



An
Coimisiún
Pleanála

Record of Meeting ACP-323296-25

Case Reference / Description	Proposed development of 11 no. turbine wind farm located in Raheenakeeran, Enaghan, Clonsast Upper, Clonsast Lower, Cushina (Ballyshear E.D), Cushina (Bracknagh E.D) and other townlands in County Offaly.		
Case Type	Pre-application consultation		
1st / 2nd / 3rd / 4th Meeting	3 rd Meeting		
Date	20 July 2026	Start Time	2:30pm
Location	MS Teams	End Time	4:05pm

Representing An Coimisiún Pleanála
Stephen Kay (Assistant Planning Director) Chair
Heidi Thorsdalen (Senior Planning Inspector)
Maeve Flynn (Senior Ecologist)
Finbarr Quigley (Senior Environmental Scientist)
Ellen Moss (Executive Officer)

Representing the Prospective Applicant
David Broderick – Hydro Environmental Services
Jenny Kiely – APEM
John Ball – APEM
Richard Carter – Bow Acoustics
Bláithín Rafferty – Galetch Energy Services
Simon Carleton – Galetch Energy Services
James Carville – Cushina Wind Limited

Introduction

The Commission's representatives referred to the correspondence received from the prospective applicant requesting this third meeting and to the first meeting held on 3rd November 2025 and the second meeting held on 19th March 2026.

The Commission's representatives also mentioned the general procedures for the pre-application consultation process referenced at the first meeting and recorded in the record of the first meeting held on 5th November, 2025 which remain applicable.

Presentation made by the prospective applicant:

The prospective applicant set out their presentation, which is on the file.

Discussion:

Update on Development Proposal/Development Description

- The Commission's representatives queried whether the road junction in County Galway, where the removal of a wall and fence are required, is signalised and whether such works would require temporary removal of traffic lights. The prospective applicant advised that these traffic lights are intended to be removed and that consultation is ongoing with Galway County Council. It is intended that a meeting will be held with Galway County Council roads department prior to the application being submitted.
- The prospective applicant noted that the project's scope has not changed from previous meetings.
- The Commission's representatives queried whether it is the intention to include the grid connection as part of this application process. The prospective applicant advised that one single grid connection would be presented as part of the application and be assessed in the EIAR.

- The Commission's representatives noted the reference in the record of the second meeting to a second connection to the substation being considered in the EIAR and the prospective applicant clarified that this was not the intention. A single grid connection route is intended to be presented and assessed.

Update on Geology, Hydrogeology and Hydrology

- The Commission's representatives advised that the efficiency of the proposed surface water management systems in removing silt and nutrients would need to be clearly demonstrated in the application. Implementation of CIRIA guidelines alone may not be sufficient.
- The prospective applicant advised that there was no plan to use flocculants in treating waters.

Update on Biodiversity and Ornithology

- The Commission's representatives advised that mitigation measures that go beyond standard practice should be clearly identified. Depending on the receiving habitats/ species, measures may need to be go beyond 'standard best practice'.
- The Commission's representatives queried the population levels of Whooper Swan in the area of the proposed development. The prospective applicant advised that they do not have the figures to hand. It was noted that disturbance and displacement of whooper swans are the main issues identified. The Commission's representatives advised that these figures should be included in the EIAR.
- The Commission's representatives reiterated the importance of the cumulative impact assessment and reminded the prospective applicant to consider neighbouring wind farms.
- The Commission's representatives reminded the prospective applicant to characterise impact significance by CIEEM standards. The prospective applicant noted that this has also been raised by the NPWS.

- The Commission's representatives queried whether any habitat enhancement measures are intended. The prospective applicant noted that habitat enhancement measures are being refined. The Commission's representatives recommended that these details be included in the EIAR with reference to likely effectiveness of the measures.

Noise & Shadow Flicker

- The Commission's representatives queried the selection of noise monitoring locations, specifically to the west of the proposed wind farm and advised that a clear rationale be provided for the sites selected for background noise monitoring. Information on where the equipment was placed including photographs would be beneficial. The prospective applicant advised that the location of noise monitoring locations to the west were selected taking account of existing wind turbine noise and permission for access obtained.
- The Commission's representative queried the sound levels and recommended that the results from the range of turbine options be included in the noise chapter of the EIAR. The prospective applicant advised that these levels would depend on the wind speed.
- The Commission's representatives reminded the prospective applicant of the recently published 2026 Assessment and Rating of Wind Turbine Noise Guidance and advised that references to ETSU be removed.
- The Commission's representatives queried the rationale behind the request for a 30m high met mast. The prospective applicant noted that this would be used to monitor wind speed and noted that temporary LiDAR could be deployed.
- The Commission's representatives advised that the noise complaints procedure be detailed within the application documentation.
- The Commission's representatives recommended that the predicted noise levels be presented for the proposed wind farm, and where applicable, presented cumulatively with operational and permitted wind farms, and in combination with operational, permitted and proposed wind farm developments. It was recommended that any existing operational or permitted wind farm noise limits, where applicable, to cumulative sensitive receptors should be outlined.

- The prospective applicant advised that modelling is ongoing for the cumulative assessment for shadow flicker.

Landscape and visual

- During the presentation, photomontages were presented, and the Commission's representatives requested that a copy of these photomontages be forwarded for the file.
- The Commission's representatives queried whether the selected viewpoints had considered scenic views and scenic routes identified in the respective county development plans, and that a clear rationale for viewpoints be provided. The prospective applicant confirmed that this was the case.
- The Commission's representatives noted the location of Slieve Bloom Mountains outside the 20km LVIA study area, and advised that a clear rationale for the study area to be provided.
- The Commission's representatives noted the importance of clarity in the landscape and visual assessment methodology, specifically in relation to the findings of no significant effects, and in the application of any mitigation measures.

Cultural heritage

- The Commission's representative queried whether the study area extended beyond the 5km referenced in the presentation, where applicable. The prospective applicant confirmed that this was the case.
- The Commission's representatives advised that the methodology and scope of the assessment of indirect effects in relation to archaeological and cultural heritage assets should be clearly outlined.

Transport

- The Commission's representatives advised that details of the construction haul route and the phasing of turbine delivery and grid connection works should be taken into account in the assessment and transport management.

- The Commission's representatives recommended that details of the proposed works at the Galway road junction where signalisation is to be temporary removed should be assessed.

Other technical topics, including material assets

- The Commission's representative queried ongoing aviation consultation. The prospective applicant advised that Aviation consultations are ongoing. A safety assessment has been conducted, and no significant effects are expected.
- The Commission's representatives reminded the prospective applicant of the importance of consulting with AirNav and the Department of Defence.

Cumulative

- The Commission's representatives advised that the methodology for the assessment of cumulative effects should be clearly outlined and noted the importance of reviewing the determination of the significance of individual effects when assessing the potential for significant cumulative effects.

RED III Directive

- The Commission's representatives reminded the prospective applicant that mandatory EIA scoping commences on 1st November 2026 and that applications lodged on or after that date will be required to have engaged in formal scoping.
- The Commission's representatives reminded the prospective applicant that given the decision timelines for projects that are subject to the REDIII Directive there will be a limited opportunity to request further information.
- The Commission's representatives advised that any submissions/ observations received on any future application, if deemed SID, would be circulated and recommended that any issues raised in the submissions should be fully engaged with by the applicant in their response to submissions.

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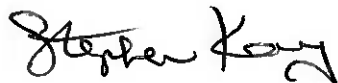
Consideration of Documentation

- The Commission's representatives requested consistency of approach including in impact assessment across documentation submitted with any future application.

Conclusion:

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

The Meeting concluded at 4:05pm.

 29.4.2026.

Stephen Kay

Assistant Director of Planning