



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended)

Strategic Infrastructure Act 2006

Report as required by Section 37E(4) – (7) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended)

An Coimisiún Pleanála Reference 323761-25/ ACP Pre-App 322632-25 and 316466-23

Application Details:

Applicant:	Neoen Renewables Ireland Limited
Received By GCC:	3 rd October 2025
Agent:	MKO
An Coimisiún Pleanála Reference Number:	ACP- 323761-25
Proposed Development (Summary):	9 no. turbine wind farm and associated infrastructure
Site Location:	in the townlands of Cloondahamper (Blake), Cloonascragh, Elmhil, Cooloo, Lecarrow, Dangan Eighter, Lissavally and Slievegorm, in Co. Galway.

PLANNING ASSESSMENT

1. PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

Following consultation pursuant to Section 37B of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended) (the Act), and following notice issued to the applicant pursuant to Section 37B (4) (a) of the Act, An Coimisiún Pleanála (ACP) (ACP Pre-App Ref.: 322632-25 and 316466-23) has determined that the proposed development constitutes Strategic Infrastructure Development within the meaning of Section 37E of the Act. ACP considered the size, scale and location of the proposed windfarm and related development, and to the policy context, and determined that it fell within the definition of energy infrastructure in the Seventh Schedule of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), thereby satisfying the requirements of Section 37(A)1 of this Act.

ACP also considered the proposed development to be of strategic importance by reference to the requirements of Section 37A(2)(a) and 37A(2)(b) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) in that the proposed development will be of strategic importance.

Given the development has been determined to be a SID by An Coimisiún Pleanála, the normal mechanism of applying to Galway County Council for planning permission does not apply. Therefore, the development proposal requires a planning application to be made directly to the Bord. Accordingly, Neoen Renewables Ireland Limited as required, has applied directly to An Coimisiún Pleanála for planning permission, as per Section 37E of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended).

As required under Section 37E (4) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the purpose of this report is to set out the views of the Planning Authority on the effects of the proposed development on the environment and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, having regard in particular to the matters specified in section 34(2) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended). This report will have regard to the following matters specified in section 34(2) of the Act:

- (i) the provisions of the development plan,*
- (ia) any guidelines issued by the Minister under section 28,*
- (ii) the provisions of any special amenity area order relating to the area,*
- (iii) any European site or other area prescribed for the purposes of section 10(2)(c),*
- (iv) where relevant, the policy of the Government, the Minister or any other Minister of the Government,*
- (v) the matters referred to in subsection [34](4),*
- (va) previous developments by the applicant which have not been satisfactorily completed,*
- (vb) previous convictions against the applicant for non-compliance with this Act, the Building Control Act 2007 or the Fire Services Act 1981, and*
- (vi) any other relevant provision or requirement of this Act, and any regulations made thereunder.*
- (aa) when making its decision in relation to an application under this section, the planning authority shall apply, where relevant, specific planning policy requirements of guidelines issued by the Minister under section 28.*

In the interest of clarification, there are no Special Amenity Area Orders (Item ii above) in County Galway. The matters referred to in section 34(4) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) relate to conditions to which may be attached by the Planning Authority during the consideration of a planning application. Sections 34 (2) (b) and (c) are also noted with respect to

legislative provisions referencing adjoining authorities, specific planning policy requirements and developments requiring an IPC or waste license but are not deemed applicable in this instance.

This report shall be submitted to An Coimisiún Pleanála for consideration, as required under Section 37E(4) of the Act. However, prior to submission to An Coimisiún Pleanála, as per Section 37E(5) of the Act, this report shall be submitted to the members of the authority and seek their views on the proposed development. The views of the members will be attached at Appendix 1. It is noted that the Planning Authority held an online information workshop on the 11th December 2025, in advance of the Plenary Meeting, for the Tuam MD and Ballinasloe MD members.

It should be noted that prior to determining any application for permission under 37E of the Act, the Board may, at its absolute discretion and at any time as per Section 37F of the Act:

- *Require the applicant to submit further information, including a revised Environmental Impact Assessment Report,*
- *Indicate it is considering granting permission, subject to the applicant for permission submitted revised particulars, plans or drawings in relation to the development,*
- *Request further submission or observations from the applicant, any person who made submissions or observations, or any person who made submissions or observations, or any person who may, in the opinion of the Board, have information, which is relevant to the determination of the application,*
- *Make any information relating to the application available for inspection, notify any person or the public that information is so available and, if it considers appropriate, invite further submissions or observations to be made within such period as it may specify, or*
- *Hold meeting with the applicant for permission or any other person where it appears to the Board to be expedient for the purpose of determining the application, or where it appears to the Board to be necessary or expedient for the purpose of resolving any issue with the applicant for permission or any disagreement between the applicant and any other party, including resolving any issue or disagreement in advance of an oral hearing.*

2.DESCRPTION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

This development application proposes the following components, as per the statutory notices:

The proposed development will consist of the provision of the following:

- (i) 9 no. wind turbines with the following parameters:*
 - *Total turbine tip height of 180 metres;*
 - *A rotor blade diameter of 150 to 162 metres;*
 - *A hub height of 99 to 105 metres;*
- (ii) Permanent turbine foundations, hard-standing and assembly areas;*
- (iii) Underground electrical (33kV) and communications cabling;*
- (iv) 1 no. temporary construction compound (including site offices and welfare facilities);*
- (v) A meteorological mast with a height of 100 metres, security fencing and associated foundation and hard-standing area;*
- (vi) 1 no. new site entrance on the R332 in the townland Lisavally;*

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- (vii) 1 no. new access and egress point off the L6056 Local Road in the townland of Dangan Eighter;
 - (viii) 1 no. new access and egress point on to an existing access track in the townland of Dangan Eighter;
 - (ix) 2 no. new access and egress points off the L6301 Local Road in the townland of Cooloo and Lecarrow;
 - (x) Upgrade of existing site tracks/roads and provision of new site access roads, clear span crossings, junctions and hard-standing areas;
 - (xi) A new temporary access road from N63 national road and to R332 Regional Road in the townland of Slievegorm to facilitate the delivery of turbine components and other abnormal sized loads;
 - (xii) Demolition of an existing derelict house and adjacent outbuilding in the townland of Cooloo;
 - (xiii) Peat and Spoil Management Areas;
 - (xiv) Tree felling and hedgerow removal;
 - (xv) Biodiversity Management and Enhancement measures;
 - (xvi) Site Drainage;
 - (xvii) Operational Stage site signage; and
 - (xviii) All ancillary apparatus and site development works above and below ground, including soft and hard landscaping.

A 10-year planning permission and 35-year operational life of the wind farm from the date of commissioning of the entire wind farm is sought (other than temporary and permanent works specified above). A design flexibility opinion issued by An Coimisiún Pleanála on 19th September 2025 accompanies this application. The details unconfirmed in the application are the turbine rotor diameter and hub height. The range of parameters under which the turbine dimensions will fall are specified on this notice and in the design flexibility opinion that accompanies this application.

This development is covered by the provisions of the Renewable Energy Directive III (Directive (EU) 2023/2413) and it is important to note that the planning application may be subject to section 37JA of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. When a notice issues in accordance with section 37JA(b), the provisions of article 216A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 to 2025 shall apply.

An Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) have been prepared in respect of the proposed development and accompany the planning application. The EIAR assesses the proposed development, as specified above, as well as integral elements of the wider project consisting of grid connection and battery storage infrastructure which constitutes a 110kV electrical substation and battery energy storage system.

The proposed wind farm development will have an export capacity ranging between 54MW and 64.8MW, based on a turbine capacity of between 6 and 7.2 MW.

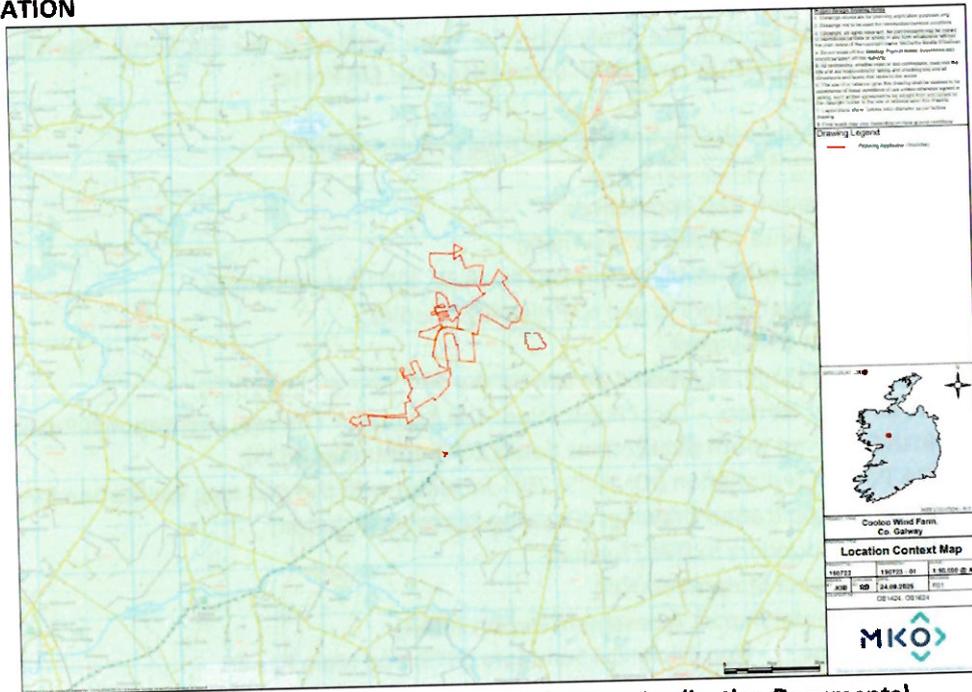
It is noted in the documentation received that the Proposed Grid Connection (via 110kV underground cabling from a proposed on-site 110kV substation to the existing 110kV Cloon substation at Cloonascragh, County Galway) is not included in this application and will be subject to a separate application to An Coimisiún Pleanála under Section 182A of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. The accompanying documentation outlines that all elements of the Proposed Wind Farm (subject of this Section 37E application) have been assessed as part of the EIAR and NIS lodged.

As the project requires an EIAR the application has been notified to the EIA Portal. The EIA Portal ID is 2025179 and the project details have been uploaded to the EIA Portal.

The planning application pack contains the following documentation:

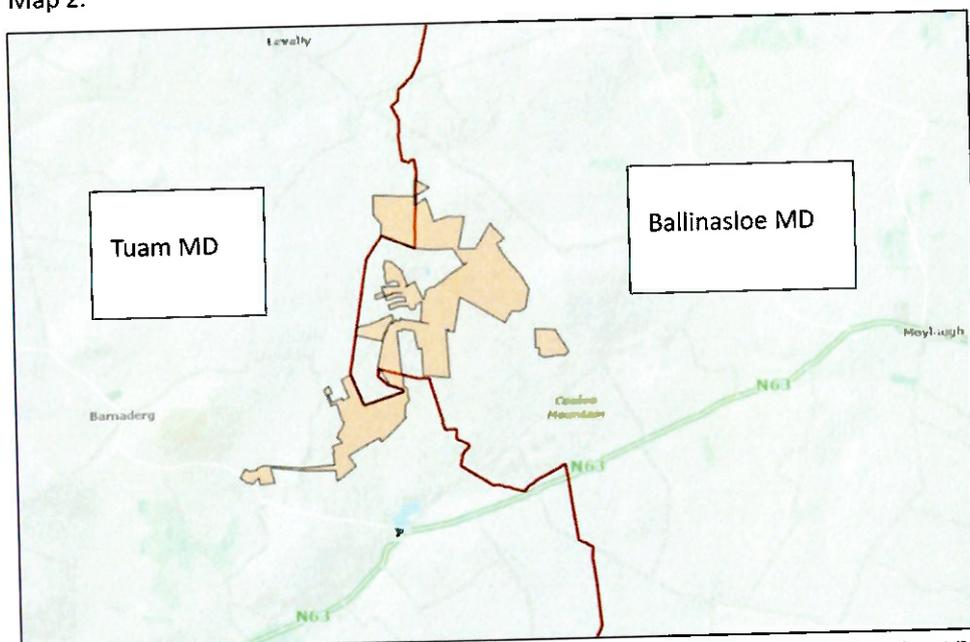
- SID Planning Application Form;
- Planning Report and Appendices;
- Letters of Consent from Landowners;
- Letters of Design Flexibility Opinion, Form 22, SID Determination;
- Copies of cover letters issued to Prescribed Bodies;
- EFT Receipt of Payment;
- Site Notice (copy, as erected on site on the 26th September 2025);
- Newspaper Notices – Local Publication: The Connacht Tribune, and National Publication: The Irish Examiner (both publications dated 26th September 2025);
- EIA Portal Confirmation (ID: 2025179) - included with the planning application form;
- Planning Application Drawings (Drawing Schedule included)
- Red Line Boundary in DWG format;
- Natura Impact Statement (NIS)
- Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR);
 - Volume 1 – Non-Technical Summary (NTS) and Main Report
 - Volume 2 – Photomontage Booklet
 - Volume 3 – EIAR Appendices

3.SITE LOCATION



Map 1 - Location of Site – (Source Planning Application Documents)

The subject application site is 299.2 ha in area and located across the Tuam MD and Ballinasloe MD, as shown in Map 2.



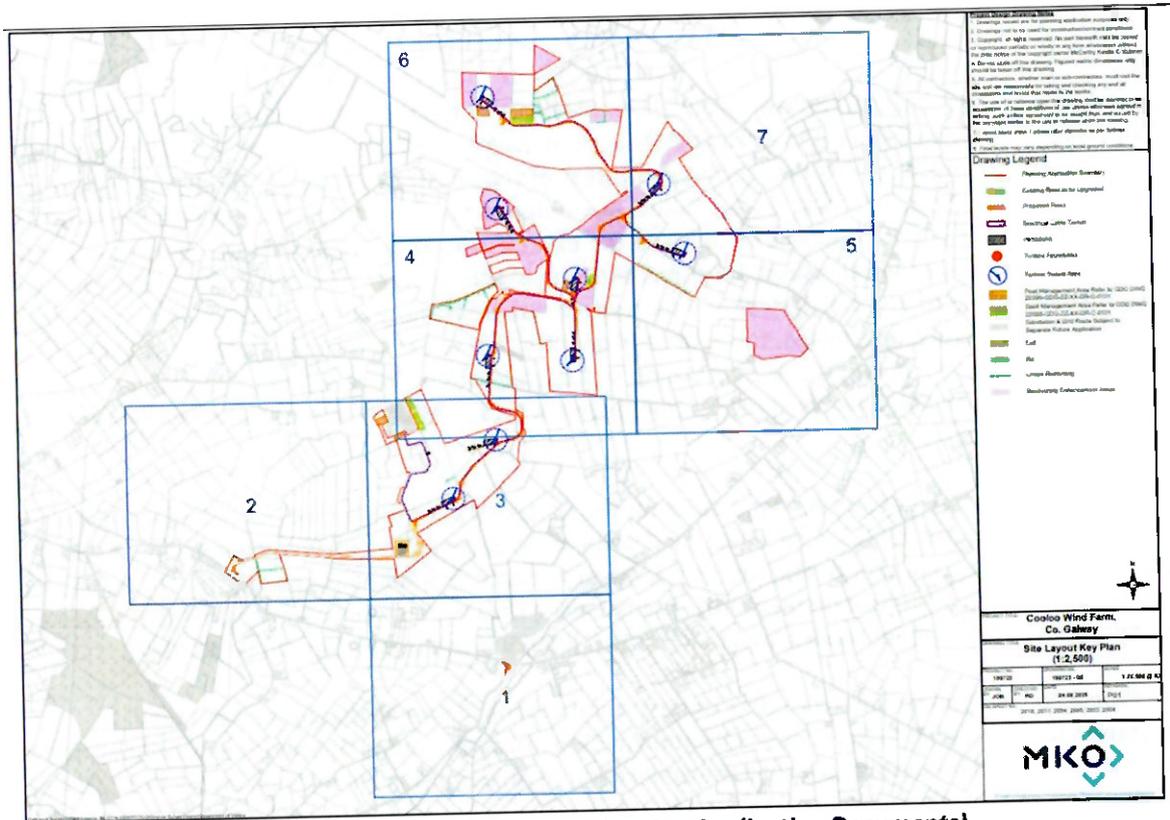
Map 2 - Location of Site in Ballinasloe MD and Tuam MD – (Source GCC Internal Planning Viewer)

The application site is located approximately 11km southeast of Tuam and approximately 4km to the west of Moylough, Co. Galway. Access to the application site is currently off the local road L-22255 to the north of the site and the R332, which runs to the southwest of the site with a network of local tertiary roads traversing the site. Proposed new access points are proposed along the following public roads: R332, L6056, L6301 and it is also proposed to upgrade the existing site tracks and roads and provision of new site access roads, clear span crossings, junctions and hard-standing areas. The proposed wind farm site is largely characterised by areas of agricultural pasture with additional land uses such as cutover and raised peat bogs, agricultural crops, tillage, transport and forestry. The wider surrounding area is rural in nature and principally characterised by one off housing and farm clusters. There are no recorded monuments within the application site, however, it is noted that there are a number of recorded monuments in proximity to the site.

A Natura Impact Statement has been prepared for the proposed wind farm development which examines the potential pathways for adverse effect on European Sites and prescribes mitigation to ensure the pathway by which such effects may occur has been robustly blocked through the use of avoidance, appropriate design and mitigation measures. The following sites were screened-in for potential impacts in the Appropriate Assessment report: Lough Corrib SAC [000297] and Lough Corrib SPA [004042].

The Proposed Grid Connection (via 110kV underground cabling from a proposed on-site 110kV substation to the existing 110kV Cloon substation at Cloonascragh, County Galway) is not included in this application and will be subject to a separate application to An Coimisiún Pleanála under Section 182A of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended.

The proposed wind farm development will have an export capacity ranging between 54MW and 64.8MW, based on a turbine capacity of between 6 and 7.2 MW.



Map 2 – Site Layout (Source: Planning Application Documents)

4. PLANNING POLICY

Galway County Council are cognisant of a range of national, regional and local planning policies and strategies in considering the proposed wind energy development, these include, but are not limited to the below non-exhaustive list:

- National Planning Framework – First Revision (April 2025)
- Ireland Climate Action Plan 2025
- All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021 -2025 including Wind Farm Management
- National Biodiversity Action Plan (2023–2030)
- Wind Energy Development Guidelines (2006)
- Draft Revised Wind Energy Guidelines (2019)
- Planning Guidelines for Wind Energy (2006), Department of Environment Heritage and Local Government
- Northern and Western Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) 2020 -2032
- Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028
- Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategy
- Galway County Council Climate Action Plan 2024 - 2029

Specific Planning Policy;

The Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategy forms part of Appendices of the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 and the location of the subject site is situated within areas identified as 'Open to Consideration' and partially within areas designated 'Generally to be Discouraged' on the GCC Internal Map Viewer and in the Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategy (LARES). The following policy objectives are considered relevant:

LARES Policy Objective 13 - To increase renewable energy generation levels from wind energy developments in County Galway, given the recognised wind energy potential of the County.

LARES Policy Objective 14 - All onshore wind energy developments shall comply with the National Wind Energy Development Guidelines or any subsequent version thereof.

LARES Policy Objective 16 - Wind energy development proposals in areas that are identified as 'Open to Consideration' for wind energy development will be considered in accordance with the LARES and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

LARES Policy Objective 17 - Wind energy development proposals in areas that are identified as 'Generally to be Discouraged' for wind energy development will be considered in accordance with the LARES and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

RE1 Renewable Energy Generation and Ancillary Facilities

To facilitate and support appropriate levels of renewable energy generation and ancillary facilities in the county to meet national, regional and county renewable energy targets, to facilitate a reduction in CO2 emissions and the promotion of a low carbon economy.

RE 3 Wind Energy Developments

Promote and facilitate wind farm developments in suitable locations, having regard to areas of the County designated for this purpose in the Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategy. The Planning Authority will assess any planning application proposals for wind energy production in accordance with the Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategy, the DoEHLG Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Wind Energy Development, 2006 (or any updated/superseded documents), having due regard to the Habitats Directive and to the detailed policy objectives and Development Standards set out in the Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategy.

RE 5 Renewable Energy Strategy

Support and facilitate the sustainable development and the use of appropriate renewable energy resources and associated infrastructure within the County having due regard to the Habitats Directive and to the detailed policy objectives and Development Standards set out in the Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategy as follows:

- Renewable Energy Transmission
- Renewable Energy Generation
- 'Strategic Areas' for renewable energy development
- Onshore Wind Energy
- Solar Energy
- Bioenergy/Anaerobic Digestion
- Micro-renewables
- Marine Renewables
- Hydro Energy
- Geothermal Energy
- Alternative Technologies
- Energy Efficiency & Conservation
- Sustainable Transport
- Auto production
- Battery Storage
- Repowering/Renewing Wind Energy Developments
- Community Ownership

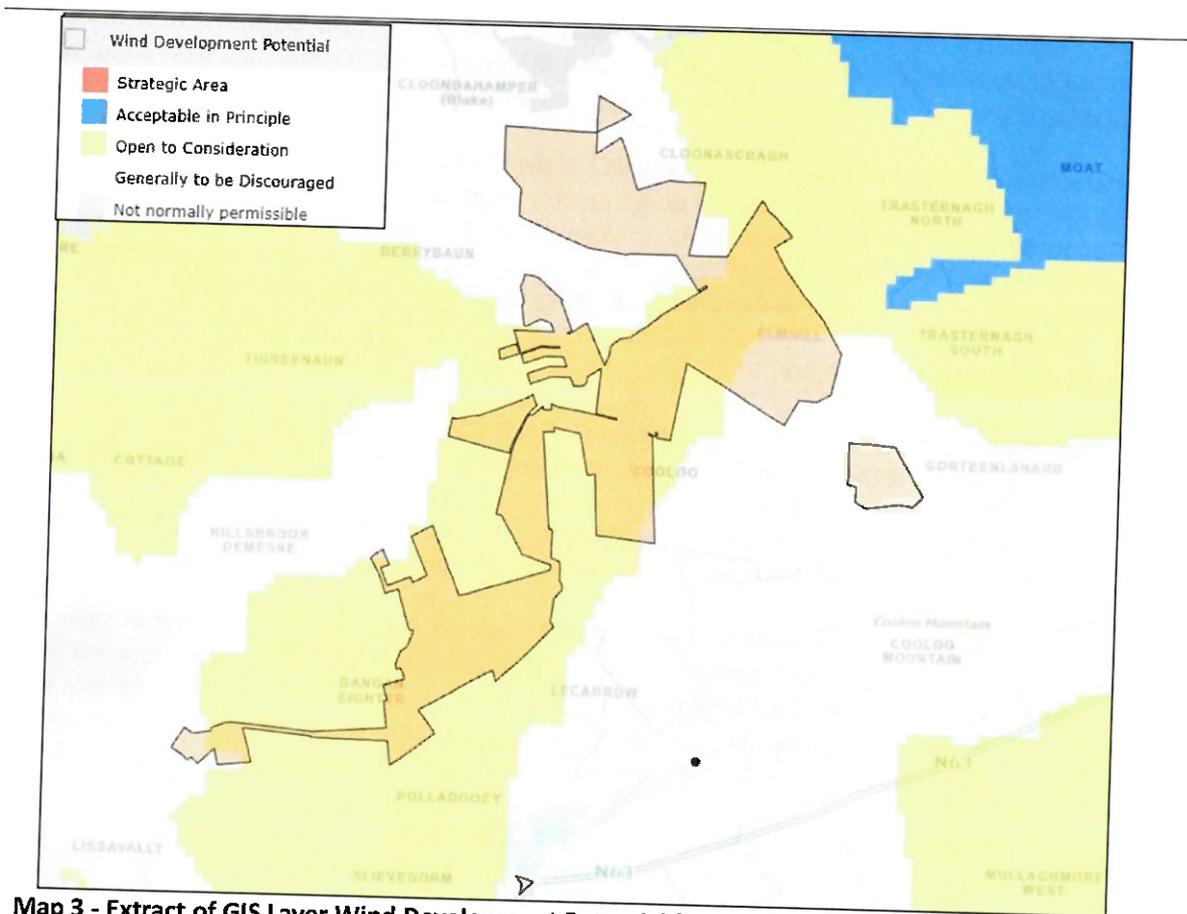
RE 7 Renewable Energy Generation - Transition to a Low Carbon Economy

To facilitate and support appropriate levels of renewable energy generation in County Galway, considering the need to transition to a low carbon economy and to reduce dependency on fossil fuels.

4.1 Strategic Assessment & Principle of the Proposed Development

The site of the proposed development is located in an unserved rural area (totalling 299.2 ha), approximately 11km southeast of Tuam and approximately 4km to the west of Moylough within the townlands of Cloondahamper (Blake), Cloonascragh, Elmhill, Cooloo, Lecarrow, Dangan Eighter, Lissavally and Slievegorm, in Co. Galway.. Access to the application site is off the R332, which runs to the southwest of the site with a network of tertiary local roads connecting to the site. Proposed new access points are proposed along the following public roads: R332, L6056, L6301 and it is also proposed to upgrade the existing site tracks and roads and provision of new site access roads, clear span crossings, junctions and hard-standing areas

The strategic assessment of the proposal is governed by inter alia the national, regional and local policy as stated above in Section 4. In terms of Policy Objectives, RE1, RE2, RE 5, RE7 and Policy Objectives EG1, EG2 and EG3 in Chapter 14 and Policy Objectives EG1, EG2, EG3, EG4 and EG5 in Chapter 7 of the GCDP 2022-2028 all provide the policy basis to assess the principle of the proposed development at this location, in addition to the policy objectives as set out in the Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategy (LARES).



Map 3 - Extract of GIS Layer Wind Development Potential from Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028

Following full consideration of the Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategy (LARES), it is noted that the subject site is largely located within an area where it has been identified that wind energy development is 'Open to Consideration' and partially within an area designated 'Generally to be Discouraged', however located in close proximity (c.1km southwest) of an area designated 'Acceptable in Principle'. The designations in the LARES are based on identifying the factors required for a viable and environmentally compliant windfarm and included mapping, analysing and weighting such factors such as the electricity grid, wind speed, road, coastal potential, population, corine land uses, slope, flooding, landslides, protected areas and residential areas.

The policy objectives of the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 include facilitating and supporting appropriate levels of renewable energy generation and ancillary facilities in the county to meet national, regional and county renewable energy targets, which must be balanced against facilitating such developments in suitable locations as referenced in the LARES and Policy Objective RE3 and RE 5 of the GCDP-2022-2028.

The development works for the proposed wind farm are principally located in an area where such development is either identified as being 'Open to Consideration', or 'Generally to be Discouraged' as set

out in LARES Policy Objective 4, LARES Policy Objective 15, and LARES Policy Objective 16 which seek to prioritise the development of wind energy in identified strategic areas. It is noted that 6 no. wind turbines are proposed within the areas identified as 'Open to Consideration'.

Having regard to Policy Objectives RE3, RE5 and RE7 of the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028, which promotes and facilitates wind farm developments in suitable locations, having regard to areas of the County designated for this purpose in the Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategy, it is considered that the principle of the proposed development is considered acceptable subject to the assessment of the proper planning and sustainable development considerations set out in this assessment.

5. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

It is noted that the proposed development traverses across c.5km and multiple townlands. The planning authority highlights that there are no significant or relevant planning applications for development within the boundary of the proposed wind farm area of the subject site (noting Pl. Ref. 23/119 for a meteorological mast). There are a number of applications in the vicinity of the full subject site relating to one-off residential and agricultural developments, particularly along the public roadways.

There are approximately 4 no. wind farm development applications within 25km of the proposed wind farm site. 4 no. of which (Clonberne Windfarm SID, Laurclavagh Windfarm SID and Shancloon WF SID) are currently in-planning and awaiting final decisions. Notably, the proposed Clonberne Wind Farm is located within c.5km north of the proposed application site. The planning authority notes that a Cumulative Impact Assessment was carried out by applicant and submitted within Chapter 2 (Section 2.9) of the EIAR.

6. ENFORCEMENT INFORMATION RELATING TO THE SUBJECT SITE

There are no enforcement cases relating to the subject site identified on the Internal Planning Viewer.

7. DESIGNATED SITES

Special Protected Areas (SPAs) & Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Potential Impact of the Proposed Development

There are no European Sites within the subject lands delineated for the proposed development. There are no protected sites within close proximity to the application site. The European Sites whose connectivity or ecological continuity can be affected by the project are determined as Lough Corrib SPA and Lough Corrib SAC.

AA Screening and Natura Impact Statement:

A Screening for Appropriate Assessment Report (AASR) and Natura Impact Statement report (NIS) was carried out by MKO on behalf of the applicant. The report identified that Lough Corrib SAC and Lough Corrib SPA as being within the potential likely zone of impact of the site and were screened in, on the basis of source-path-receptor relationships. In the screening and NIS submitted, both the subject site of the windfarm and grid connection were considered.

Designated Site	Qualifying Interests SACS	Potential Pathway
Lough Corrib SAC (000297)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) [3110] · Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the <i>Littorelletea uniflorae</i> and/or <i>Isoeto-Nanojuncetea</i> [3130] · Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of <i>Chara</i> spp. [3140] · Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation [3260] · Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco-Brometalia</i>) (* important orchid sites) [6210] · <i>Molinia</i> meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>) [6410] · Active raised bogs [7110] · Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120] · Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> [7150] · Calcareous fens with <i>Cladium mariscus</i> and species of the <i>Caricion davallianae</i> [7210] · Petrifying springs with tufa formation (<i>Cratoneurion</i>) [7220] · Alkaline fens [7230] · Limestone pavements [8240] · Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles [91A0] · Bog woodland [91D0] · <i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i> (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) [1029] · <i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i> (White-clawed Crayfish) [1092] · <i>Petromyzon marinus</i> (Sea Lamprey) [1095] · <i>Lampetra planeri</i> (Brook Lamprey) [1096] · <i>Salmo salar</i> (Salmon) [1106] · <i>Rhinolophus hipposideros</i> (Lesser Horseshoe Bat) [1303] · <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355] · <i>Najas flexilis</i> (Slender Naiad) [1833] · <i>Hamatocaulis vernicosus</i> (Slender Green Feather-moss) [6216] 	<p>Yes, , there is potential that significant effects on the groundwater body Clare-Corrib may result in significant effects on the Groundwater Dependant Terrestrial Ecosystems (GWDTE) of the designated habitats and species of this SAC. There is also potential for disturbance of QI species otter as a result of the construction of the Proposed Wind Farm and Proposed Grid Connection.</p>

Designated Site	Qualifying Interests SPAs	Potential Pathway
Lough Corrib SPA 004042	Gadwall (<i>Anas strepera</i>) [A051] · Shoveler (<i>Anas clypeata</i>) [A056] · Pochard (<i>Aythya ferina</i>) [A059] · Tufted Duck (<i>Aythya fuligula</i>) [A061] · Common Scoter (<i>Melanitta nigra</i>) [A065] · Hen Harrier (<i>Circus cyaneus</i>) [A082] · Coot (<i>Fulica atra</i>) [A125] · Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] · Black-headed Gull (<i>Chirocephalids ridibundus</i>) [A179] · Common Gull (<i>Larus canus</i>) [A182] · Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) [A193] · Arctic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>) [A194] · Greenland White-fronted Goose (<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>) [A395] · Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	Yes, the subject site is located within the same ground waterbody as this SPA (Clare-Corrib - IE_WE_G_0020). According to the GSI groundwater body data sheet for the Clare-Corrib GWB15 overall, flow directions are to the southwest, with all groundwater discharging to Lough Corrib. Therefore, there is potential that significant effects on the groundwater body Clare-Corrib may result in significant effects on the Groundwater Dependant Terrestrial Ecosystems (GWDTE) of the designated habitats and species of this SAC.

See www.npws.ie for the further detail on conservation objectives of the above sites.

Galway County Council outline the relevant Articles of the Habitats Directive for the assessment of the proposed development:

- Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive requires that any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the sites conservation objectives.
- Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive allows for derogation (exception) for plans or projects affecting Natura 2000 sites, even with a likely significant negative impact, if they are justified by Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI), such as human health, public safety, or important socio-economic benefits, provided that compensatory measures ensure the overall coherence of Natura 2000 and no damage to the site's conservation status.

Galway County Council note that a Natura Impact Assessment (NIS) has been submitted as part of the application. As the competent authority for this application, An Comisiún Pleanála should be satisfied that the proposal has demonstrated that the development can be implemented without adverse effects on the integrity of the European Sites Network.

8. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIAR)

The proposed development falls within the definition of a project under the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by EIA Directive 2014/52/EU and falls within the scope of Class 3 (i) under Part 2 Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended) *“Installations for the harnessing of wind power for energy production (wind farms) with more than 5 turbines or having a total output greater than 50 megawatts.”* The Proposed Project exceeds the output threshold and the turbine threshold, and therefore is subject to a mandatory EIAR.

Galway County Council note that an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) has been submitted as part of the application, comprising:

- Volume 1 – Non-Technical Summary (NTS) and Main Report
- Volume 2 – Photomontage Booklet
- Volume 3 – EIAR Appendices

An Comisiún Pleanála is the competent authority with regard to assessing the EIAR and should, therefore, ensure that the submitted EIAR is sufficient to make a determination in accordance with Directive 2014/52/EU. Where An Comisiún Pleanála are minded to grant permission, they should be satisfied that the proposed development would not have a significant effect on the receiving environment.

9. WATER FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE

Chapter 9 Appendix 9-4 of the EIAR contains compliance assessment with the Water Framework Directive. An Comisiún Pleanála is the competent authority with regard to assessing the Water Framework Directive and should, therefore, ensure that the submitted application documentation is sufficient to make a determination. Where An Comisiún Pleanála are minded to grant permission, they should be satisfied that the proposed development would not have a significant effect on the receiving water bodies.

10. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

10.1 STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT AND PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

The strategic assessment of the proposal is governed by national, regional and local policy as outlined in Section 4.0 of this report. The need to harvest sustainable renewable energy resources to meet Ireland's Climate Action targets is a common theme throughout national, regional and local planning policies. Galway County Council welcomes the investment in the county through its role in facilitating the delivery of this onshore wind development. However, the Planning Authority recognise the importance of balancing the infrastructural demands of such a project with the proper planning and sustainable development of the local area.

Having particular regard to the National Planning Framework – Project Ireland 2040, Climate Action Plan 2024, The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2020 - 2032 (RSES) for the Northern and Western Region and the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028, it is considered that the proposed development is acceptable in principle subject to the assessment of all other material planning considerations as set out below.

10.2 COMMUNITY BENEFIT FUND

Section 5.10.3 of the EIAR outlines the Proposed Community Benefit Scheme as part of this application. A Community Engagement Report are provided at Appendix 2-2 of the EIAR.

Galway County Council note the stated figures in relation to the financial value and timeframes of the fund in accordance with the RESS Guidelines (approx. €300,000/year for 15 years for the local community) within the aforementioned documentation. Galway County Council highlight that the applicant is seeking permission for a 10-year development permission and a 35-year operational life. Galway County Council note that the proposed development proposes to bring long-term socioeconomic benefits to the local community.

10.3 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL AMENITY

An assessment of the landscape and visual impacts (LVIA) of the proposed development is set out in Chapter 13 of the EIAR. The proposed development is located in a Class 1 Low landscape designation, there are also no designated scenic routes in the LVIA Study Area. However, there are two designated protected views within the LVIA study area. It is noted that the most notable visual impacts will occur within the immediate surroundings of the turbines at local residential receptors.

It is highlighted in the EIAR that the landscape of the Proposed Wind Farm site will undergo substantial changes by the introduction of the turbines as vertical, man-made structures within the material area of the site. As a result, there will be a "Substantial" magnitude of change to the landscape in localised areas within the site where the landscape is materially altered. It is highlighted that there are no other large-scale developments within the vicinity of the wind farm site in terms of cumulative impacts with other forms of development. In addition, the future receiving environment could potentially be within c.5km of the Clonberne Wind Farm (11 no. turbines) highlighting that some of the cumulative wind farms may be seen in combination with each other from the other parts of the sites during the operational phase.

Galway County Council consider that the LVIA of the proposed wind farm development gives a clear indication that it will have a result in an intensification of wind energy development within this landscape context when analysed cumulatively with existing and proposed wind farms within the cumulative study area.

Galway County Council consider the findings within the *Coolglass Windfarm Limited v. An Comisiún Pleanála* IEHC 1 [2025] judgement, which highlights that the overriding interests of renewable energy targets should take precedent over local landscape and visual impact considerations. The judgement also refers to similar cases; *Shannon LNG v. An Comisiún Pleanála* [2024] IEHC 555, [2024] and the *Nagle View Turbine Aware Group v. An Comisiún Pleanála* [2024] IEHC 603, where it was considered that the legally binding EU and National energy targets take precedent over local policies regarding visual impact, including the expectation that the visual context of an area cannot be expected to remain unchanged within the context of a climate emergency.

10.4 HERITAGE AND ARCHAEOLOGY

Galway County Council note that an EIAR Chapter 14 on Cultural Heritage and Archaeology has been submitted to An Comisiún Pleanála as part of the application documentation. Galway County Council consider that Section 14.4 and Appendix 4-2 presents proposed mitigation measures and monitoring of the development's sites archaeology. Galway County Council recommends to condition that a suitably qualified archaeologist be employed to monitor ground works during the construction phase. Where An Comisiún Pleanála are minded to grant permission for the proposed development then conditions pertaining to the protection and monitoring of Archaeology and Cultural heritage are recommended.

10.5 TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT

Chapter 15 of the EIAR includes an assessment of the material assets and traffic effects on the local road network as a result of the proposed project during construction, operational and decommissioning phases. The traffic and transport assessment and traffic management plan in Appendix 15-2 of the EIAR considers the likely impacts on the transport delivery route to the development site resulting from the additional traffic movements that will be generated by the proposed development during each phase.

The EIAR states that it will take an estimated 18-24 months to construct the proposed wind energy development, during which construction traffic will travel to and from the development site.

The GCC Roads Department have reviewed the relevant documentation and have made the following comments with regard to traffic and transport impacts:

10.5.1 Observations:

Having Regard to Relevant Standards:

- TII Publications DN-GEO-03060 Geometric Design of Junctions (priority junctions, direct accesses, roundabouts, grade separated and compact grade separated junctions), May 2023, Section 5.6.2.2 Direct Access, tables 5.4 and 5.5.
- TII Publications DN-GEO-03031 Rural Road Link Design, May 2023– Section 2 Sight Distance, Figure 2.1, passing bays Figure 9.3.
- TII publications - PE-PDV-02045
- TII standards 'DN-GEO-03030
- TII Road Safety Audit guidelines GE-STY-01024

Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028

- DM Standard 28, Distances Required for Access onto National, Regional, Local and Private Roads
- DM standard 33a: Sight Traffic and Transport Assessment (TTA), Road Safety Audit (RSA) & Road Safety Impact Assessments (RSIA)

Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 Transportation Policy Objectives

- NNR2 – Safeguard the Capacity and Safety of County's Regional & Local Roads

10.5.2 Road Safety Traffic Concerns:

- I. In the absence of a recommended Road Safety Audit Stage 1 / 2 to reflect the entire scheme including new vehicular accesses onto the public road network and significant scale of roadside interventions being proposed in accordance with TII Road Safety Audit guidelines GE-STY-01024.
- II. The required Visibility splays in relation to compliance to forward and stopping sight distance triangles where the Regional R332 road speed limit resides whilst owing to the sub optimum horizontal and vertical alignment & profile of the public road as denoted by continuous white line at midpoint of road and where the subject site proposes to introduce new site entrance/access onto regional route network is considered to be restricted. The vertical envelope of visibility (i.e. intervisibility) has not being demonstrated in accordance with TII standards, in particular the provisions of visibility requirements as stated within DN-GEO-03031 Rural Road Link Design, May 2023– Section 2 Sight Distance, Figure 2.1 would render the road network, or any part of it, unsuitable to carry the additional road traffic including additional generated turning movements likely to result from the proposed development. It is considered that if permitted as proposed that the development would endanger public safety by reason of traffic hazard, obstruction of road

users or otherwise, contrary to policy objectives NNR2, and DM Standards 28, and DM standard 33a of the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028.

- III. Whilst having regard to the safety and the impact to the public road in accordance to DM Standard 33a of the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028, where the uncertainty of regional and local road network arises regarding the carrying capacity of alternative traffic diversions to support such extensive road closures, in conjunction with the necessity of scoping and seeking third party consent of proposed grid connection underground works where impacting the public road circa 18.0km of works from Subject site to Cloon Substation as proposed & whereby considered outside the control of the applicant. It is considered that the proposed works are at variance to Policy Objectives NNR 2 in relation to safeguarding regional and local roads of the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028. Therefore, in relation to safeguarding the transport function of public roads and associated public road junctions, it is considered that the proposed development works would interfere with the safety and endanger public safety by reason of traffic hazard or obstruction of road users or otherwise and therefore would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

10.5.3 Traffic and Transport Conditions:

It is highlighted that whilst the Roads & Transportation Department have outlined traffic and transport concerns in relation to the proposed development, in the event of conditional grant permission, it is considered as a minimum that the traffic and transport conditions attached in Section 11 of this report should be attached on behalf of the Roads Authority. See section 11 for further detail.

10.6 CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT

The GCC Climate Unit and Environment Department have reviewed the relevant documentation and have made the following comments with regard to traffic and transport impacts:

In general, the Climate Unit are supportive of wind energy production, where the conditions are appropriate, as wind energy is a crucial element of Ireland's decarbonisation plans. The Climate Unit has carried out a brief review of this application. Please find comments / recommendations below:

10.6.1 Impact on Surrounding Environment

We note that the land is primarily agricultural land as well as peatland, and suggest that the development of the windfarm be assessed in the context of opportunity cost of lost grazing land and release of carbon from disturbance of peatland sinks.

10.6.2 Carbon Emissions

It is recommended that the net carbon emissions associated with this development be assessed in detail through a complete lifecycle assessment inclusive procurement and waste management to calculate the carbon payback period.

10.6.3 Circular Economy

Decommissioning should be considered in the design phase so that structures may be procured which are easily disassembled for ongoing use at the end of their life. Rather than specifying the turbines' lifespan, it would be preferred to extend the asset's life by repowering the site (refurbishing/replacing components

or installing new turbines, ensuring re-use as much of the existing infrastructure/assets as possible). Where not possible to extend the lifespan, a decommissioning plan needs to be more detailed than that offered in the application. Up to 95% of turbines are potentially recyclable, when the correct materials are selected as inputs, this needs to be detailed. Steel monopile foundations should also be entirely recyclable. However, disassembling the structures into all the distinct components is challenging, therefore material selection at procurement stage is essential. Currently, turbine blades are mostly shredded, incinerated or sent to landfill, with no viable recycling route established. Repurposing, remanufacturing, repairing, and refurbishing for re-use are all preferred to recycling, which in turn is, of course, preferred to disposal.

10.6.4 Climate Action and Environment Conditions:

It is highlighted that whilst the Environment and Climate Action Department have outlined their concerns above in relation to the proposed development in the event of conditional grant permission, it is considered as a minimum that the environmental protection conditions attached in Section 11 of this report should be attached on behalf of the local authority. See section 11 for further detail on the environmental conditions.

10.7 ECOLOGY AND BIODIVERSITY

Chapter 6 of the EIAR analyses ecology and biodiversity of the application site. A Natura Impact Statement and Appropriate Assessment are included with the application also (as assessed above). A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) is appended to the EIAR in Appendix 4-5. Galway County Council has considered the details submitted regarding impact of the construction and operational of the development on the local natural environment. Chapter 6 places an emphasis on habitats, flora, fauna and water quality and assesses the potential effects of the proposed wind farm on the ecological receptors studied. Where impacts are assessed to be significant, mitigation measures have been incorporated into the project design to remove or reduce these impacts. The SAC's, SPA's and the NHA's within 25km of the study area were identified. The NIS assesses the impacts on the Natura 2000 sites. Details of the identified habitats have been provided. Species recorded in the area are also provided.

A Project Ecologist / Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) will be appointed for the duration of the construction phase to oversee implementation of all mitigation measures outlined in the EIAR and NIS. A Biodiversity Enhancement and Management Plan (BEMP) Appendix 6.4 has been prepared for the proposed wind farm development.

Biodiversity Management and Enhancement Plan:

Appendix 6.4 of the EIAR includes a Biodiversity Management and Enhancement Plan (BMEP), which sets out the measures to be implemented to ensure that the proposed wind energy development results in improvements in the quality and extent of habitats of value and local fauna in accordance with the goals of the 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan. The submitted BMEP details the measures to be implemented during construction and operation phases of the proposed wind farm, in order to ensure that the measures are successful, in addition to implementation of regular monitoring and reporting by an ecologist to ensure the success of the prescribed measures. An Ecological Impact assessment is provided in Section 6.5

10.8 HUMAN HEALTH AND RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

Chapter 5 of the submitted EIAR addresses the potential impacts and effects of the proposed development on human beings, population and human health. Chapter 12 includes assessment of the Noise and Vibration impacts, Chapter 10 and 11 an analysis of potential Air and Climate impacts, and Appendix 5.4 contains a Shadow Flicker Analysis.

Galway County Council note that where a negative impact is identified, mitigation measures will be proposed for any potential population and human health impacts under the relevant sections of the EIAR. It is outlined that provided the proposed development is constructed and operated in accordance with the design, best practice and mitigation set out then significant effects on population and human health are not anticipated. Having reviewed the documents as submitted and having regard to the content of the consultation response received from the Environment Department, Galway County Council are of the opinion that the proposal would not result in adverse impacts on Population, Human Health and Residential Amenity.

11. RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS

Whilst the planning authority have indicated their view on the proposed development under Section 10 above, in the event that An Comisiún Pleanála decide to grant planning permission for the proposed development, it is considered at a minimum that the following conditions should be attached:

1. The development shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the plans and particulars lodged with the application, except as may otherwise be required in order to comply with the following conditions.

REASON: In the interest of clarity.

2. The period during which the development hereby permitted may be carried out shall be 10 years from the date of this order.

REASON: In the interest of clarity and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

3. This permission is for an operational period of 35 years from the date of commissioning of any wind turbine. The wind turbines and related ancillary structures shall then be decommissioned and removed unless, prior to the end of the period, planning permission shall have been granted for their continuance for a further period.

REASON: To enable the Planning Authority to review its operation in the light of the circumstances then prevailing and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

4. (i) The development shall be carried out strictly in accordance with all of the mitigation measures and monitoring proposals and in accordance with any timelines as set out in the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).

(ii) The services of a suitably qualified and experienced environmental professional shall be retained to oversee and supervise the entirety of the construction works, and to provide monthly electronic reports to the planning authority (Planning and Environment Sections) detailing the stage of the works, and compliance with EIAR and CEMP mitigation measures. They shall be responsible for preparing and submitting quarterly reports to the Planning Authority during construction phase, detailing the results of any proposed monitoring, including the cleaning maintenance and inspection of the on-site systems including the site drainage system and hydrocarbon prevention measures. When site development works

are completed, the suitably qualified and experienced environmental professional shall lodge with the planning authority, a certificate indicating completion and compliance with the planning permission. All reports shall be forwarded in electronic format and shall be available to the public on request.

(iii) The operational phase of the development shall be overseen by an appropriately qualified environmental professional to ensure that the operational mitigation measures as set out in the EIAR are fully implemented. Yearly monitoring reports shall be submitted to the planning authority by the annual anniversary of the grant of permission and shall detail the results of any monitoring proposed during operation.

(iv) In the event of any incident which poses a significant risk to surface water quality the developer shall immediately notify Inland Fisheries Ireland, the National Parks and Wildlife Service and the Environment Section of Galway County Council.

REASON: in the interest of clarity and protection of the environment during the construction and operational phases of the proposed development.

5.(i) The development shall be carried out strictly in accordance with all of the mitigation measures as set out in the Natura Impact Statement. If there is a conflict between the EIAR, CEMP and the Natura Impact Statement (NIS), the provisions and mitigation measures in the Natura Impact Statement shall take precedence.

(ii) During the enabling works/construction stage of the proposed development, the appointed contractor shall adhere to Mitigation Measures as set out NIS. A suitably qualified ecologist shall oversee the implementation of the construction, operation and decommissioning mitigation measures set out in the NIS and shall list and certify that the construction mitigation measures as set out in the NIS have been carried out in full and that all operational mitigation measures are in place. This certification shall be submitted to the planning authority for written agreement prior to the commissioning of any turbine.

REASON: In the interest of ensuring the proper planning and sustainable development of the area and in order to protect Natura 2000 sites.

6.(i) The wind turbines, including tower and blades, shall be finished externally in a white/light grey matt colour.

(ii) Cables within the site shall be laid underground.

(iii) The wind turbines shall be geared to ensure that the blades rotate in the same direction.

(iv) No advertising material shall be placed on or otherwise be affixed to any structure on the site without a prior grant of planning permission.

(v) The access tracks within the site shall be surfaced in gravel or hard-core and shall not be hard topped with tarmacadam or concrete.

(vii) Transformers, switchgear and controls associated with each individual turbine shall be located either within the turbine mast structure or shall be located beside the mast and appropriately screened.

REASON: In the interests of visual amenity, traffic safety and orderly development.

7. The planning authority shall be informed in writing of the date of commencement of the site development works and they shall be given at least two weeks notice of same.

REASON: In the interest of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area and to protect the amenity of the area.

8. Prior to commencement of development, a detailed reinstatement programme providing for the removal of all turbines and ancillary structures shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the

Planning Authority. On full or partial decommissioning of the windfarm, or if the windfarm ceases operation for a period of more than one year, the masts and turbines concerned, and ancillary structures shall be dismantled and removed from the site. The site shall be reinstated in accordance with the agreed programme and all decommissioned structures shall be removed within three months of decommissioning.

REASON: To ensure satisfactory reinstatement of the site upon full or partial cessation of the project.

9. Prior to the commencement of development, the development shall lodge with the planning authority a cash deposit/bank bond or other such security as may be acceptable to the planning authority, to secure the satisfactory reinstatement of the site on cessation of the project coupled with an agreement empowering the planning authority to apply such security or part thereof to such reinstatement. The form and amount of security shall be as agreed between the planning authority and developer or, in default of agreement, shall be referred to An Comisiún Pleanála for determination.

REASON: To ensure the site is restored to a satisfactory condition.

10. Prior to commissioning of the wind farm, the Irish Aviation Authority shall be informed of the co-ordinates of the constructed turbines and the constructed elevation highest point of each turbine. Any lights or warning devices required by the Irish Aviation Authority shall be placed on the turbines in accordance with the details to be agreed in writing with the planning authority prior to commissioning of the wind farm.

REASON: In the interest of public safety.

11. The permitted wind energy development, shall not result in noise levels, when measured externally at nearby noise sensitive locations, which exceed:

(a) Between the hours of 0700 and 2300:

- (i) The greater of 5 dB(A) L90, 10min above background noise levels, or 45 dB(A) L90, 10min at standardised 10m height above ground level wind speeds of 7m/s or greater,
- (ii) 40 dB(A) L90, 10min at all other standardised 10m height above ground level wind speeds,

(b) 43 dB(A) L90, 10min at all other times.

Prior to commencement of development, the developer shall submit to and agree in writing with the Planning Authority a noise compliance monitoring programme for the subject development, including any mitigation measures such as the de-rating of particular turbines. All noise measurements shall be carried out in accordance with International Organisation of Standardisation Recommendation R 1996 "Acoustics – Description, measurement and assessment of environmental noise" as amended by IOS Recommendations R 1996-1. The results of the initial noise compliance monitoring shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority within six months of commissioning of the wind farm.

REASON: In the interest of residential amenity.

12. (i) The proposed development shall be fitted with appropriate equipment and software to suitably control shadow flicker at nearby dwellings.

(ii) Shadow flicker arising from the proposed development, by itself or in combination with other existing or permitted wind energy development in the vicinity, shall not exceed 30 hours per year or 30 minutes per day at existing or permitted dwellings or other sensitive receptors.

(iii) A report shall be prepared by a suitably qualified person in accordance with the requirements of the planning authority, indicating compliance with the above shadow flicker requirements at dwellings. Within 12 months of commissioning of the proposed wind farm, this report shall be submitted to, and agreed in

writing with, the Planning Authority. The developer shall outline proposed measures to address any recorded non-compliances, including control of turbine rotation if necessary. A similar report may be requested at reasonable intervals thereafter by the Planning Authority.

REASON: In the interest of residential amenity.

13. Facilities shall be installed at the developer's expense to address any interference with radio, television, or other telecommunications reception in the area, which shall be submitted to and agreed with the planning authority prior to the installation of such facilities.

REASON: To prevent interference with radio and television transmissions and telecommunications reception in the area and in the interest of residential amenity,

14. The developer shall facilitate the archaeological appraisal of the site and shall provide for the preservation, recording and protection of archaeological materials or features which may exist within the site or along the grid connection route. In this regard, the developer shall:

(a) notify the Planning Authority in writing at least four weeks prior to the commencement of any site operation (including hydrological and geotechnical investigations) relating to the proposed development, and;

(b) employ a suitably-qualified archaeologist prior to the commencement of development. The archaeologist shall assess the site and monitor all site development works.

The assessment shall address the following issues:-

(i) the nature and location of archaeological material on the site, and

(ii) the impact of the proposed development on such archaeological material.

A report, containing the results of the assessment, shall be submitted to the Planning Authority and, arising from this assessment, the developer shall agree in writing with the Planning Authority details regarding any further archaeological requirements (including, if necessary, archaeological excavation) prior to commencement of construction works.

In default of agreement on any of these requirements, the matter shall be referred to An Comisiún Pleanála for determination.

REASON: In order to conserve the archaeological heritage of the area and to secure the preservation (in-situ or by record) and protection of any archaeological remains that may exist within the site or along the grid connection route.

15. Prior to commencement of development, details of the following shall be submitted to, and agreed in advance with the area engineer and agreed in writing with, the planning authority:

(i) Technical & structural pavement analysis such as level 1 and Level 2 pavement analysis that includes recommended Falling Weight Deflectometer (FWD) Testing, Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) and core logs shall be provided to assess the pavement stress and strains at the critical design locations as required are to be calculated on proposed regional and local road trafficked routes, including number of axles to failure calculation requires verification.

(ii) Structural evaluation of all trafficked regional and local road network structures shall be evaluated and assessed for trafficked loads being generated by development.

(iii) The Applicant shall submit the following in support of the proposed development:

Prior to commencement of the development, the applicant shall commission a road safety audit (stage 1 / stage 2 audit) . Recommendations arising from the audit, or alternative measures proposed therein by the developer and accepted by the auditor, shall be incorporated into the final design of the development

at the expense of the developer. The audit shall be completed by an independent road safety auditor, at the developer's expense, and shall be submitted for the written approval of the planning authority.

(iv) Prior to commencement of the development, A design report shall be submitted to Roads & Transportation Dept and to the satisfaction of the Area Engineer in accordance to TII standards 'DN-GEO-03030 Design Phase Procedure for Road Safety Improvement Schemes, Urban Renewal Schemes and Local Improvement Schemes' whilst on receipt of detailed design works to public road physical alterations including Road widening, Road make up materials, specifications and finishes that includes Drainage infrastructure and necessary visibility works which shall be further assessed as part of the Road Safety Audit Report.

(v) Prior to commencement of development, and to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority, The applicant shall Submit a revised site layout plan to demonstrate sight distance triangles from trafficked junctions clearly showing details of both exit and entry sightline triangles and details of the vertical alignment available in the form of a longitudinal section in order to depict the existing road profile sightlines in both directions in respect of vehicular entrances. The required visibility from the proposed entrance and access to/from the local road network should strictly comply with Galway County Development plan 2022-2028 per DM Standard 28 and TII standards, in particular the provisions of visibility requirements as stated within Table 5.4 and Table 5.5 of TII Publications - DN-GEO-03060 Geometric Design of Junctions (priority junctions, direct accesses, roundabouts, grade separated and compact grade separated junctions) May 2023 for the design speed of the road from an x-distance 3m setback from the road edge and measured along the y-distance to the nearside road edge at specified object height from the dwell area to the sightline distance in accordance to TII standards. Forward visibility and stopping sight distances pertaining to right hand turning movements shall also be presented in both directions for each entrance in accordance to TII standards. The current extents of current hedgerow and/or boundary walling shall be set back to achieve clear and unobstructed sightlines in both directions and replaced with soft landscaping with new roadside passively safe boundary treatments proposed. Visibility splays as proposed over existing hedgerow (i.e through unpaved areas) is not an acceptable permanent visibility measure to the form of the proposed development junction which can increase traffic conflicts to vulnerable road users and unaware public road users.

(vi). A letter(s) of consent from any adjoining landowner and relevant third parties consenting to set back their boundary in order to permanently achieve clear and obstructed required sight distances where current sight distance y- splay traverses through adjoining third party boundary is required.

(vii). The applicant shall demonstrate that any adjoining lands to achieve required sight distance triangles as referred to above are within their control i.e. sightlines triangles outside the applicants red line boundary shall be outlined in blue on a revised site location map as per Article 22 (2)(b)(ii) of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended).

(viii) Sight distance triangles shall be maintained and kept free from boundary walling, vegetation, or other obstructions that would reduce the minimum visibility required.

REASON: In the interests of traffic safety.

16. (i) All surface water generated by this development shall be disposed of within the site and shall not be discharged onto the public road or the adjoining property.

(ii) Proposed development vehicular entrance(s) onto the public road and any tie into the existing road margin shall be cleared, graded, levelled and surfaced to a standard suitable for use to the satisfaction of the Area Engineer to prevent unbound material (loose stone) entering onto the public road. Proposed road make up and tie in to include suitable drainage infrastructure to collect and dispose of surface water runoff

from the existing public road. The provisions shall not increase the likelihood of flooding to the development property, the road or adjoining properties.

REASON: In the interests of road safety and proper planning and sustainable development to the area.

17. Prior to commencement of development, details of the following shall be submitted to, and agreed in advance with the Area Engineer and agreed in writing with, the planning authority:

(i) An independent vehicular laser road condition pavement survey for all surrounding local roads and bridges along the haul routes shall be carried out at the developer's expense by a suitably qualified person/firm during pre and post construction of the proposed development. This survey shall include a schedule of required works to enable the haul routes to cater for construction-related traffic. The extent and scope of the survey and the schedule of works shall be agreed to the satisfaction of the area engineer prior to commencement of development. The survey shall give a description of the local road network including each chainage section, lane, survey direction and measured length for each section. GPS coordinates at the beginning and end of each section shall also be tabulated with a clear map of start point of survey / chainage 0m-10m etc and shall include pavement surface condition index (PCSI), structural index and surface index results for each 10 meter section surveyed. Results shall include details of any pavement distress including type, severity and quantity within each 10m intervals sections of local road surveyed. Post construction phase, Road Condition Pavement survey shall then be repeated in order for the Planning Authority to assess any damage of the public road network that may arise during the development works.

(ii) Within three months of the cessation of the use of each public road/haul route to transport material to and from the site, aforementioned road survey and scheme of works detailing works to repair any damage to these routes shall be agreed in advance with the area engineer and shall be submitted to the planning authority.

(iii) All works arising from the aforementioned arrangements shall be completed to the satisfaction of the area engineer at the developer's expense within 3 months of the cessation of each road's use as a haul route or other for the proposed development.

REASON: In the interests of road safety.

18. All necessary measures shall be taken by the applicant to prevent the spillage or deposit of clay, rubble or other debris on adjoining roads during the course of the works.

REASON: In the interests of road safety.

19. (i) A revised detailed Traffic Management Plan to incorporate existing road conditions., including detailed design of temporary traffic measures and signs for roadworks shall be submitted prior to development commencement and agreed in advance with the Area Engineer, which sets out proposed measures and best practice to be implemented during the construction phase of development. The outline TMP should address the following: Site Access and Egress, Traffic Management Signage, Stop/Go or road closure/diversion arrangements, Traffic Management Speed Limits, Road Cleaning, Road Condition, Implementation of Traffic Management Plan. It shall include details of construction traffic routing, the number of trips generated for deliveries and collections of materials from the site, provision for a storage compound and parking provision within the site, wheel washing and measures for control of dust and other pollutant materials the installation of which shall be the responsibility of the applicant.

(ii) A road opening license and an abnormal load license shall be obtained from Galway County Council, with aforementioned TMP & accompanying detailed Traffic management Design in accordance with Traffic Signs Manual (Chapter 8 - Temporary Traffic Measures and Signs for Roadworks), to be further agreed with

Local Area Engineers including a phasing programme of the works indicating the timescale within which it is intended to use each public route to facilitate construction of the proposed development.

(iii) The applicant shall avoid deliveries utilizing the R332 during the Kilbannon to Kilconly road widening and realignment works.

(iv) Public Road including areas within Public Road Margins backfill and reinstatements including finished road levels shall be in accordance with Guidelines for Managing Openings in Public Roads (Purple Book – April 2017) as amended and shall be to the satisfaction of the Area Engineer.

REASON: In the interests of road safety.

20. Prior to commencement of development, the developer/applicants shall lodge a transportation bond with the planning authority of a cash deposit amount to the sum to be agreed with the Planning authority, or other cash amount or form of security, as may be acceptable to the relevant planning authority, to secure the reinstatement of the public road and road markings which may be damaged by the transport of materials to the site, to secure the provision of existing drains, open space and other services required in connection with the development coupled with an agreement empowering the relevant planning authority to apply such security or part thereof to the satisfactory reinstatement of the public road.

REASON: In the interest of traffic safety and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

21. On completion of the development, a stage 3 road safety audit shall be completed by an independent road safety auditor, at the developer's expense, and submitted for the written approval of the planning authority. Any safety issues highlighted in the audit shall be reviewed and addressed by the developer at their expense.

REASON: In the interests of road safety

22.(i) Prior to commencement of development the applicant shall liaise with Uisce Eireann or the local Barnaderg DBO, Elmhill, and Boyounagh Ballyedmond Group Water Schemes in respect to the existing water services and infrastructure within the public road.

(ii) Prior to commencement of development the applicant shall liaise with ESB Networks in respect to the existing electrical services and infrastructure within the public road vicinity.

(iii) Any proposal by the applicant to divert or build over/under existing water or services shall be submitted to Uisce Eireann/ Barnaderg DBO, Elmhill, and Boyounagh Ballyedmond Group Water Schemes or ESB or applicable service provider for written approval prior to commencing works.

(iv) Separation distances between the existing assets and or other services, trees, etc. shall be in accordance with Uisce Eireann Code of Practice for water infrastructure and water infrastructure Standard Details & ESB Networks Standards.

(v) All development shall be carried out in compliance with Uisce Eireann Standards and ESB Networks codes and practices.

REASON: In the interest of proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

23. The colour of the control building(s) roof shall be black or slate grey. The external wall of the control building shall be of natural limestone finish.

REASON: In the interest of visual amenity.

24. (a) The applicant shall submit details of the collection and disposal of material from the holding tank associated with the control building(s) for the information and record of the Planning Authority on an annual basis.

(b) Only waste collectors holding valid waste collection permits under the waste Management (Collection Permit) Regulations, 2007 (as amended), shall be employed to transport wastewater away from the site.

REASON: In the interest of public health.

25. Construction work shall take place between 0800 hours and 1800 hours Monday to Friday and the hours of 0800 and 1400 on Saturday. No works shall take place outside of these hours or on Sundays or Bank Holidays, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Planning Authority.

REASON: To protect the residential amenities of the area.

26. Construction and demolition waste shall be managed in accordance with a construction waste and demolition management plan, which shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority prior to commencement of development. This plan shall be prepared in accordance with the "Best Practice Guidelines for the Preparation of Resource & Waste Management Plans for Construction and Demolition Projects", published by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in 2021.

REASON: In the interest of sustainable waste management.

27. The applicant shall submit details to the planning authority for written agreement to provide and implement a community gain proposal, including any the financial commitments set out therein, which is considered a community gain in accordance with section 37 (G)(7)(d) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. In default of agreement on any of these commitments, the matter shall be referred to An Comisiún Pleanála for determination.

REASON: To offset the impacts on the local community in the construction phase and to maximise the long-term benefits of the proposed facilities to local residents.

28. Unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development, the applicant/developer shall pay €690,792.00 to the Planning Authority, unless a phased payment schedule has been agreed in writing with the Planning Authority. This charge has been calculated using the Development Contributions Scheme adopted by Galway County Council in accordance with the provisions of Section 48 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended):

The makeup of this sum is detailed in the list below:

A charge of €10,760 per megawatt capacity applies. The application details refer to an output of 64.2MW (10,760 x 64.2= 690,792.00)

REASON: So that the developer shall pay an equitable portion of the cost of the services which facilitates and/or which will facilitate the proposed development.

Report Prepared by: Jade Power, Executive Planner 10/12/2025

Countersigned by: Ciara Cosgrave, Senior Executive Planner 10/12/2025.

Appendix 1 - THE VIEWS OF THE MEMBERS OF GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL

Views of Members of the Tuam MD and Ballinasloe MD at workshop held on 11th December 2025

A workshop was held on the 11th December, 2025 with the Elected Members of the Tuam and Ballinasloe Municipal Districts. The purpose of this workshop was to inform the Elected Members of the proposed development and inform them of their role, and that the views of the Elected Members would be attached as an appendix to the Planners Report which would be submitted to An Coimisiún Pleanála. Following a brief discussion, it was agreed that the Members of the Tuam and Ballinasloe Municipal Districts would collectively compile a submission and present this to the Plenary Meeting on the 15th December, 2025.

Views of Members at December Plenary Meeting held on 15th December 2025

Item No. 3: To consider report to An Coimisiún Pleanála under Section 37(E)(4) of the Planning & Development Act 2000, as amended on the following -Proposed Development: Construction of wind energy development and all associated works, located within Cloondahamper, Cloonascragh, Elmhill, Cooloo, Lecarrow, Dangan Eighter, Lissavally and Slievegorm, Co. Galway ACP – 323761-25

The Director of Services, Mr. Liam Hanrahan advised of application. Submissions were received from the Tuam Municipal District and Ballinasloe Municipal District.

Comments were made at the meeting by the following:

Cllr. Reddington – acknowledging the workshop held on 11/12/25 giving information on the process.

Cllr. Connolly - expressed concerns about the consultation process.

Cllr. Cunniffe - unhappy at the lack of guidelines being updated.

Cllr. Hoade - read into the record the submission of the Tuam Municipal District.

The submission for inclusion in the Planners Report was proposed by Cllr. Hoade, seconded by Cllr. McHugh Ryan.

Cllr. Keaveney - read into the record the submission of the Ballinasloe Municipal District.

The submission for inclusion in the Planners Report was proposed by Cllr. Keaveney and seconded by Cllr. Alan Harney. Both submissions are listed below.

Submission by Tuam Municipal District Members

On CE Report 15/12/2025

Cooloo Windfarm ACP-323761-25

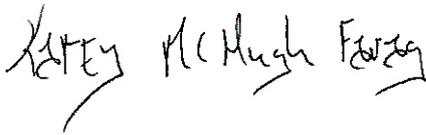
As members of the Tuam MD, we would like to make the following observations in relation to the CE Report on the Cooloo Windfarm Proposal ACP-323761-25

We are of the opinion that the following points must be considered by the planning inspector for [An Coimisiún Pleanála](#).

- The scale of the development with a proposed 9 Wind turbines is not in keeping with the landscape sensitivity of the area. The scale of proposed development will have an adverse impact on the local built environment.
- The proposed development has one turbine and associated works that are within the Tuam Municipal district, we strongly object to any of the development taking place within the Tuam MD as it is within the LARES area, an area not deemed appropriate for such a development, we ask that this part be excluded for consideration for that reason.
- The scale and siting of the proposed development will also adversely impact the local road infrastructure which are not to a standard for such heavy transport of equipment and building materials.
- The scale of the development will have an impact on consumable water, not in keeping with the protection of major drinking water sources for the local population.
- The impact of the development on traditional boglands in the area is unprecedented, we are of the opinion that mitigation against such peatland disturbance is not sufficient and will have a longer lasting environmental impact.
- The proposed intensification and concentration of large scale SID's within the Tuam Municipal district is not in keeping with sustainable development and could constitute a over development of the district as a whole. We need to protect the built environment for future development in both tourism and amenities and other rural development. The Tuam Municipal district is mapped under the Galway County Council Development plan 2022-2028 Galway County Transport and Planning Study (GCTPS), therefore such proposed developments need to be considered on that basis.

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- The area's within the townlands of Cloondahamper, Cloonascragh, Elmhill, Cooloo, Lecarrow, Dangan Eighter, Lissavally and Slievegorm, are areas of strong rural communities, such a development if granted could reduce significantly the ability for new rural housing and a protection of the rural population and its future expansion, especially the parts of the area that fall within the Tuam Municipal District.

Yours sincerely,



Cllr Karey McHugh Farag (on behalf of Members of the Tuam MD).

Chair of The Tuam Municipal District

**Submission by Ballinasloe Municipal District Members
On CE Report 15/12/2025
Cooloo Windfarm ACP-323761-25**

As members of the Ballinasloe MD, we would like to make the following observations in relation to the CE Report on the Cooloo Windfarm Proposal ACP-323761-25

We are of the opinion that the following points must be considered by the planning inspector for [An Coimisiún Pleanála](#).

- The scale of the development with a proposed 9 Wind turbines is not in keeping with the landscape sensitivity of the area. The scale of proposed development will have an adverse impact on the local built environment.
- The scale and siting of the proposed development will adversely impact the local road infrastructure which are not to a standard for such heavy transport of equipment and building materials.
- The scale of the development will have an impact on consumable water, not in keeping with the protection of major drinking water sources for the local population.
- The impact of the development on traditional boglands in the area is unprecedented, we are of the opinion that mitigation against such peatland disturbance is not sufficient and will have a longer lasting environmental impact.
- We need to protect the built environment for future development in both tourism and amenities and other rural development including one off houses. The Ballinasloe Municipal district is mapped under the Galway County Council Development plan 2022-2028 Galway County Transport and Planning Study (GCTPS), therefore such proposed developments need to be considered on that basis.
- The area's within the townlands of Cloondahamper, Cloonascragh, Elmhil, Cooloo, Lecarrow, Dangan Eighter, Lissavally and Slievegorm, are areas of strong rural communities, such a development if granted could reduce significantly the ability for new rural housing and a protection of the rural population and its future expansion, especially the parts of the area that fall within the Ballinasloe Municipal District.
- Three of the proposed turbines - numbers 6,7 and 8 are in locations that are considered "generally to be discouraged" by the Galway County Council Wind Potential report, for such developments.

Yours sincerely,

Cllr Peter Keaveney _____

Chair of The Ballinasloe Municipal District
(on behalf of Members of the Ballinasloe MD).

