — undermine the integrity of the entire Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR).

As a result, the EIAR fails to function as a coherent and complete document, as required under Article 5 of the EIA Directive and the EPA's Guidelines on the Information to be Contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (2022).

This significantly compromises the ability of the public and competent authority to assess the environmental effects of the proposed development and the alternatives considered, and therefore diminishes the legal and procedural adequacy of the full EIAR submission

"*The substation is needed to export electricity from the wind farm to the national grid and the location is strategic due to its proximity to the existing 110 kV transmission network*"

The developer claims all reasonable alternatives were considered "at an appropriate level of detail," in line with the EIA Directive and EPA Guidelines.

The site selection process must consider not only grid accessibility but also environmental sensitivities, local planning context, and alternative locations. Over-reliance on grid proximity as the primary driver of site choice, in the absence of transparent and documented comparative assessment, fails to meet the requirements of Article 5 of the EIA Directive, the Planning and Development Regulations, and the EPA's 2022 Guidelines

This chapter aims to demonstrate that the developer properly evaluated other options before selecting the final substation site and design. While it outlines general reasons for the choices made, it lacks detailed comparative data, environmental impact assessments, or mapping figures to allow verification. It references other chapters for specifics, such as ecological impacts, noise, landscape, and cumulative assessments — meaning this document does not stand alone for evaluating the substation's environmental impact

This chapter presents a surface-level justification for the substation, without including the necessary supporting material to verify claims. It assumes the reader has access to other chapters and appendices, which weakens its transparency and usefulness as an independent assessment therefor it fails to meet the required standards of transparency, completeness, and substantiation under the EIA Directive and the EPA's 2022 Guidelines.

It relies heavily on cross-references to other EIAR chapters and appendices, which are not provided here, making it impossible for the public or competent authority to evaluate the substation alternatives in a standalone or transparent manner. This frustrates the objective of the EIA process, which is to allow for informed public participation and evidence-based decision-making. Therefore, by failing to present the full comparative assessment of environmental effects for each substation alternative, the chapter does not demonstrate how environmental considerations meaningfully informed site and design selection, contrary to Article 5(1)(d) of Directive 2011/92/EU (as amended) and Annex IV thereof.

This omission diminishes the legal and procedural adequacy of the entire EIAR, as the substation is an integral component of the proposed development and should be subject to the same robust scrutiny as the turbine array and grid connection

"The site selection process appears retrospective and dismisses alternatives without robust comparison. The chapter does not show a comparative evaluation of multiple candidate sites with scoping or mapping.

There is no evidence of a structured multi-criteria analysis (e.g., grid access vs. biodiversity vs. community proximity) The EIA Directive Article 5(1)(d) requires consideration of reasonable alternatives

"Grid access is used as the primary justification, but this does not outweigh other environmental and community risks. While the site's proximity to grid infrastructure is emphasized, there is minimal balancing of impacts such as; Local population density, Sensitive habitats or Road suitability

Grid convenience should not override environmental and residential suitability.

CH. 3 Description of the Proposed Development

Both Chapter 3 files were compared - The one from the Wind farm application (322845) and from the Substation (322843) both contain the exact same details which describe the full proposed development, including both:

The wind farm (11 turbines, associated infrastructure, recreational trail, access roads), and

The substation (110 kV substation, loop-in connection, access road, grid works, etc.)

Both refer to the combined project in a single application context (even though two separate SID applications have been submitted)

The substation description is embedded within the main Chapter 3 for the full project. This may be deliberately trying to confuse those who are evaluating the substation as a standalone Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) under Section 182A.

This chapter outlines the scope of the Drehid Wind Farm and Substation proposal of 11 wind turbines, each with rotor diameters of 133m. Most will have a tip height of 167m; one smaller turbine (T1) will be 147.9m.

Substation: A 110 kV substation with permanent planning permission (to be retained after the wind farm is decommissioned).

ESB Specification - Not included in visible detail - technical electrical specifications for the 110 kV substation

Access & Cabling:
9.67 km of new access tracks

951 m of upgraded tracks

Underground electrical/communications cabling

2 temporary compounds

Amenity trail upgrades (with signage, picnic tables, etc.)

Forestry felling and drainage

3 watercourse crossings

Wind farm footprint: 16.17 ha & Substation: 7.17 ha (1.32 ha for the compound)

Turbine Delivery Route (TDR):From the M4 via the R402 and local roads. The turbine delivery route (TDR) includes "15 Points of Interest" with physical works on public roads, including: Vegetation clearance, Hedge and tree cutting - The developer doesn't supply any consent letters from affected landowners along the proposed route nor any confirmation that these suggested works will be permitted - all is excluded from the application red-line

The TDR requires significant interventions along "*15 Points of Interest*," yet the developer proposes securing these through separate road opening licenses post-consent - Segregating critical delivery route works from the formal consent process denies the public the right to engage meaningfully and undermines the legality and transparency of the application

There is no documentation in this file indicating: Pre-consultation with Meath County Council on the TDR impacts and somewhat limited consultation with Kildare Co Council Joint traffic/environmental assessments with the appropriate Co Councils nor Road safety audits shared with the local authorities

Temporary modifications to roundabouts - Meath County Council should have been consulted - We don't see any correspondence attached

EU environmental law (Article 6 of the EIA Directive and the Aarhus Convention) requires early and effective public participation in environmental decision-making

These works are subject to road opening licenses (not included in this application) which is fragmenting consent and bypassing scrutiny.

These works are assessed in the EIAR but not included in the development consent, with the applicant suggesting future road opening licenses.
This sidesteps statutory planning oversight and a possible breach of Section 34 of the Planning and Development Act 2000

Jurisdiction overlaps with Meath and Kildare County Councils, not fully addressed - I don't see any consultation with Meath Co Council and the only reference to consultation with Kildare County Council is that they will consult with them after planning is granted

Wind farm seeks temporary (35-year) permission, but the substation is permanent. This could create residual infrastructure that persists beyond the operational life of the project without a full long-term strategy or decommissioning pathway

The red line boundary is divided into two separate areas (wind farm: 73.9 ha, substation: 21.9 ha), but the combined development boundary is not clearly consolidated which under reports the total land impact or misrepresenting development footprint

Forestry Felling of approx. 28.4 ha - Habitat destruction and fragmentation, particularly for bat and bird populations, and potential for disturbance during nesting or breeding seasons

Development includes 3 new stream crossings and construction in catchments of the Fear English and Kilcooney Rivers, both feeding the Blackwater - Issues with Sediment mobilization, pollution risk, and aquatic habitat disruption. Some stream crossings require OPW Section 50 consent, which is not confirmed to be in place.

Peat deposition area proposed near the substation and if not managed properly, peat movement can cause erosion, carbon release, or instability—especially in high rainfall periods

Construction includes heavy haulage, turbine delivery, and vegetation clearance - Potential for air quality degradation, especially in winter months Dust suppression is proposed via water-spraying on rural access roads. However, in winter conditions, these roads are unsalted, narrow and un-lit

9 lighting columns (~3m high) plus wall lights, lightning masts (20m), and lattice masts (16m) -Causes concern for Night-time light pollution, visual impact on rural landscape, and biodiversity disturbance

While a comprehensive CEMP is provided, many mitigation plans are outlined but not finalized (e.g., final drainage design, construction scheduling around species),. Mitigation enforce-ability is uncertain without binding commitments or regulatory oversight

Mitigation measures in the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) are proposed but not binding, with many details to be confirmed post-consent

A separately licensed turbine delivery route (TDR) not included in the red line boundary

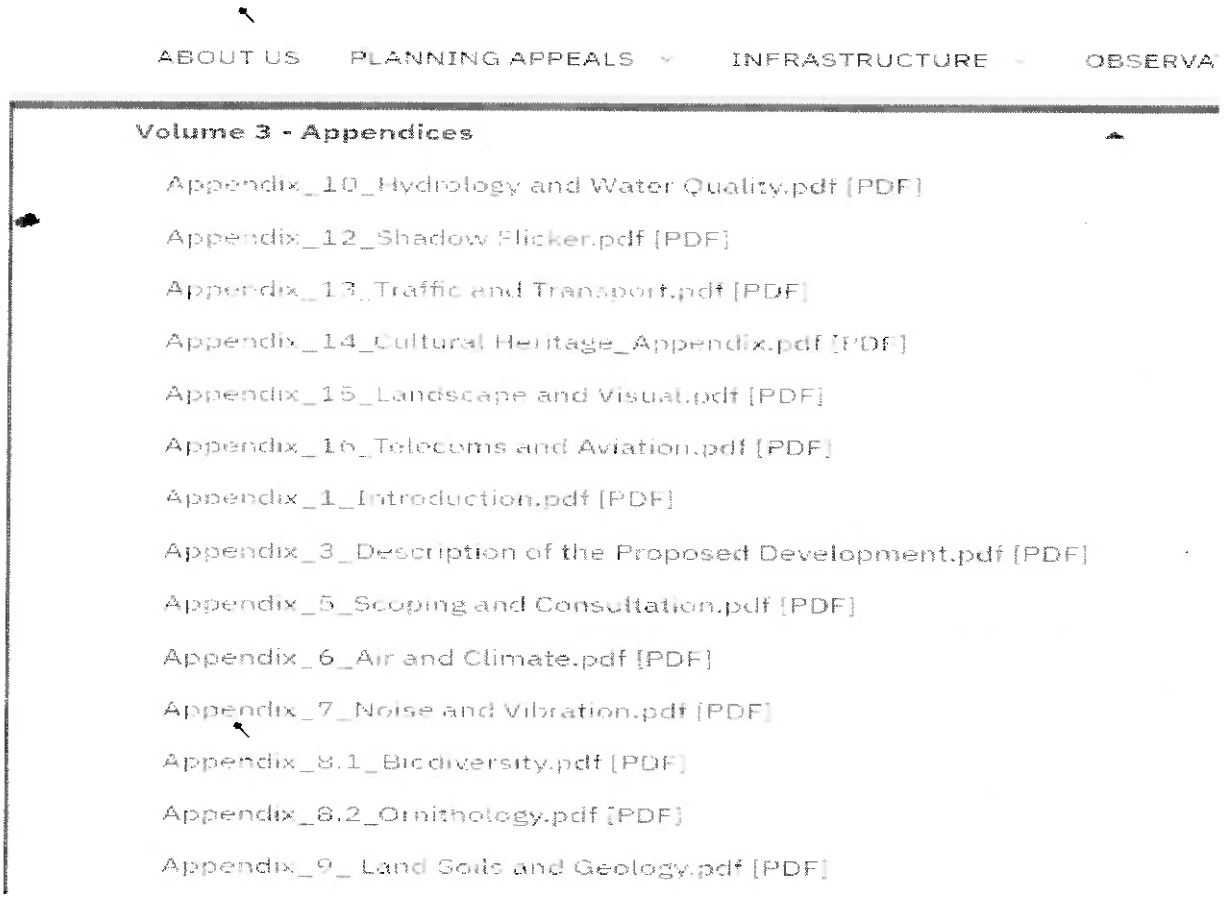
The TDR and substation are functionally integral and must be assessed as a single project under EIA law. Splitting them undermines proper environmental assessment and may invalidate the consent process

Additionally, the Turbine Delivery Route (TDR)—which involves physical interventions to the public road—is excluded from the red line planning boundary. Therefor it should be deemed invalid due to
- Article 5(1) of the EIA Directive
- CJEU Case C-392/96 Commission v Ireland (Derrybrien)
- CJEU Case C-290/03 (Barker case)
Fragmenting of the project undermines the Directives purpose

Two applications are being made (ABP - 322845 for the wind farm and ABP - 322843 for the substation), but they are functionally interdependent. Project splitting could obscure cumulative impacts or breach EIA Directive requirements on project integrity

CH: 4 Policy

No Apendix 4 submitted - Not available to compare / check



Both Chapter 4 files were compared - The one from the Wind farm application (322845) and from the Substation (322843) both contain the exact same details.

This chapter is generally structured to be a standalone chapter within an EIAR, but it clearly references other chapters and assumes the presence of supporting appendices – As there is no supporting appendix. it is clearly not sufficient as a standalone document in the context of a full EIAR. Therefore, it diminishes the EIAR and fails to satisfy the requirements of Article 5(1)(d) and Annex IV of Directive 2011/92/EU (as amended by 2014/52/EU), it fails to meet those standards

The absence of supporting appendices and the reliance on other chapters render Chapter 4 of the EIAR incomplete and non-compliant with the EIA Directive and EPA guidance.

The EIAR improperly relies on an outdated local wind energy strategy (Kildare Wind Energy Strategy 2017–2023) as a justification for site suitability, rather than applying the updated policy context in the 2023–2029 County Development Plan. This undermines the validity of the local policy compliance assessment

The EIAR does not provide sufficient spatial evidence to show that the proposed development complies with zoning or environmental sensitivity designations under the Kildare County Development Plan 2023–2029, undermining the credibility of the local policy compliance claim

The EIAR fails to assess the long-term standalone policy compliance of the proposed substation, a permanent industrial land use, in the context of the Kildare County Development Plan 2023–2029. The absence of such analysis undermines compliance with local land use and landscape policies.

The policy chapter presents an unbalanced and selective assessment of planning policy, failing to engage with potentially conflicting local policies or constraints. This breaches the objectivity required of an EIAR under the EIA Directive and the Planning and Development Regulations.

The EIAR is in breach of Article 5(1)(d) of Directive 2011/92/EU (as amended) by failing to provide a comprehensive assessment of how the permanent substation and associated works interact with up-to-date local planning policy and zoning objectives. It also omits discussion of potentially conflicting local policy provisions

The SEA Directive mandates that development proposals must be assessed in the context of current strategic plans that have undergone SEA.

In 2020 the ECJ released judgement C-24/19 which stated that wind energy guidelines are plans and programs as set out in Directive 2001/42/EU. As such, the Wind Energy Guidelines legally require a Strategic Environmental Assessment. The Irish Wind Energy Guidelines are almost identical to the Flanders Wind Energy Guidelines on which the ECJ decision, C-24/19, was made. The ECJ Decided that wind energy guidelines are PLANS and Programs as set out in DIRECTIVE 2001/42 /EU.

Therefore, they legally require a strategic environmental assessment. Any upgrade of these can only be affected by a strategic environmental assessment. No other procedure is legally valid. Currently the Irish Wind Energy Guidelines do not have a strategic environmental assessment nor do the expired Kildare Wind Energy Strategy (2017–2023) on which the developer has relied

By relying on the expired Kildare Wind Energy Strategy (2017–2023) and not fully grounding the proposal in the 2023–2029 Development Plan (which has an SEA), the developer undermines this legal framework

The EIAR's policy chapter presents broad, non-critical assertions of compliance without adequately informing the public how the local policies (e.g. zoning, visual amenity protections) are applied. The policy chapter of the EIAR may breach the principles of the Aarhus Convention and Directive 2003/35/EC by failing to present a transparent, clear, and evidence-based explanation of local policy compliance, thereby impairing informed public participation.

A combination of over reliance on outdated local policy and failure to address the permanent nature of the substation may collectively result in non-compliance with core provisions of the EIA Directive, SEA Directive, public access requirements under the Aarhus Convention & Directive (EU) 2023/2413 of the European Parliament and of the Council

The developer should have given consideration to:

KCC CDP - 2. Wind Energy Strategy - Open for Consideration *"areas in the northwest and south of the county are emerging as areas where there are less conflicts to potential wind farm development"* the developer interpreted this statement to their own needs

Acceptable in Principle - This is the preferred area for wind energy development characterized by a robust landscape, a low housing density, adequate wind speeds and proximity to the existing electricity transmission and distribution grid. The location of a potential wind farm site within.

An *'Acceptable in Principle'* zone should not be construed as a certainty that planning permission will be granted

It should also be noted that while wind energy schemes may be *'Acceptable in Principle'* within this area there are still many site-specific considerations such as impacts to residential amenity and biodiversity that will need to be examined and considered at planning application stage

"The developer cites the Draft National Planning Framework and previous renewable targets without referencing most recent sector guidelines."

This chapter sometimes references outdated targets or policies (e.g., the 2006 Wind Energy Guidelines) and does not show: How the proposal aligns with the Draft Wind Energy Development Guidelines (2019) in terms of community engagement, noise, or setback. The developer is relying on obsolete benchmarks and ignores evolving policy requirements that promote better siting and public consultation

"Chapter 4 selectively references national policy goals while avoiding critical evaluation against local planning protections and landscape designations. The developer provides no detailed assessment of the County Development Plan or site-specific zoning. Furthermore, the policy chapter lacks any measurable evidence of local benefit, engagement, or compliance with updated national guidelines. The developer has failed to show a detailed, reconciled policy assessment showing clear alignment with national targets and local planning protections."

KCC Wind Energy Development Strategy (Wind Strategy) incorporates a statement of the Council's objectives in relation to wind energy development and sets out the methodology for the identification of suitable locations for wind energy development in the county, having regard to the relevant policy context

Scoping and Consultation

Both Chapter 5 files were compared - The one from the Wind farm application (322845) and from the Substation (322843) both contain the exact same details

The developer of the proposed Drehid Wind Farm (North Kildare Wind Farm Ltd.) undertook a multi-stage scoping and consultation process between 2018 and 2024 to inform the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) or so they state;

Initial Scoping Report (2018):
A detailed EIAR Scoping Report was issued in July 2018 to 72 consultees, including: Kildare County Council departments, Government departments (e.g. Agriculture, Defense, Culture, Transport), Environmental NGOs (e.g. An Taisce, Birdwatch Ireland), Infrastructure and utility providers (e.g. ESB Telecoms, Eir Grid, Gas Networks Ireland), Aviation and telecommunications stakeholders (e.g. IAA, DAA, 2RN, RTÉ, mobile operators)

Scoping Update Letter (2024):
An updated letter was sent to the same consultees to reflect: Changes to the site layout, Inclusion of a new proposed substation and an Updated grid connection method differing from the 2018 plan

The developer also states *"Community Liaison Officer (CLO): Engaged with residents via door-to-door visits, newsletters, a dedicated project email and phone line."* A limited number of homes received flyers - Some people have said that they did try to phone the number provided but it was an un-maned landline, which was of little use

Although a scoping update was issued in 2024, key changes — such as the addition of a substation and amended grid connection — were introduced late in the process. There is no evidence of comprehensive re-consultation with affected parties or full transparency with the community. Furthermore, the limited or non-existent public access to some technical appendices (e.g., mitigation agreements with telecom providers) is concerning.

While the site is within a medium-compatibility area for wind energy, the proposed development conflicts with key Kildare County Development Plan objectives concerning: Protection of residential amenity, Sustainable land use and peatland conservation, Road-safety and infrastructure capacity and the Preservation of recreational and tourism assets

The development area is commonly used by the community for informal recreation, such as walking and cycling. The construction and long-term presence of turbines, fencing, and associated infrastructure would severely disrupt the enjoyment and accessibility of these lands — a matter inadequately considered in the EIAR

The 2018 plan did not include a standalone substation and by 2024, a permanent substation (with control buildings, compound, etc.) was added to the proposal. This change required additional environmental assessment and consultation, especially under SID provisions of Section 182A of the Planning and Development Act. The 2024 design included a defined underground cable route to the existing 110 kV substation at Dunfierth, avoiding overhead lines. The on-site substation needs to feed power via underground cables to the existing 110 kV Dunfierth substation, which is a node on the national grid

The developer via "Kevin Mac Mahon" states in a letter to the ABP that the cabling under / alongside the public road will be undertaken by a statutory undertaker having a right or interest to provide services - The developer hasn't provided any consultation in this regard and a private developer cannot impose on private lands .We do not see any correspondence nor consent for this statement

A developer does not have inherent authority to install a cable along or under a public road. They must obtain formal consent from the relevant road's authority — in this case, Kildare County Council — and comply with statutory procedures

"While Kildare County Council was consulted during scoping, no confirmation is provided that the Roads Department has approved or agreed to the use of public roads for the underground grid connection. It remains unclear whether road opening licenses will be granted, and therefore, the feasibility of the grid connection — and by extension, the entire project — is not assured. Specific feedback from the Roads Department regarding the road opening for the grid connection cable is not detailed in the summary tables of scoping responses

The developer acknowledges that a road opening license will be required, and this would typically be applied for after planning approval but before construction

The grid connection is an integral part of the development, and the developer lacks legal interest or consent to complete that connection (e.g. through public roads or into the Dunfierth 110 kV substation), and the application fails to demonstrate how this will be lawfully secured

The developer says it will connect to the existing Dunfierth 110 kV substation but the application does not include evidence of: A grid connection agreement with EirGrid/ESB Networks, nor a Road opening licenses from Kildare County Council

The developer has not demonstrated that it has secured or is likely to secure the necessary statutory consents to construct the grid connection, including access to the Dunfierth 110 kV substation and the use of public roads. Given the precedent established in O'Grianna v. An Bord Pleanála, this omission renders the application materially deficient. As the grid connection is integral to the development, the absence of legal consent or agreement fundamentally undermines the project's viability and the adequacy of the EIA."

Air Quality and Climate

Both Chapter 6 files were compared - The one from the Wind farm application (322845) and from the Substation (322843) both found to contain the exact same details.

The Air Quality and Climate chapter lacks component-specific granularity, particularly for the substation, which is a permanent infrastructure element and the measures proposed to protect air quality during construction and operation of the substation appear minimally sufficient and largely rely on assumptions rather than direct monitoring. They consider emissions from construction machinery and traffic, but deem them negligible due to the short duration and low intensity. Once built, the developer states "the substation emits no pollutants during operation, aside from rare backup generator use".

While the EIAR concludes that air quality impacts from the substation will be negligible, this conclusion is largely assumption-based. They do the minimum required for compliance under IAQM and EU standards but: they do not go far enough to robustly protect air quality around the substation—particularly during construction

Local dust and air quality monitoring should have been conducted.

Substation-specific dust suppression measures should be detailed and enforceable.

Peat and soil management practices should be explicitly tied to air quality controls

Although the report uses Institute of Air Quality Management (IAQM) guidance and designates the substation works as "Low Risk" for dust, this conclusion is reached without any site-specific dust or air quality monitoring. This is unacceptable given that receptors exist within 350 meters of the development boundary—a distance which the EIAR itself acknowledges requires a dust impact assessment.

Furthermore, no substation-specific dust suppression or air pollution control measures are proposed beyond generic statements that impacts will be "imperceptible" or "negligible." These conclusions are unsupported by empirical evidence and rely instead on assumptions about wind dispersion, rural setting, and limited plant usage. There is also no quantification of potential particulate matter releases associated with peat handling or excavation, despite the known link between such activities and air quality degradation.

The absence of baseline site-specific monitoring, enforceable mitigation commitments, or detailed substation-specific emission modelling renders the assessment of air quality impacts incomplete and potentially misleading. This is particularly concerning in the context of cumulative impacts from other existing and permitted developments in the area, including the Drehid Landfill, which also operates under an EPA licence. The applicant's reliance on desktop assessments alone does not meet the standard of precaution required under the EIA Directive or Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive.

Given the potential for dust soiling, health risks, and construction-related particulate emissions, it is submitted that the proposed development does not demonstrate sufficient protection of air quality, nor does it provide adequate site-specific mitigation for substation-related works. The application should therefore be refused or significantly revised to include monitoring, mitigation, and a more robust impact analysis

The developer fails to meaningfully assess cumulative air quality impacts. The proposed substation is located approximately 1.6 km from the Drehid Landfill, which already operates under an EPA industrial emissions licence. While the EIAR claims that there are "no air quality issues" linked to the landfill, no supporting data or modelling is presented to justify this claim. Nor is any assessment offered of potential additive effects from simultaneous construction activity, traffic emissions, peat disturbance, and landfill-related emissions—despite the acknowledged risk posed

The mitigation measures proposed are vague, generic, and non-binding. There is no commitment to real-time air quality monitoring, no peat-specific dust control measures, and no mechanism proposed to enforce compliance. Instead, the EIAR relies heavily on assumptions that rural air dispersion and short construction periods will prevent any significant effects, without substantiating this with empirical data or site-specific modelling

Given these deficiencies, the EIAR does not comply with the precautionary principle under the EIA Directive, nor does it meet the standard of rigor required for assessing projects in proximity to vulnerable habitats and receptors under the Habitats Directive. The air quality risks—particularly in the context of peat disturbance and cumulative exposure from adjacent industrial activity—have not been properly identified, assessed, or mitigated

The environmental assessment is incomplete and may not comply with the requirement for a thorough, transparent, and science-based assessment of significant effects under the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive 2011/92/EU, as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU

3. Ambient Air Quality Directive 2008/50/EC (CAFE Directive), transposed into Irish law via: S.I. No. 739/2022 (Air Quality Standards Regulations 2022)

The developer assumes that emissions from dust-generating peat and traffic will be "negligible" without demonstrating how this complies with limit values for PM10 and PM2.5, especially in combination with background levels and nearby emitters like Drehid Land fill. The proposal may risk non-compliance with air quality standards, even if temporarily and could also raise SEA compliance issue

Noise and Vibration

Both Chapter 7 files were compared - The one from the Wind farm application (322845) and from the Substation (322843) both contain the exact same details which describe the full proposed development, including both:

This chapter claims to evaluate potential noise and vibration impacts associated with the Drehid Wind Farm and Substation across three phases: construction, operation, and decommissioning

Noise Sources: Turbine foundations, trenching for cables, heavy vehicles, access roads, substations.

Vibration Sources: Mainly from rock breaking, heavy vehicles

Substation Noise: Assessed using BS 4142, which rates industrial noise impacts based on their margin above background noise. A level below 35 dB is considered low impact. BS 5228 for construction noise & BS 4142 for substation/industrial noise

The developer states "With proposed mitigation, noise and vibration impacts from all phases will remain within acceptable limits"

The assessment relies heavily on ETSU-R-97 (1996) and the 2006 Wind Energy Planning Guidelines, both acknowledged to be outdated and under review. Although the report mentions anticipated updates in 2024, it proceeds using older standards, even though Draft Revised Guidelines (2019) and EPA NG3 Guidance (2022) exist.

The developer should have used a precautionary approach and assessed compliance with the stricter draft 2019 guidelines, especially given public concern over AM and nighttime noise. No site-specific AM risk assessment is done, even though the site is in flat terrain and contains turbines that could be susceptible to stall-induced AM.

The mitigation of AM is speculative and relies on manufacturer design improvements or reactive shutdowns. This provides no enforceable planning conditions and leaves uncertainty for residents

Substation noise is assessed using BS 4142 methodology, but actual sound power levels from substation equipment are not provided in detail.

The rating level is assumed to be below 35 dB LAeq at the nearest receptors, but no night time noise propagation modelling is shown.

The substation will operate 24/7 and its transformers may create tonal hum. The absence of measured baseline tonal content or receptor-specific BS4142 assessments weakens the conclusion that the impact is low

Vibration is dismissed quickly in this chapter, even for residences 25–48 m from access roads and the grid connection trenching zone.

Monitoring was done in 2017 and 2019 but seems to be non-contiguous since and there's no information on weather comparability or consistency across the datasets. The non-contiguous data collection over multiple years introduces potential bias. The results may not represent typical noise conditions, especially for nighttime winter periods when background noise is lower.

"Several monitoring sites were located away from actual homes due to denied access" - The applicant fails to provide factual information as to who "*denied access* " and should be required to reassess noise thresholds using actual receptor locations, not nearby fields or approximations- Inconsistency because no detail is given as to which landowners/ home owners refused access

While the report mentions the Timahoe North Solar Farm, the combined noise effects from that site, grid works, and the wind farm are treated as negligible without detailed modelling - A proper cumulative assessment under the EIA Directive is missing. The solar farm may contribute inverter and traffic noise that overlaps with wind turbine and substation operation

No assessment of future or consented wind developments / Solar projects is provided, despite a clear IOA guideline that if noise contributions are within 10 dB of existing sources, cumulative analysis is required. Failing to consider reasonably foreseeable developments undermines the integrity of the EIA and may breach cumulative impact assessment requirements under Irish and EU EIA law

Old Noise Data Collection - Noise monitoring was conducted in 2017 and 2019, but the EIAR is dated May 2025- no updated monitoring has been conducted which is even more necessary now with the recent completion of the North Kildare Solar Farm

The assessment inappropriately assumes a 0 dB tonal penalty, contrary to best practice under ETSU-R-97 and BS4142, and dismisses the risk of tonal noise and 'Other Amplitude Modulation' (OAM) without any enforceable mitigation framework or planning conditions.

It also fails to adequately assess cumulative impacts with other nearby energy infrastructure such as the Timahoe North Solar Farm, despite the clear potential for overlapping acoustic effects. The substation noise assessment lacks contextual sensitivity to the rural noise environment and fails to address receptor vulnerability or low absolute background levels, particularly at night. In addition, the EIAR prematurely scopes out low frequency and infrasound impacts based solely on generic literature, with no site-specific modelling or monitoring.

Biodiversity & Ornithology

Both Chapter 8-1 files were compared - The one from the Wind farm application (322845) and from the Substation (322843) both contain the exact same details and are largely identical in structure, methodology, and much of the narrative content. However, some differences relate to the mitigation measures specific to the different components of the project

Substation Chapter: Evaluates a more restricted footprint, primarily focused on habitats directly affected by the 110 kV substation and grid connection. Discusses fauna impacts (e.g., badger, otter) in context of linear infrastructure and substation footprint, with no turbine-specific analysis. Mitigation measures focus on drainage design, vegetation clearance, and minimizing lighting spill around the substation but it does not adequately assess the cumulative impact alongside the Wind Farm.

The cumulative effects section mentions: "The biodiversity cumulative assessment considers potential in-combination effects with other projects, including the wind farm, solar farms, and peat extraction activities..."
But then only briefly lists developments, without a detailed analysis of the interaction between:

Habitat fragmentation from the wind farm and substation together

Drainage impacts from both infrastructures potentially affecting the same bog systems

Species disturbance from overlapping construction and operation activities

No integrated ecological impact matrix showing overlapping zones of influence between wind farm and substation, particularly on sensitive habitats like Mulgeeth Bog or shared fauna corridors

Residual Effects (Section 8.11.2) This section attempts to isolate the residual effects of the substation, but it assesses the substation in isolation, even though the same species populations (e.g., bats, badgers, Curlew) are potentially impacted by both developments

Mitigation Measures (Section 8.10.2) Substation-specific mitigation focuses on:

Construction-phase controls, Lighting minimisation & Drainage features

However, no integration is made with mitigation measures for the wind farm. For example: Bat boxes and flight corridors are mentioned, but without considering whether substation lighting or noise will undermine those installed near turbines.

No coordinated biodiversity offset strategy between substation and wind farm zones. Unified mitigation strategy that addresses how substation impacts could amplify or undermine wind farm measures

The substation chapter uses a narrow assessment scope- This contradicts the broader ecological receptors evaluated in the wind farm chapter, creating fragmented and incompatible scales of analysis

The biodiversity assessment for the substation fails to robustly consider its cumulative interaction with the wind farm. Instead of assessing both as components of a single development with shared ecological pathways and receptors, the substation is treated as an isolated element. This undermines the credibility of mitigation proposals and the integrity of residual impact evaluation

The legal sufficiency of the EIAR under EIA Directive requirements on cumulative assessment and this has not been addressed appropriately

The EIA Directive requires the cumulative effects of all components of a project to be assessed as a whole. By isolating the substation, the EIAR fails to meet this standard. The substation biodiversity chapter assesses impacts in isolation from the wind farm, contrary to the EIA Directive's requirement to assess cumulative impacts

Residual biodiversity impacts from the substation are not integrated with those from the wind farm (Section 8.11.1), despite overlapping ecological zones and shared species (e.g. bats, badgers, Curlew, raised bog)

Fails to meet CIEEM guidelines for integrated biodiversity impact assessment and risks breaching legal standards under the EIA Directive (2014/52/EU)

The EIAR identifies the presence of Red-Listed and Annex I species, such as Curlew, Lapwing, Whooper Swan, Snipe, and Woodcock, but proposed mitigation is generic and not tailored to their ecology or sensitivity.

No dedicated buffer zones or breeding habitat protections (e.g. 500m buffer for Curlew) are proposed.

Risk of disturbance, displacement, or habitat loss for some of Ireland's most threatened bird species remains unmitigated or under-acknowledged

Although the chapter title includes "substation," the assessment does not separate impacts from the substation works. The phrase "the proposed wind farm and substation" is used interchangeably throughout, with no clear delineation of bird habitat loss or disturbance related specifically to the substation footprint.

Overlooks cumulative or additive impacts specific to this large, permanent, hard standing infrastructure

Night-time lighting from the substation and turbine obstacle lighting is not assessed for potential impacts on nocturnal species (e.g. Woodcock, Long-eared Owl, migratory birds).

Ignores a documented pressure on nocturnally active birds, particularly in formerly dark-sky bogland and forest-edge habitats.

Cumulative impact section lists nearby wind and solar farms but does not quantify overlap of species ranges, foraging areas, or flyways. No in-combination collision risk is calculated, and cumulative displacement is discussed only qualitatively

Fails to comply with best-practice cumulative effects assessment and under-represents landscape-scale impact

The EIAR fails to cross-reference habitat loss (e.g. peatland) with avian habitat usage. Species like Curlew and Snipe that rely on wet grassland or peat habitats are assessed separately from peat disturbance. This understates potential indirect and long-term habitat degradation for peatland-dependent bird

Survey timing is described as compliant with SNH (now NatureScot) guidance, but data for some target species (e.g. Whooper Swan) is mostly observational, and may not reflect use patterns outside daytime hours.

No infrared/motion camera use or nocturnal surveys reported therefore they could have missed important roosting, flight corridor, or night-foraging behaviours

Inadequate Mitigation for Red-Listed and Annex I Birds
The EIAR identifies key Red-Listed and Annex I species including Curlew, Lapwing, Woodcock, and Whooper Swan but fails to propose species-specific mitigation. There is no commitment to exclusion buffers around potential breeding or foraging habitat, nor any targeted measures to avoid displacement of these threatened species.

Absence of Transparent Collision Risk Modelling (CRM) Results
While CRM was reportedly carried out, the EIAR does not include tabulated results or predicted collision mortality figures per species. There is no explanation of how CRM outputs influenced turbine siting, undermining the integrity of the impact evaluation and mitigation strategy.

Substation Impacts Not Assessed Separately
The permanent 110 kV substation is not assessed as a discrete impact source. No consideration is given to the specific habitat loss, noise, or lighting disturbance arising from this infrastructure. The chapter conflates all project components under a single narrative, masking potentially significant substation-related effects.

Lighting Impacts on Nocturnal and Migratory Birds Ignored
The EIAR does not assess the effects of obstacle or security lighting on nocturnal birds such as Woodcock or migrating species, despite known sensitivity to light pollution in open bog and farmland habitats.

Deficient Cumulative Impact Assessment
Although other wind and solar developments are listed, there is no quantitative cumulative collision or displacement analysis. The assessment fails to account for additive pressure on local bird populations across projects within shared flyways or foraging ranges.

Public and Specialist Consultation Not Addressed
Responses from stakeholders such as the Irish Peatland Conservation Council raised concerns about impacts on Curlew and hydrology-dependent habitats, but these are not followed up or resolved. Absence of engagement with BirdWatch Ireland and Irish Raptor Study Group is not mitigated by independent species review.

Disconnect Between Habitat Loss and Bird Habitat Use
The chapter does not cross-reference peatland and wet grassland habitat loss with breeding or foraging needs of sensitive wader species. This artificially isolates habitat and species assessments, underplaying the cumulative degradation of ecological function.

Survey Limitations
There is no evidence that nocturnal activity was adequately surveyed, particularly for roosting or migrating species. The assessment relies on daytime vantage point watches only, which may overlook significant night-time flight activity or usage patterns.

Lack of Post-Construction Monitoring Commitments
The EIAR provides no binding framework for post-construction bird monitoring, nor any adaptive management provisions based on monitoring results. This undermines enforceability and long-term protection of avifauna.

The ornithological assessment as presented does not provide a sufficiently precautionary or evidence-based evaluation of the likely significant impacts on bird species of conservation concern. It lacks clarity, completeness, and measurable mitigation outcomes, and therefore does not satisfy the legal and ecological standards required under the EIA Directive or Birds Directive - Directive 2011/92/EU (amended by Directive 2014/52/EU)

Reactive rather than preventative – Relying on "pre-works surveys" to identify active nests shifts the burden of protection until after planning is granted and site works begin, which is an unacceptable risk for vulnerable species.

Hen Harrier – No Effective Protection or Buffering - Hen Harriers, though recorded only during winter, are extremely sensitive to disturbance and landscape fragmentation. The EIAR fails to:

Define minimum flight corridor or foraging buffer zones. - Include any commitment to turbine curtailment during key migration or overwintering periods, despite acknowledging Hen Harrier presence and flight activity.

Lapwing and Curlew – Breeding Waders at Risk - These species were recorded as breeding near the site and are extremely vulnerable to displacement: The mitigation measures rely on undefined "buffer zones" around nests with no commitment to maintaining suitable breeding habitat post-construction. The proposed habitat restoration lacks specificity in terms of target vegetation structure, grazing regimes, or long-term management necessary to support these declining species.

Barn Owl – Roost Disruption Risk Understated - The EIAR suggests that Barn Owls were surveyed, but there is no definitive data presented on confirmed roosts within or near the site, nor any legally enforceable protection for roosting/nesting habitat. The vague mention of potential nest box provision off-site does not offset the risk of turbine collision or roost abandonment.

Yellowhammer – Hedgerow Removal and Displacement - Yellowhammer presence is acknowledged, but mitigation hinges on replanting hedgerows post-construction. However: There is no guarantee of hedgerow quality, continuity, or timescale to maturity, making such measures inadequate to preserve existing breeding territories. No buffering, quiet zones, or ecological corridors are proposed to support this species through the construction or operational phase.

Lack of Adaptive Management or Contingency Planning - There is no binding commitment to adaptive mitigation should post-construction monitoring reveal adverse effects. Without predefined thresholds or mitigation triggers, post-impact monitoring is functionally toothless.

In accordance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive and national biodiversity policy, the precautionary principle must apply. A Natura Impact Statement that fails to assess known vulnerable species documented on-site cannot be considered legally or scientifically robust, and should be deemed inadequate for the purpose of informing a grant of permission.

We fail to find any references to Red Squirrel which we know exist and live within the proposed development areas for the wind farm and the substation. The EIAR / biodiversity appendices make no reference to them,therefor the developer has failed to meet their legal and procedural obligations by omitting this species from survey, assessment, and mitigation

Recent sightings confirm the presence of Red Squirrel (Sciurus vulgaris) within and adjacent to the proposed development footprint. This species is protected under the Wildlife Acts 1976–2023, listed as Near Threatened on the Irish Red List of Terrestrial Mammals (Marnell et al., 2019), and its breeding and resting places are strictly protected year-round under Regulation 51(d) of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011–2021. The developer's Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and associated appendices make no reference to Red Squirrel, provide no survey data, and propose no avoidance, mitigation, or compensation measures.

Land, Soils, Geology & Hydrogeology

This chapter contains extensive references to peat, primarily in relation to site investigations, stability, vulnerability, and excavation

The Drehid Wind Farm proposal references peat extensively, particularly in the "Peat Stability Report" (Appendix 9.1), and outlines several mitigation measures to address peat-related risks.Peat is described as low strength, high moisture, fibrous, and highly variable, making it susceptible to instability from preparatory factors like water content changes, vegetation loss, and slope geometry

Peat depth probing was conducted in 2018, 2023, and 2024 at turbine locations (especially T6–T11), the substation, and access route

The EIAR acknowledges that construction may require excavation and replacement of peat in some locations, which contributes to the magnitude of impact ratings.The volume of peat underlying the site was used to determine site importance and impact significance

The EIAR describes peat as more vulnerable to disturbance and sediment mobilization during construction, leading to indirect impacts like turbidity or water quality degradation

The EIAR identifies turbines T8, T9, and T10 as being located on peat up to 5.4 m deep with recorded shear strengths as low as 8–14 kPa. Despite this, the risk assessment concludes low to moderate risk without providing full justification or the complete peat stability risk register. Forestry drainage patterns and anticipated climate-related increases in extreme rainfall events are not adequately considered in the assessment, despite being recognized triggers of peat slides in similar wind energy developments. It is submitted that the proposed development poses an unacceptably high risk of peat instability at these locations and that the assessment as presented is deficient in both scope and documentation.

The substation is proposed on ground underlain by up to 1.5 m of cut over peat. This poses both stability and long-term settlement concerns, especially given the permanent nature of the structure. Risk of differential settlement or drainage alteration is not addressed in detail.

Given recent substitute consent proceedings against Bord na Móna for unregulated peat land disturbance, it would be legally inconsistent and environmentally unsound for An Coimisiún Pleanála to permit construction of permanent infrastructure (like a 110 kV substation) directly on peatland — including cut over peat — without full cumulative assessment, peat land function analysis, and horological modelling. The precedent set in the substitute consent case should apply here, requiring the same high standard of scrutiny and legal compliance

Monitoring and Inspections: The developer states that regular monitoring of excavation works will be carried out during the construction phase. As part of the mitigation measures for peat and subsoil disturbance, the developer commits to: Inspection of exposed soils and peat during works. Adherence to a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), which will outline roles and responsibilities for inspections and response action

The EIAR does not provide a detailed monitoring programme:

No schedule (e.g. daily, weekly)

No mention of who performs inspections (e.g. independent environmental clerk of works)

No commitment to public reporting or audit trail

No threshold criteria for triggering mitigation or halting works

There is no clear mention of long-term monitoring: For peat stability after construction, For settlement or substation foundation behaviour , For drainage impacts or erosion along roads

The EIAR references "regular monitoring" and "visual inspections" during construction works involving peat and sub-soils but fails to provide any meaningful detail on the monitoring regime. There is no clear information on inspection frequency, responsible parties, threshold criteria for intervention, or post-construction monitoring of peat stability, foundation settlement, or drainage impacts—despite significant peat deposits (up to 5.4 m) and proposed infrastructure, including a permanent substation, being located on peat land.

This omission undermines the credibility and enforce-ability of the proposed mitigation measures. It also appears to conflict with the requirements of Article 8a(4) of the EIA Directive (2011/92/EU, as amended), which requires that significant adverse effects on the environment are subject to proportionate and enforceable monitoring. In the absence of a detailed and independently verifiable monitoring plan, it is submitted that the assessment is incomplete, and the application should be refused or deferred pending submission of a comprehensive monitoring and inspection programme

The EIAR states that a qualitative peat risk register was compiled and is "to be updated during construction." However, no mechanism is described for how, when, or by whom these updates will be made. There is no commitment to independent oversight, public availability, or integration with a broader monitoring programme. Given the sensitivity of the peat land environment and the depth of peat at several turbine locations, this lack of clarity makes the mitigation and risk management framework effectively unenforceable.

The EIAR states that a peat risk register was compiled and is to be "updated during construction." This approach is inadequate and does not reflect the seriousness of peat instability risks in high water-content, low-shear-strength peat environments. Post-approval updates to a risk register during the active construction phase are inherently reactive, not preventative.

This is especially important given the history of catastrophic peat failures in other Irish wind energy projects (e.g. Derrybrien, Meenbog). Reliance on live updates during construction does not provide adequate safeguards for sensitive peatlands, nearby watercourses, or downstream ecosystems.

Saying the register *"will be updated during construction"* contradicts the core principle of pre-emptive risk management in PLHRAG and IWEA guidelines, which recommend all slope stability hazards be identified and mitigated in the planning/design phase

The applicant's reliance on a peat risk register "to be updated during construction" does not meet the standards of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive (2011/92/EU, as amended), particularly Article 5, which requires a clear, proactive outline of mitigation measures prior to consent

Hydrology & Water Quality To assess the likely impacts of the proposed Drehid Wind Farm substation on hydrology, drainage, and water quality during construction, operation, and decommissioning phases.

The proposed substation is within the Fear English River catchment, a tributary of the River Blackwater, which flows into the River Boyne.

Fear English River - Listed as "At Risk" under the Water Framework Directive (WFD).

Potential Impacts Identified: Siltation and runoff during construction, Pollution risk from fuels, concrete & Changes in flow regimes due to land clearance and hard standing areas

Mitigation Measures Proposed: Buffer zones of 10–50m from watercourses, Use of silt fencing, swales, settlement ponds, No in-stream works, Re fuelling and storage in designated bunded areas, Regular inspections and sediment control structures & Adherence to CIRIA C648 and IFI guidelines

Fear English River (Ballynamullagh) is crossed at 3 locations (ST-01, ST-02, ST-03). 12 culverts (including 2 temporary) are also proposed across land drains and channels within the Arterial Drainage Scheme and they have just previously stated " No in-stream works"

No analysis of cumulative effects from other existing or permitted developments within the Fear English River catchment

There is no identification or analysis of other existing or permitted developments within the Fear English River catchment, such as the North Kildare solar farm. There is no mapping, mention, or quantitative assessment of cumulative runoff, sedimentation, or flow changes from other projects.

The EIAR fails to include cumulative hydro logical impacts from other significant developments within the same catchment—namely, the North Kildare solar farm that also discharges into the Fear English River. This is a critical shortcoming in terms of compliance with both EIA and Water Framework Directive obligations. Without considering these projects in combination, the assessment of potential impacts on water quality, peak flows, and ecological sensitivity is incomplete until a hydro logical impact assessment is provided that explicitly addresses cumulative effects from all developments discharging into the Fear English River and its tributaries.

The EIAR fails to assess cumulative impacts on the Fear English River, a water-body currently classified as "At Risk" under the Water Framework Directive (WFD). Notably, it omits the already constructed and operational North Kildare Solar Farm, which discharges into the same sub-catchment. The omission of existing pressures undermines the validity of

the baseline conditions used in impact assessment and contravenes EIA and WFD cumulative assessment requirements. This is a significant deficiency that compromises the integrity of the hydrology and water quality evaluation.

This failure constitutes a material deficiency under both the EIA Directive (2011/92/EU as amended by 2014/52/EU) and Article 4 of the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) Therefore, the application should be deemed invalid

Ireland has been referred to an EU court over its failure to adopt laws on protecting water quality.

The EU Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) requires all Member States to protect and improve water quality in all waters so that we achieve good ecological status by 2015 or, at the latest, by 2027. It was given legal effect in Ireland by the European Communities (Water Policy) Regulations 2003 (S.I. No. 722 of 2003). It applies to rivers, lakes, groundwater, and transitional coastal waters. The Directive requires that management plans be prepared on a river basin basis and specifies a structured method for developing these plans.

The **Water Framework Directive** (2000/60/EC), adopted in 2000 and requiring transposition by 22 December 2003, mandates that inland and coastal waters across the EU must reach at least "good status" by 2027 ScienceDirect+15Wikipedia+15RTÉ+15.

The European Commission concluded that Ireland had failed to correctly transpose this directive into national law, particularly around critical areas like **water abstraction**, **impoundment**, and **hydromorphological changes** (e.g., dams, weirs) European Commission+7The Irish Times+7Law Society of Ireland+7.

Multiple reminders from the Commission—letters dating back to October 2007, escalated with a reasoned opinion in November 2011—went unaddressed in full BreakingNews.ie+5Wikipedia+5Law Society of Ireland+5.

As a result, on **26 January 2023**, the Commission formally referred Ireland to the ECJ Representation in Ireland+13The Irish Times+13RTÉ+13.

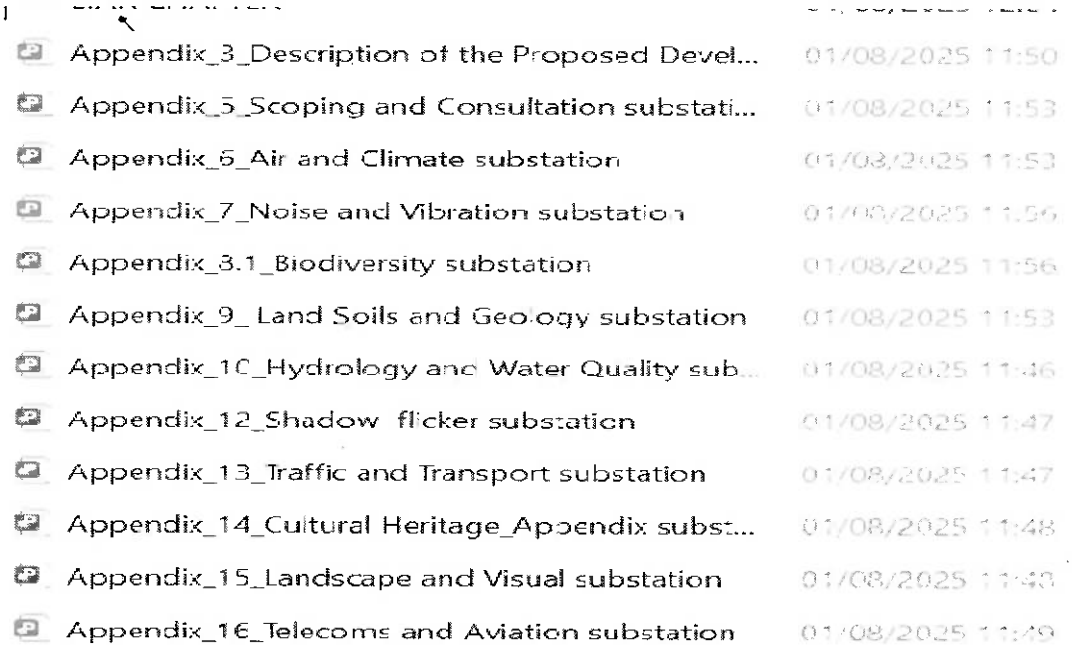
Recent Developments In December 2022, the Irish government enacted the **Water Environment (Abstractions and Associated Impoundments) Act 2022**, aiming to remedy some of the Commission's concerns Independent+2Law Society of Ireland+2.

However, the Commission considered these efforts **insufficient**, and it remained unclear how long full compliance would take Independent+1.

More recently, on **7 February 2024**, the Commission also referred Ireland (along with five other EU Member States) to the ECJ for failing to finalize the **third cycle of river basin management plans** under the Water Framework Directive, and for shortcomings under the **Floods Directive** Representation in Ireland+2BreakingNews.ie+2.

Population, Human Health and Material Assets

No Appendix 11 submitted - Not available to compare / check



There is no substantive difference between the · "Chapter 11 (wind farm) & Chapter 11 (substation)

This chapter assesses the potential impacts of the Drehid Wind Farm development (including turbines, substation, and turbine delivery route (TDR)) on: Population, Human health, Material assets, Recreation, tourism, amenity, Employment and economic activity & Land use

- States that it " Considered other projects within 20 km" A 20 km radius was selected based on: Visual impact guidance from the 2006 Wind Energy Development Guidelines (for turbines over 100 m), Potential for cumulative impacts on traffic, noise, air quality, and water.Projects within 250 m of the TDR (Turbine Delivery Route) were also assessed

This chapter refers generally to multiple solar farm applications in Kildare and Meath as part of its cumulative assessment, it does not identify the North Kildare Solar Farm individually or evaluate its specific potential cumulative impacts -

The North Kildare Solar Farm is completed and borders the Drehid Wind Farm, but the developer has yet again ommited it from the EIAR

The North Kildare Solar Farm has the potential to contribute to cumulative impacts (e.g. on land use, biodiversity, grid infrastructure and amenity. It shares hydrologica pathways, including impact on the Fear English River, with the proposed wind farm & substation

Failure to Assess Cumulative Impact with constructed North Kildare Solar Farm


Clanough
R402
Kilwarden
GORTEEN
DUNFIERTH
Dysart
DYSART
Dysart
KNO
KILMURRY
Kilshanroe
KILLYON
NKEERAN
R402
CLONAGH
Cadamstown solar
farm - KCC 2460568
BALLYNAMULLAGH
MUCKLON
Proposed wind farm
TOWN
MULGEETH
Barnhill
DREHID
North kildare solar farm KCC - 181514
TIMAHOE EAST
L5025 Drehid
SONSTOWN
COOLOGMARTIN

The EIAR fails to assess the cumulative environmental impacts of the proposed Drehid Wind Farm and Substation in combination with the North Kildare Solar Farm, which is already constructed and directly adjoins the proposed development site.

The North Kildare Solar Farm shares a hydrological connection to the Fear English River, a receptor also affected by the proposed wind farm and substation. The cumulative impact on surface water quality, drainage patterns, flood risk, and peat stability has not been considered.

Furthermore, the combined visual, land use, and amenity impacts of co-located large-scale renewable energy infrastructure — solar farm and wind farm — have not been evaluated. This omission contravenes obligations under the EIA Directive (2014/52/EU) and Irish planning law to provide a robust cumulative impact assessment.

The assessment uses Tailte Éireann maps (2018) for land use - This Violates the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive (2014/52/EU), which requires use of current and accurate baseline data & Contravenes EPA Guidelines (2022), which stress the importance of up-to-date mapping and field surveys

The EIAR relies on outdated maps and baseline datasets, including Tailte Éireann maps from 2018 and an incomplete house survey. This has resulted in the omission of residential receptors and new developments within the vicinity of the proposed wind farm, substation, and turbine delivery route

The absence of this information renders the EIAR deficient

Shadow Flicker

There is no substantive difference between the · "Chapter 12 (wind farm) & Chapter 12 (substation) This chapter evaluates the potential for shadow flicker — the strobing effect caused by rotating wind turbine blades casting shadows on nearby properties

Number of turbines: 11 (Nordex N133 model)

Study Area: 1,330 m radius (10 rotor diameters) from each turbine

Receptors Identified: 185 properties (residences and mixed-use buildings)

Assessment Models Used: WindPro software with two scenarios

Exceeded: 57 receptors are predicted to exceed 30 hours/year under worst-case conditions.

5 receptors exceed 30 hours/year even under realistic conditions

WEDG 2006 : Recommends limits of 30 minutes/day or 30 hours/year within 500 m of turbines.

Draft WEDG 2019: Recommends zero shadow flicker.

Kildare County Development Plan (2023–2029): Requires shadow flicker modelling and mitigation, including shutdown protocols if needed

North Kildare Wind Farm Ltd - commits to minimal shadow flicker through the use of automated turbine shut-down systems & Real-time monitoring and control systems

The EIAR says the developer is "willing to commit" to mitigation but does not specify legally binding measures or provide any guarantee that these systems will be implemented, verified, or monitored.

Mitigation measures are not secured by condition or legal agreement, making them unenforceable after planning is granted.

Local authorities often lack the resources or mechanisms to continuously monitor shadow flicker and ensure turbine shutdowns occur when needed. This proposal shifts the burden of enforcement to the public, placing the onus on affected residents to detect, log, and prove non-compliance — which is unrealistic and unfair

The mitigation relies on turbine control systems using light sensors and software algorithms to shut down turbines during shadow flicker events — yet no specifications, testing standards, or independent verification are provided. The effectiveness and reliability of these technologies are unproven in this context and that no independent oversight has been proposed

The draft 2019 Wind Energy Development Guidelines require zero shadow flicker, with automated shutdown and monitoring technologies. The application does not fully comply with this policy and offers no evidence that a zero flicker outcome is guaranteed

No Shadow Flicker Management Plan or shutdown protocol has been submitted with the application. A clear, binding plan — with thresholds, sensor details, control software description, independent auditing, and complaint resolution procedures — must be submitted prior to consent, not left to post-consent agreement

Traffic and Transportation

There is no substantive difference between the · "Chapter 13 (wind farm) & Chapter 13 (substation) EIAR chapter and provides a high-level assessment of traffic impacts associated with all stages of the project (construction, operation, and decommissioning).This appendix contains technical backup for Chapter 13

There is a heavy reliance on mitigation works,invasive road modifications,and impact on local traffic flow during delivery - The developer commits to engaging with utility providers to confirm required works before turbine deliveries.

"A number of potential haul routes are assessed... however, a single haul route will be agreed with KCC following the appointment of a contractor should the development receive planning permission."

"Engagement with local utility providers will be required to confirm which [overhead cables] are to be removed/lowered or disconnected during turbine delivery."

"Coordination with all relevant utility providers is to be undertaken prior to any delivery to ensure the safe passage of the blades."

The developer has not completed coordination with utility providers prior to submitting the planning application, despite acknowledging that extensive mitigation works (e.g., cable relocation/lowering) will be required to facilitate turbine deliveries.

- Without confirmed agreements with ESB, telecoms, or other utility providers, there's no guarantee that required works can or will be completed in time or at all.

Incomplete Impact Assessment: If utility infrastructure needs to be moved, this could:

Impact private properties (if overhead lines are redirected)

Require further road closures

Introduce un-assessed environmental, traffic, or amenity impacts

Have cumulative construction effects that were not captured in the EIAR

Under the EIA Directive (2014/52/EU), the developer must provide a complete assessment of all likely significant effects. Deferring major mitigation coordination to post-consent undermines this obligation.

Leaving utility clearance to post-consent transfers risk to the planning authority and community. It suggests that the delivery route may not be feasible without significant alterations — meaning the project, as described, may not be deliverable.

Temporary Use Entrance (L5012 – for Turbine Delivery Only)

A new entrance off the L5012, just west of an existing Coillte entrance, will be constructed specifically to facilitate turbine deliveries to the northern section of the site. This entrance is described as:

"Required for the lifetime of the project, but its utilisation will be infrequent in nature."

The entrance is described as "temporary-use" but will remain for the project's lifespan — that's effectively permanent, and its long-term impacts may be under-assessed Lack of Detail: No cross-sections, swept path drawings, or construction specs provided for the new entrance

This clearly indicates that the entrance will:

Remain in place for the full duration of the project's operational lifespan, and be used intermittently during maintenance or replacement events.

Thus, despite being framed as a "temporary-use" feature, this entrance is in fact a permanent physical modification to the local road network, and its long-term environmental and amenity impacts have not been properly assessed. It raises key concerns:

Visual and landscape impact of a permanent access point,

Cumulative road safety and traffic impact during turbine replacement,

Lack of design detail (e.g., sightlines, road geometry, lighting, drainage),

Potential unauthorized development risk if consent conditions are vague or unenforceable.

> "A single haul route will be agreed with Kildare County Council following the appointment of a contractor should the development receive planning permission." - *Chapter 13, Section 13.2.1*

This defers critical routing decisions and local impact assessments until after consent is granted. It is wholly inappropriate and procedural unsound under Irish planning law and the EIA Directive, which require a project to be assessed in its entirety, including the specific physical routes and mitigation measures necessary to make it acceptable.

Approving a project where the key access and delivery infrastructure is undefined would amount to a "project split" – the unlawful segmentation of a development to avoid assessing cumulative and specific impacts.

The L50242:

It is a cul-de-sac road centrally located within the proposed development site.

It will be used for cable installation to connect the northern and southern sections of the site.

It will also be used as an internal connection road during both construction and operation

This road will facilitate internal site access and cable route installation

There is no stated mechanism (e.g. traffic order, physical barrier, condition of consent) that prohibits hauliers from using the L50242.

The developer has not committed to enforceable constraints that prevent hauliers from accessing or deviating onto local roads like L50242

The applicant has not provided a legally binding commitment or traffic management condition to prohibit turbine delivery hauliers from using the L50242, a local cul-de-sac road not designed for HGV access. Without such a guarantee, the risk of inappropriate routing and damage to local infrastructure or amenity remains.

This application does not meet the threshold for legal, environmental or procedural sufficiency. The planning authority has a duty to reject applications where critical infrastructure is undefined or subject to speculative future arrangements

The Drehid Wind Farm and Substation application fails to present a legally robust, technically complete, and environmentally assailable proposal with respect to access and delivery infrastructure. The omissions identified here render the EIAR deficient and the application materially incomplete

The L5025 is a critical component of the proposed site access and haulage route, especially for general construction traffic.

Some junctions involving the L5025 were considered tight or constrained, requiring potential verge trimming, sign relocation, and/or visibility improvements.

The Route Survey Report (Appendix 13.1) includes the L5025 as part of the Turbine Delivery Route (TDR) to reach the southern and northern parts of the site.

The Road Safety Audit (Appendix 13.4) also refers to potential risks on local roads like the L5025, although detailed RSA findings are summarised but not fully disclosed.

The EIAR proposes the L5025 local road as the main construction access route for the wind farm and substation development. However, this route is clearly unsuitable for sustained, large-scale HGV traffic for the following reasons:

The L5025 is a narrow rural local road, not designed for frequent or oversized vehicle movements- It lacks hard shoulders, formal footpaths, or adequate lighting. There are tight bends and poor sightlines along several sections, especially near residential entrances, laneways, and agricultural accesses.

No detail is provided regarding road strengthening, verge protection, or lay-by provision for HGV passing.

These limitations create a serious risk of conflict between HGVs and local residents, farm machinery, school buses, and vulnerable road users such as pedestrians and cyclists.

Creates serious safety hazards for children and elderly residents using the road for local access,

Introduces dust, noise, and vibration pollution in close proximity to private homes, and

Is likely to result in verge erosion, road edge degradation, and potential obstruction to emergency vehicles.

Despite these risks, the EIAR does not provide a full safety assessment or independent audit of the L5025's capacity to accommodate sustained construction traffic volumes

While the EIAR mentions a Road Safety Audit and visibility assessment (Appendices 13.3 and 13.4), it;

Fails to provide concrete upgrade measures (e.g. verge widening, traffic calming, local signage, pedestrian buffers), and fails to provide consent details from any of the affected landowners / home owners along the route who will be impacted

Postpones key decisions until after consent, stating that haul routes and traffic measures will be "agreed with KCC following contractor appointment."

The L5025 is not only a construction route but is proposed as a long-term access route for turbine component replacement over the lifetime of the development. This implies that:

Future heavy or abnormal load deliveries could be **reintroduced at short notice**, causing **repeated disruption** to residents,

The long-term safety and structural integrity of the L5025 may be compromised

The proposal to use the L5025 — a narrow, rural local road — as the primary construction access route without any confirmed mitigation, upgrades, or community safeguards is entirely inadequate and unsafe. The risk to residents and road users is unacceptable and the planning authority has a duty to uphold basic safety and planning principles in its assessment of this application

Approving a project where the key access and delivery infrastructure is undefined would amount to a "project split" – the unlawful segmentation of a development to avoid assessing cumulative and specific impacts.

Cultural Heritage

We have compared the files from both applications ABP 322845 & ABP 322843) The main (wind farm) file evaluates impacts across a wide geographical area (several km radius for wind farm + infrastructure), while the substation file focuses on a much smaller, immediate footprint and excludes any broader cultural heritage landscape assessment

Omissions in substation version –

Most descriptions, baseline environment details, and assessments for the wind farm area.

References to turbines, access tracks, and recreational trail.

Tables and figures relating to wind farm–specific heritage features.

Photomontages, except where they are relevant to the substation.

Cumulative impact assessment for the wind farm

Carbury Hill Complex (National Monument, RMP multi-period site)

Very High sensitivity due to legal protection, rarity, and historical importance. Significant setting impact from visibility of turbines, especially from VP13 (photomontage) showing turbines on skyline behind the site. Change to visual dominance and intervisibility with surrounding historic landscape (including Newbury Hall). Risk to heritage significance from altered vistas and sight-lines integral to the monument's value.

The proposed development will cause a significant adverse setting impact on the Carbury Hill Complex, as acknowledged in EIAR Chapter 14 (VP13), where turbines are visible on the skyline behind the monument. This National Monument's significance derives from its commanding views and insensibility with other heritage assets, including Newbury Hall. The EIAR confirms that turbines will alter historic vistas and sight-lines integral to the monument's cultural value. Such intrusion is contrary to the statutory presumption in favour of protection in situ and breaches Kildare County Development Plan 2023–2029, Policies BH1, BH3, and BH4, which require protection of the setting of National Monuments from inappropriate development.

Newbury Hall House (Protected Structure RPS B08-10) RPS protected structure.

Associated with the designed landscape of Carbury Hill. High sensitivity due to statutory protection and setting context. Visual intrusion from turbines in key approach views (VP15). Detracts from historic designed relationship between house and Carbury Hill.

EIAR photomontage VP15 confirms that the proposed turbines will intrude into the approach views towards Newbury Hall, a Protected Structure (RPS B08-10), thereby undermining the designed relationship between the house and the Carbury Hill landscape. This is an adverse setting impact on a structure of High sensitivity. Policy BH5 of the County Development Plan requires that the character and setting of Protected Structures be safeguarded, and the EIAR fails to demonstrate that such protection can be achieved.

Mulgeeth Ringfort & Habitation Site (RMP KD004-011 & KD004-010)

Recorded Monuments (early medieval) within 300–400 m of proposed turbine T10. High sensitivity for archaeological potential and intactness. Risk of direct physical impact if access tracks or cabling extend into monument's buffer. Change to setting and historic landscape character; turbines could visually dominate low-profile earthworks.

Turbine T10 is located within approximately 300–400 m of these monuments, with associated access tracks and cable routes in close proximity (Appendix 14.5.2.1). The EIAR acknowledges potential direct physical impacts if buffer zones are encroached, and also admits to setting impacts from visual dominance. The precautionary principle requires avoidance of all ground works within statutory buffer zones, yet the design does not guarantee this. This contravenes National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994, Section 12 and the protection requirements under the Historic and Archaeological Heritage and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2023.

Coolree Ringforts (RMP KD004-008 & KD004-009) Early medieval ring-forts, well-preserved in pastoral landscape.

High sensitivity due to rarity and intactness. Ground disturbance risk from nearby infrastructure. Visual impact from turbines altering rural backdrop.

The EIAR (Appendix 14.5.2.2) identifies risk of construction-phase ground disturbance from associated infrastructure and admits to operational visual setting impacts due to turbine prominence in an otherwise unaltered rural backdrop. The proposal would diminish the legibility of these monuments within their historic setting, contrary to EPA EIAR Guidelines (2022) which require avoidance of significant setting impacts where feasible.

Ballynamullagh Ringfort (RMP KD008-010) Recorded Monument within the wider wind farm area.

High sensitivity due to survival and prominence. Turbine visibility altering historic setting. Potential setting impact compounded by cumulative wind farm visibility.

The EIAR acknowledges operational phase visual intrusion from turbines into the setting of Ballynamullagh Ringfort (Appendix 14.5.2.3), with potential cumulative effects from other wind farms. Such impacts erode the historic rural character and are inconsistent with Kildare CDP Policy BH7, which seeks to protect archaeological monuments and their settings from inappropriate development.

Dunfierth Medieval Church & Graveyard (RMP KD004-005001-003)

Medieval church ruins and graveyard; "site of" adjacent castle (KD004-006). High sensitivity due to religious, architectural, and historical value. Turbine blades visible from within graveyard changing spiritual and contemplative character. Cumulative impact with other modern intrusions in views.

The EIAR includes photographic evidence (Appendix 14.5.2.4) showing turbines visible from within the graveyard, altering the spiritual and contemplative setting of this medieval site. This constitutes a significant adverse setting impact, incompatible with Article 5 of the Granada Convention (1985) and the Heritage Council's Historic Landscape Characterisation Best Practice Guidance (2013), both referenced in Appendix 14.1.

Metcalfe Park House, Walls & Gates (RPS B04-017)

Protected structure with designed demesne landscape. High sensitivity for setting and designed vistas. Turbines visible in designed views, undermining historic aesthetic.

The EIAR includes photographic evidence (Appendix 14.5.2.4) showing turbines visible from within the graveyard, altering the spiritual and contemplative setting of this medieval site. This constitutes a significant adverse setting impact, incompatible with Article 5 of the

Granada Convention (1985) and the Heritage Council's Historic Landscape Characterisation Best Practice Guidance (2013), both referenced in Appendix 14.1.

The EIAR repeatedly acknowledges that these assets have High or Very High sensitivity and that visual setting changes from turbines are the most significant impact type.

For Carbury Hill and Newbury Hall, there is direct photomontage evidence showing altered historic vistas.

For ringforts and Dunfierth Church, there is proximity data indicating that setting impacts will be noticeable and possibly cumulative with other wind farms.

Some assets (e.g., Mulgeeth Ringfort) are close enough to risk both physical and setting impacts, which strengthens arguments about the insufficiency of mitigation.

The applicant's own EIAR confirms that the proposed development will cause irreversible adverse effects to the setting of multiple High and Very High sensitivity heritage assets, including a National Monument and numerous Protected and Recorded Monuments. These impacts are permanent, cannot be fully mitigated, and are contrary to both statutory protection requirements and adopted planning policy.

On this basis, the application should be refused in order to protect the cultural heritage of County Kildare in accordance with national legislation, international obligations, and the Kildare County Development Plan 2023–2029

Landscape and Visual

Landscape and Visual Wind farm (322845)and Chapter 15 Landscape and Visual substation (322843)**are not identica**l.

The wind farm version has more photomontages, while the substation version uses a reduced set of Viewpoints and focuses on the visual impact of the substation building and associated infrastructure

This chapter suggests that it assesses how the proposed Drehid Wind Farm and substation will affect the landscape character and visual amenity of the surrounding area, both individually and cumulatively with other developments.The main chapter outlines the methodology, baseline, policy context, and general impact conclusions, while the appendix provides granular, site-specific visual assessments supporting those conclusions. Both documents frame the wind farm's visual/landscape effects as locally noticeable but mostly moderate-to-slight in planning significance, with strongest impacts in nearby open viewpoints.

They suggest that the viewpoint analysis in Appendix 15 shows that most locations around the proposed Drehid Wind Farm would experience low to medium-low magnitude visual change, with impacts generally classed as slight to moderate-slight and long-term in nature. The most pronounced effects occur at closer or more open viewpoints such as Coolrea (VP8), Kilshanroe (VP10), and elevated positions like Grange (VP4) and Newtown Hills

(VP6), where turbines appear co-dominant or occasionally dominant in the scene. However, these stronger views are limited in geographic extent. Many viewpoints, including Enfield (VP2), Longwood (VP1), Ballnamullagh (VP11), and Mucklon (VP12), are either screened by vegetation or part of more complex/anthropogenic vistas, resulting in negligible or slight effects. Overall, the LVIA frames significant visual change as localised, with the majority of the study area experiencing filtered, partial, or distant views that limit visual prominence

The EIAR and appendix are written in a way that downplays how visible the turbines will be, even though the evidence in their own documents actually supports the opposite conclusion.

The developer's Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment seeks to present the proposed 167–169 metre turbines as having limited visual effects, despite the flat, open nature of the receiving environment making such structures inherently prominent over long distances. This relies heavily on screening from vegetation and built form, but this is overstated.

On flat peatland and farmland, 169 m turbines will break the skyline from many kilometres away. Even the LVIA's own photomontages show blade tips and towers clearly above tree lines and settlement backdrops. Screening by hedgerows or deciduous trees will be ineffective for much of the year, and only partial screening in summer

They state that most impacts as "slight" or "moderate-slight," yet its own viewpoint descriptions (VP4 Grange, VP6 Newtown Hills, VP8 Coolrea, VP10 Kilshanroe) admit turbines will be "dominant" or "co-dominant" in the scene, visible in clear and legible form across the rural plains. These represent significant, long-term changes to valued views, not marginal effects

They Suggest that visitors may not notice wind farms. This is irrelevant to local residents who will have unavoidable, daily exposure to these turbines, including from their homes, workplaces, and along local transport routes. For these receptors, visibility is not fleeting and impacts are far from imperceptible

Here are developer statements from the Appendix 15 Landscape & Visual that actually acknowledge the turbines will be highly visible, even though they try to downplay significance:

VP1 Longwood – "Around half of the proposed turbines will be partially visible… rising intermittently within the winter tree tops…"

VP3 M4 Motorway Ballyvoneen – "The proposed turbines can be seen at a relatively prominent scale… within the focus of the view… co-dominant to sub-dominant…"

VP4 Grange – "The proposed turbines are fully revealed… will still be a relatively prominent and distinctive feature of the view… co-dominant to sub-dominant."

VP5 Johnstown Bridge – "The blade sets of the nearest three proposed turbines will rise above houses and trees… a distinctive feature of the view…"

VP6 Newtown Hills – "All of the proposed turbines are visible… turbines are considered to have a co-dominant visual presence… strongly legible view."

VP7 Cadamstown – "Turbines… distinctive features of this otherwise typical rural scene… partial blade sets… generate a small degree of visual irritation…"

VP8 Coolrea – "Three nearest turbines… visible… the most distinctive feature of this typical rural setting… visual presence is deemed to be dominant."

VP9 Knockanally – "The proposed turbines are all visible… full blade sets generally revealed… distinctive feature… co-dominant."

VP10 Kilshanroe – "One of the proposed turbines is openly visible… turbines present at a prominent… scale… co-dominant… intensification of built development…"

VP11 Ballnamullagh – "But for the hedgerow, the turbines would be seen at a prominent scale…"

VP12 Mucklon – "Turbine blades… seen at a noticeable scale…"

These admissions undermine the "*slight*" or "*imperceptible*" classifications and confirm that the developer's own evidence recognizes clear visibility, prominence, and dominance in multiple locations.

The applicant's own EIAR confirms that the proposed development will cause irreversible adverse effects to the setting of multiple High and Very High sensitivity heritage assets, including a National Monument and numerous Protected and Recorded Monuments. These impacts are permanent, cannot be fully mitigated, and are contrary to both statutory protection requirements and adopted planning policy.

Telecoms and Aviation

Both Chapter 16 files were compared - The one from the Wind farm application (322845) and from the Substation (322843). The "substation" version has been updated to explicitly reference both the Proposed Wind Farm and the Proposed Substation throughout the text, rather than only the wind farm. This includes changes in the introduction, methodology, consultation summaries, and assessment sections

The "substation" version is a revised, broader-scope update of the original chapter, incorporating the substation into all assessments, adding 2024 consultation updates, and reflecting some design and operator changes These sections are suppose to address how the proposed wind farm and substation might affect telecommunications (TV, radio, mobile networks, broadband links) and aviation operations (radar, flight paths, airfields). · Consult all known telecom operators in the area.

Map all telecom links/masts and compare with turbine locations.Apply recommended buffer distances (e.g., 100 m for some operators, 300 m for ESB Telecoms). Relocate turbines where possible to avoid interference and where relocation is not possible, agree mitigation with operators

Wind turbines can affect: Primary and secondary radar systems (causing clutter or false returns), Aircraft navigation aids and Flight safety near airfields. Tall structures also need to be marked and lit for aviation safety

The EIAR relies heavily on operator cooperation and pre-construction surveys — actual impacts will only be confirmed later.

Several consultees gave no response, meaning the assessment assumes no issues without confirmation.

The commitments (e.g., to fund mitigation) are not backed by binding timelines in this chapter — enforcement will depend on planning conditions.

Aviation safety compliance is based on standard protocols, but specifics (e.g., lighting intensity, colour) will be determined later by IAA

Deferral of Decisions –

Many mitigation steps (Eir, ESB Telecoms, Netshare, radar) are left for post-consent pre-construction analysis.

Once permission is granted, pressure to avoid costly re-siting or extensive works.

No Binding Timeframes – EIAR does not fix deadlines for pre-construction reviews or for implementing mitigation, which could delay action.

Dependence on Third-Party Cooperation – Assumes telecoms/aviation bodies will engage promptly and agree solutions, but no fallback if they do not.

Omissions from Non-Responses – The EIAR treats a lack of reply from some consultees as absence of impact

Protocol and Study Confidentiality – Key mitigation documents (2RN Protocol, Netshare Impact Study) are not reproduced in full, so the public cannot verify adequacy.

The EIAR repeatedly defers identification and confirmation of mitigation measures until after planning permission is granted, contingent on pre-construction reviews by telecom and aviation stakeholders. For example:

Eir — mitigation near T9 to be agreed "prior to construction" based on Eir's review.

ESB Telecoms — JRC diffraction analysis and possible fibre installation only after consent.

2RN — Protocol signed, but contents undisclosed and unenforceable by the planning authority.

Such deferral conflicts with the requirement under Article 5 of Directive 2014/52/EU for the EIAR to include "a description of the measures envisaged to avoid, prevent or reduce and, if possible, offset" significant adverse effects before consent.

No statutory timelines are proposed for:

Completing pre-construction telecom interference reviews.

Implementing agreed mitigation before turbine erection.

Re-assessment during operation as networks evolve.

This omission risks turbines becoming operational without mitigation in place, contrary to Section 34(4) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), which requires that conditions are precise and enforceable

Incomplete Consultation with the assumption of No Impact
Numerous consultees (e.g., Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, ComReg, Viatel, Digiweb) provided no response. The EIAR presumes this means no impact, without independent verification of infrastructure locations or rights. This is contrary to the Department's 2006 Wind Energy Development Guidelines, Section 5.10, which require proactive identification of all potentially affected operators.

Aviation Mitigation is Reactive rather than Proactive and Incomplete
Obstacle lighting, radar mitigation, and airfield safeguarding measures are left to be determined "if required" by the Irish Aviation Authority post-consent. The EIAR contains no modelling results for radar clutter, no lighting specifications, and no binding commitments to implement protective measures during construction crane use. This is inadequate under ICAO Annex 14 and the IAA's own obstacle lighting requirements

The EIAR references the 2RN Protocol Agreement and Netshare Impact Study but does not make these available for public or planning authority review. This prevents verification of whether the measures are proportionate, achievable, or enforceable

The EIAR acknowledges rapid evolution of telecom networks (migration to 4G/5G, new masts/links) but provides no mechanism for review or adaptation of mitigation during the wind farm's operational lifespan. This risks future interference remaining unresolved due to absence of a binding operational monitoring and mitigation protocol.

Failure to address these points would be inconsistent with EU and national EIA law, planning best practice, and the precautionary principle

For residents working from home, this creates significant risks:

Service instability — intermittent dropouts in broadband or mobile data can interrupt video calls, disrupt remote meetings, and reduce productivity.

Latency spikes — interference may cause delays in real-time applications such as VoIP, remote desktop access, and cloud-based software.

Loss of redundancy — if one connection type (e.g., fixed wireless) is degraded, alternatives may not be available in rural areas, causing prolonged outages.

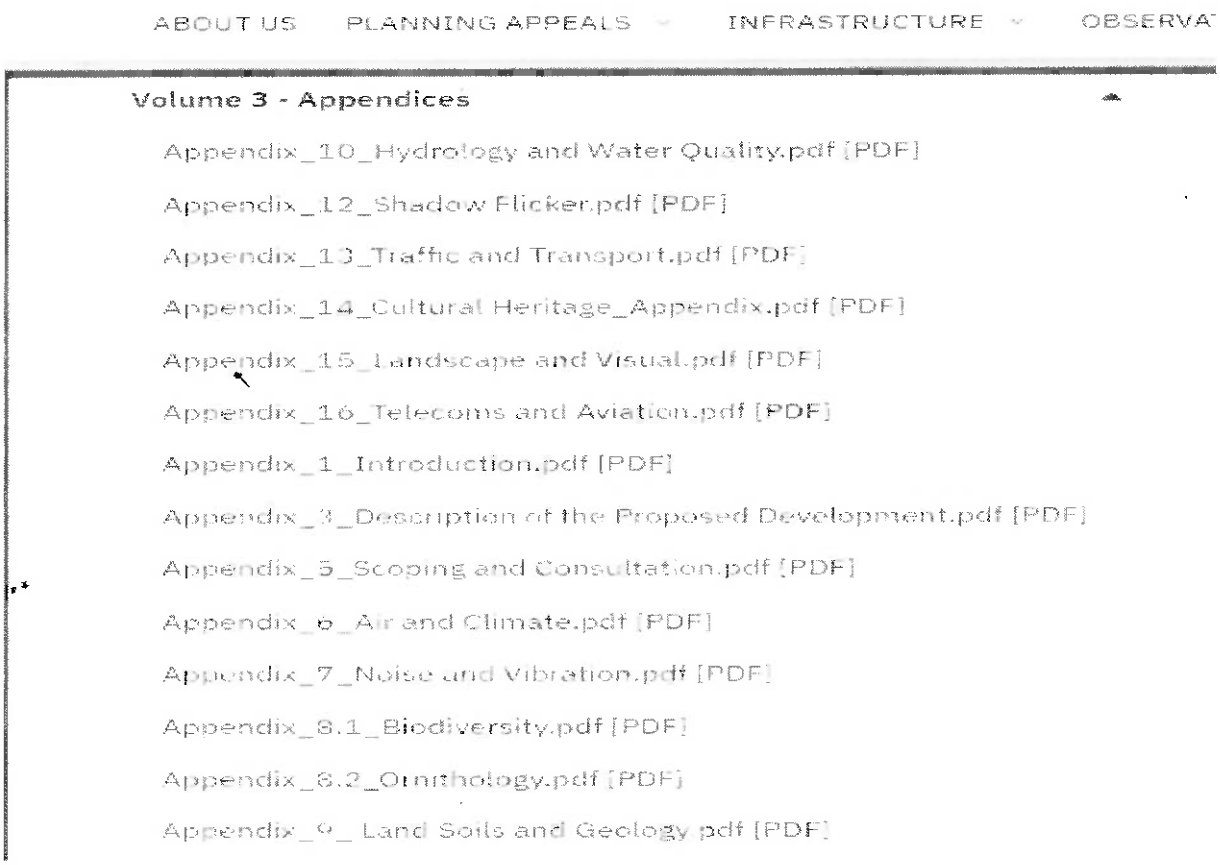
Economic harm — prolonged interference could affect residents' ability to meet work obligations, impacting livelihoods and potentially breaching employers' service level agreements for remote work.

Given the increasing prevalence of home working, reliable telecommunications are now a core component of rural residential amenity. The current EIAR does not provide binding safeguards to ensure these services will remain uninterrupted for the 25–30 year operational period of the wind farm

Reliable communications are now essential infrastructure for rural living. Without binding pre-construction safeguards, the Drehid Wind Farm could undermine internet and mobile service for residents and businesses for decades. Planning consent should not be granted until these risks are fully assessed, publicly documented, and backed by enforceable conditions.

Interactions of the Foregoing

No Appendix 17 submitted - Not available to compare / check



We compared Chapter 17 – Interactions of the Foregoing (substation) with Chapter 17 – Interactions of the Foregoing (Wind farm) and they are identical in content

The EIAR claims that interactions were addressed via turbine layout design, avoidance strategies, and targeted mitigation to minimize cumulative or combined effects. Examines how different environmental effects from the proposed wind farm and substation interact or combine, potentially amplifying or reducing impacts.

The "Interactions" chapter functions more as a checklist than a rigorous integrated impact assessment. It identifies potential interactions but does not adequately quantify them, model worst-case scenarios, or address the real-world combined experience of environmental impacts on local communities, biodiversity, and heritage assets. The repeated reliance on unspecified or generic mitigation—without binding, enforceable, and independently verifiable measures—means the analysis cannot be considered robust under EIA requirements.

The Environmental Impact Assessment Report's treatment of interactions between environmental effects (Chapter 17) is inadequate and fails to meet the requirements of the EIA Directive (2011/92/EU as amended by 2014/52/EU) and corresponding legislation. While the chapter identifies potential interactions (e.g., noise, shadow flicker, visual intrusion; drainage alterations and peat stability; traffic and water quality), it repeatedly concludes that no significant residual effects will occur after mitigation without providing robust, site-specific evidence of the effectiveness of these measures. The mitigation proposals are generic, lack quantified performance standards, and are not accompanied by enforceable monitoring or compliance mechanisms.

The assessment significantly underestimates cumulative and synergistic impacts on local residents, biodiversity, water quality, and cultural heritage by addressing topics in isolation and dismissing the combined experience of multiple concurrent disturbances without modelling or empirical support. There is no worst-case scenario testing for peat stability and drainage under extreme weather or climate change conditions, despite clear hydrological and slope stability risks to sensitive habitats and downstream receptors.

In addition, traffic-related safety hazards, including the interaction of soil/dust migration with winter road conditions, are omitted from consideration, and the analysis of visual, landscape, and cultural heritage impacts fails to address the prolonged time lag before mitigation planting becomes effective. Assertions that aviation and telecommunication impacts are "unlikely" are unsupported by independent technical evidence or confirmed agreements.

This chapter does not provide a robust basis for concluding that the Proposed Development will avoid significant combined or cumulative environmental effects. These shortcomings render the EIAR deficient under the requirement to assess "the interaction between the factors" as set out in Annex IV of the EIA Directive, and undermine the validity of any planning decision based on it.

The developer has not explicitly shown clear compliance with the specific requirements of the following:

Wind Energy Development Guidelines (2006, Draft 2019 update)

EPA Guidelines on the Information to be Contained in EIAR (2022)

National Planning Framework (NPF)

Kildare County Development Plan

Relevant EU Directives (EIA Directive, Habitats Directive)

Given the above concerns — including residual ecological risk, landscape degradation, flawed cumulative assessment, and unenforceable mitigation — the proposed Drehid Substation is contrary to:

The Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC),

The Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended),

The Kildare County Development Plan 2023–2029

a) The Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) – Article 6(3)

Under Article 6(3), a project can only proceed if it can be shown, beyond reasonable scientific doubt, that it will not adversely affect the integrity of a European site.

The Natura Impact Statement fails to definitively rule out significant effects on the River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC and SPA, particularly concerning Whooper Swan collision risk, watercourse pollution, and hydrological impacts.

The reliance on mitigation and uncertainty in key areas (e.g., species use of agricultural fields, degraded hydrology, cumulative effects) breaches the precautionary principle enshrined in Article 6(3).

Therefore, the proposal is non-compliant with the Habitats Directive as the risk to Natura 2000 site integrity cannot be confidently excluded

b) The Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended)

Section 34(2): Planning decisions must have regard to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. The project undermines this by:

Causing landscape degradation in an area not designated for strategic wind development.

Presenting unresolved ecological risks in a sensitive catchment.

Section 10(2)(c): Requires protection of the environment, including European sites. The development conflicts with this by placing undue risk on European sites and protected species within the zone of influence.

The development, by threatening ecological integrity and undermining sustainable development principles, conflicts with the Act's objectives

c) The Kildare County Development Plan 2023–2029

Policy NH 1.1: Protect and conserve designated European Sites and avoid any project likely to have a significant adverse effect on site integrity. The NIS does not eliminate this risk.

Policy NH 1.5: Apply a precautionary approach where there is uncertainty. The residual uncertainties around species impact, invasive species, and hydrology violate this principle.

Table 13.4 – Landscape Sensitivity Factors: The development occurs in "Flat Peatland" and "Lowland Farmland" areas which are assessed as less compatible with large-scale wind development

This application relies on mitigation measures to rule out significant environmental effects at the screening stage, this would contravene CJEU C-323/17 (People Over Wind). Mitigation cannot lawfully be considered during EIA or AA screening.

Furthermore, under C-258/11 (Sweetman), the Environmental or Natura Impact Assessments must contain complete, precise, and definitive findings, leaving no reasonable scientific doubt. The application must show robust evidence that impacts—particularly from access roads or hydrological interventions—have been assessed in accordance with this standard.

A Limited Felling Licence may be required from the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine. Two Limited Felling Licence must be applied for: 1) to cover turbine bases, roads, buildings and 2) to cover the area on which turbulence felling will take place, if required.16 The LFL applicant may be required to carry out replacement planting at an alternative site in their ownership as a condition of the licence- I don't see any reference to a licence being applied for / nor granted

An Coimisiún Pleanála must independently assess and agree that mitigation is sufficient and precise, with no lacunae in evidence

Under CJEU C-258/11 , mitigation must remove all reasonable scientific doubt. In this case, that standard may not be met given the limited detail and evidentiary support for mitigation effectiveness.

The NIS does rely on mitigation to reach its conclusion of no adverse effect.

Offshore wind and brownfield renewable options were dismissed with insufficient technical justification.

The "Do-Nothing" scenario is treated superficially despite being a legally required baseline.

Alternative layouts were largely driven by internal design convenience rather than environmental optimization.

The risk of run-off, sedimentation, and peat instability is not adequately mitigated. This could lead to deterioration in water quality or status in connected rivers or bogs, in breach of EU law.

Given the legal deficiencies and risks outlined above, we respectfully request that permission be refused for ABP-322843 under the Planning and Development Act and associated EU Directives and that the Board ensures full compliance with EU and national law, particularly in relation to public rights under the Aarhus Convention

We trust that the issues highlighted herein, sufficiently clarifies the position of the local community. It follows that we request the Planning Authority to dismiss the current proposal by *North Kildare Wind Farm Ltd. / Statkraft*. Moreover, having regard to the deficiencies and risks outlined above, we respectfully request that permission be refused for ABP-322843 under the Planning and Development Act and associated EU Directives, also that the Board ensures full compliance with EU and national law, particularly in relation to public rights under the Aarhus Convention

We are aware that numerous other submissions and reports are also being submitted by or on behalf of other groups including *Friends of the Irish Environment*, *Mr. Kieran Cummins*, *Eco Advocacy*, *John Dooley/Val Martin* and others. We hereby adopt all of these other submissions as part of our submission.

Having regard to the foregoing, the proposed development is therefore considered wholly incompatible to this area and we would request that An Coimisiún Pleanála should therefore REFUSE the proposed project

Yours sincerely,

Lorraine Quinn & Others (Community members listed below)

I / We wish to be included in the community submission under the guidance of Eco Advocacy (Kieran Cummins / Lorraine Quinn) to highlight our concerns and object against the following application for a 110 KV substation as part of The North Kildare Wind farm - An Bord Pleanála reference number 322843

Print Name	Address	Signature
Archie Griffith	Drehid, Carbury Co. Kildare	A. Griffith
Ayda Heavey	Drehid, Carbury Co. Kildare	A. Heavey
MEADBH.QUINN	Drehid CO. Kildare	Meadbh Q
BENNAN Quinn	Drehid carbury Co Kildare	
Angela Quinn	Drehid Co Kildare	Angela Quinn
ODHRAN QUINN	Drehid co. Kildare	Odhran. Q
Mark Q	Drehid Carbury Co Kildare	Mark Q
Gladys Farrelly (Fred.)	Pusser Drehid	
Lorraine Quinn	Drehid	[illegible]

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Print Name	Address	Signature
Liz Carter	Drehid Carbury Kildare	Liz Carter
Derek Carter	Drehid Carbury	
James Carter	Drehid Carbury	J. Carter
Eamon Coyne	Drehid Carbury	E. Coyne
Cathy Coyne	Drehid Carbury	C Coyne
Hannah Carter	Drehid Carbury	Hannah Carter
Emma Carter	Drehid Carbury	Emma Carter
Elissa Carter	Drehid Carbury	Elissa Carter
ELLIE KEENAN	COLLINSTOWN, CARBURY	Ellie Keenan
COLM KEENAN	COLLINSTOWN, CARBURY	C. Keenan
Claire Kerrigan	Clonkeeran	C.
Owen Kavanagh	Killyon	
Marie Kavanagh	Killyon	Marie Kavanagh
Sean Kavanagh	Killyon	

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Print Name	Address	Signature
ROBERT HEAVEY	DREIDH CARBURY	Robert Heavey
AMY LENEHAN	DREHID, CARBURY, CO. KILDARE	Amy Lenehan.
EDWARD LENEHAN	DREHID CARBURY CO. KILDARE	Edward Lenehan
BERNIE REDMOND	Drehid	Bernie Redmond
Eddie HANGAN	Drehid	Eddie Mangan
Biddy MANGAN	Drehid	Biddy Mangan
Pauline Mannion	Drehid	
Nigel Heavey	Drehid	N. Heavey
Kaylea Heavey	Drehid	K. Heavey
Charlie Heavey	Drehid	C. Heavey
Shannon Curley	Drehid	S. Curley
Eoin Lenehan	Drehid	Eoin Lenehan
John Dunne	Drehid Carbury	
Mary Dunne		
Libbie gannon	Drehid	
peter gannon	Drehid	
RITA Mc CARTHY LENEHAN	DREHID	Rita Mc Carthy Lenehan

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Print Name	Address	Signature
Patrick Quinn	Drehid	Patrick Quinn
Edward Lenehan	Drehid	Edward Lenehan
LINDA WRIGHT	CARBURY	Linda Wright
TIM WRIGHT	CARBURY	Tim Wright
Laura Quinn	Drehid	
Stephen Holland	J.T.B	
Paul O'Brien	Williamstown	

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Print Name	Address	Signature
HELEN MAHON	11. Kilmurray Brook Kilshanroe	Helen Mahon
Anthony Mahon	"	Anthony Mahon
Ken Dixon	Kilmurray Ented	Ken Dixon
Siobhan Kearney	" "	Siobhan Kearney
Michael Dixon	- -	Michael Dixon
Lauren Dixon	" "	Lauren Dixon
PAUL BURDETT	RAVENS LODGE, KILMURRAY, JOHNSTOWNBRIDGE, A83C981	P. Burdett
LISA BURDETT	" "	L Burdett
CONOR BURDETT	" "	Conor Burdett
SENAN BURDETT	" "	Senan Burdett
GAVIN NICHOLSON	6 OLD HOLLOW PARK	[illegible]
SANDRA NICHOLSON	KILSHANROE	Sandra Nicholson
LUKE NICHOLSON	"	LUKE NICHOLSON
ANDREW NICHOLSON.	"	Andrew Nicholson
ROBYN NICHOLSON	"	Robyn Nicholson

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Print Name	Address	Signature
SEAN SINNOTT	MUCKLON	
IMELDA CAWLEY	MUCKLON	
SEAN CAWLEY	MUCKLON	
SAOIRSE CAWLEY	MUCKLON	
SEÁNÓG CAWLEY	MUCKLON	
COLM CAWLEY	MUCKLON	
AJ CAWLEY	MUCKLON	

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Print Name	Address	Signature
PETER CLIFFORD	KILMURRAY Brook	Peter Clifford
MICHAEL SALLEY	CADAMSTOWN	Michael Salley
PATRICK SALLEY	CADAMSTOWN	
NIGEL QUINN	Drehid, Carbury, Co. Kildare	
Mary Haines	Kilshanroe	
Derek Haines	Kilshanroe	
David Haines	Kilshanroe	

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Print Name	Address	Signature
PAUL O'BRIEN	WILLIAMSTOWN	Paul O'Brien
Christopher & Fiona Hillen	BALLYNAMULLEN Enfield	Christopher W Klen
CYRIL & MARY REGAN	CLOONA ENFIELD CO. KILDARE	Cyril Regan
NINA PATTERSON	CLOONA ENFIELD CO KILDARE	Nina
FERGAL McKEOGH	CLOONA ENFIELD CO KILDARE	Fergal McKeogh.
Gerry Grogan	Cloona Enfield Kildare	Gerry Grogan
JASON BYRNE	Orchid	[illegible]
Emily Doyle	Orchid	Emily Doyle
Grace BYRNE	Orchid	Grace Byrne
Rose Byrne	Orchid	Rose Byrne
Linda Murphy	Kilshanroe	[illegible]
Ursula Murphy	Kilshanroe	Ursula Murphy
Alan Dolhly	Kilmurray	[illegible]

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Print Name	Address	Signature
CHARLAINE COOKE	COOLTRIM DONADEA	Charlaine Cooke
STEPHEN O FLAHERTY	COOLTRIM DONADEA	[illegible]
ANGELA KEENAGHAN	Coolree, Johnstownbridge	[illegible]
Declan Keenaghan	COOLREE, JOHNSTOWNBRIDGE	D Keen[illegible]
Eileen Cawley	Mucklon	E. Cawley
Geraldine ENNIS	Killyon Johnstownbridge	G Ennis
THOMAS SYNNOTT	DUNFIERTY	[illegible]
	Carbury	Michael Brennan
	Trelough.	Susan O'Brien
	Williamstown	Sile O'Brien

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Print Name	Address	Signature
LYNN GRADY	Kilmurray, Enfield	Lynn Grady.
DECLAN GRADY	Kilmurray, Enfield	Declan Grady
ROSEANN TRAYNOR	MUCKLON	Roseann Traynor
OLIVE HUGHES	MUCKLON	Olive Hughes.
ALAN HUGHES	MUCKLON	Alan Hughes
PHILIP BRADY	KILMURRAY	
PATRICIA BRADY	KILMURRAY	
SEAN and FRANCES BOURKE	CLOONA	
JOAN/COLIN DAWSON	CLOONA	
Caroline Greville	Kilmurray	
Jack Costello	Kilmurray	
Ciaran Costello	Kilmurray	
Eibhlin Costello	Kilmurray	
Albert Greville	Kilmurray	
Avril McLoughlin	Kilmurray	

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Print Name	Address	Signature
William Gannon	Coolree	Dympna Gannon
Padraig Higgins	Thomastown	P Higgins
COLIN COLEMAN	KILLYON	Colin Coleman.
FERDIA COLEMAN	KILLYON	Ferdia Coleman.
Pat Mullally	BALLINAMULLAGH	Pat Mullally
CATHERINE COFFEY	Kilmurray Brook	Catherine Coffey
Damien COFFEY	Kilmurray Brook	
MELISSA COFFEY	Kilmurray Brook	Mel Coffey
Jason COFFEY	Kilmurray Brook	
Ciaran Heavey	Kilmurray Brook	Ciaran Heavey
Lorna Heavey	Kilmurray Brook	Lorna Heavey
Jack Heavey	Kilmurray Brook	Jack Heavey
Millie Heavey	Kilmurray Brook	Millie Heavey
Ron McDonnell	Kilmurray Brook	Ron McDonnell
Sue Tierney	Kilmurray Brook	Sue Tierney

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Print Name	Address	Signature
Padraig Sheridan	Mucklon	Padraig Sheridan
[illegible] Walsh	[illegible]	[illegible]
Pat Dempsey	Kilshanroe	Pat Dempsey
Kathleen Dempsey	Kilshanroe	Kathleen Dempsey
Pádraig Brophy	Kilmurry	P. Brophy
Mary Sheegar	Killyon Dunfirth	[illegible]
Peter O'Neill	Killyon, Dunfirth	[illegible]
Patricia Byrne	Girteen, Enfield	[illegible]
ANN-MARIE LANGAN	Killyon, Dunfirth	Ann-Marie Langan
MICHAEL LANGAN	CLONKEERAN GARBURY	[illegible]
Willie Bell	[illegible] Garbey	W Bell
LOUIS ROBINSON	CONKEERAN GARBURY	Louis Robinson
Chris Mullally	[illegible]	[illegible]
Margaret Clarke	Coolree	Dympna Clarke
Dympna Clark	Coolree	Dympna Clarke

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Print Name	Address	Signature
SEAN + Siobhán Sullivan	CLOONA, ENFIELD	Sean + Siobhán Sullivan
EDDIE M'NALL	Drehid Carbury	[illegible]
Seán Keenan	Drehid Carbury	[illegible]
SEAMUS LANIGAN		[illegible]
STUART FAIRCLOUGH	Hermitage Johnstownbridge	[illegible]
MARTIN SHEEGAR	Gurteen	Martin Sheegar
[illegible]		
BARRY O'REILLY + AEDAMAR	Kilmurray	Barry O'Reilly