



Oifig na  
nOibreacha Poiblí  
Office of Public Works



Case Reference ABP PAX07.323761  
Administrative Officer  
An Coimisiún Pleanála  
Strategic Infrastructure Development Section,  
64-67 Marlborough Street,  
Dublin 1  
D01 V90

21 November 2025

**RE: ACP- PAX07.323761: Proposed Development of the Wind Farm Development Project (and all associated works) at Cooloo and surrounding townlands, Co. Galway.**

A Chara,

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Office of Public Works (OPW) is a central Government Office operating under the Minister for Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform with particular responsibility for Flood Risk and Estate Management, including Heritage.

The OPW has responsibility for the care, operation and maintenance of all National Monuments in State care. In undertaking this duty, the principal objective is to protect, conserve, maintain and present these sites and to facilitate appropriate public access where possible. In this regard, OPW works in partnership with the National Monuments Service at the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH).

This submission outlines observations from the OPW on the Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) application by Neoen Renewables Ireland Limited to An Coimisiún Pleanála for planning permission in respect of the construction of nine wind turbines within the townlands of Cloondahamper (Blake), Cloonascragh, Elmhill, Cooloo, Lecarrow, Dangan Eighter, Lissavally and Slievegorm in Co. Galway.

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## 2.0 PROPOSED WORKS (ABP- PAX07.323761)

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 - 162 metres;
  - A hub height of 99 - 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;
- 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 of the L62312 in the townland of Dangan Eighter;
- ix. 1 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, 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 Plan 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.

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### 3.0 OBSERVATION

The OPW notes that the following National Monuments in State care, all in County Galway are located within a 21km radius of the proposed windfarm (all distances approximate):

NM 166	Abbey, Knockmoy	6 km
NM 278	Church, Abbert Demesne, Knockmoy	5.6 km
NM 505	Tuam High Cross, Tuam	12 km
NM 273	Dunmore Abbey, Castlefarm	16 km
NM 248	Dunmore Castle, Castlefarm	16 km
NM 48	Church & Round Tower, Kilbennen, Pollacorragune	17 km
NM 369	Bawn & House, Caheravoley	18 km
<b>NM 406</b>	<b>Athenry Castle, Athenry</b>	<b>20 km</b>
NM 428	Jennings Castle, Castlegrove East	21 km

NM 406, Athenry Castle is highlighted as it has a Visitor Service operation, signifying investment by the OPW in the presentation of the property to domestic and international visitors.

The OPW notes that the photomontages for this SID do not include assessments of visual impact from these nationally important heritage receptors.

Chapters 13 and 14 make reference to some of the sites, in particular, to Knockmoy Cistercian Abbey (NM 166), from which the windfarm is visible.

It is also noted that there is a VP (viewpoint) assessment of a location on the east side of Tuam. The application documentation does not appear to provide evidence of an assessment through ZTV (Zone of Theoretical Visibility) mapping of the National Monuments in State care, or of baseline photographs from these sites looking towards the proposed Cooloo windfarm site, or broader views depicting other cumulative windfarm sites.

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#### 4.0 CONCLUSION

The OPW requests that An Coimisiún Pleanála seeks from the applicant, verifiable visual impact assessment information, including cumulative impact, on National Monument in State care heritage receptors, as listed above.

This will enable An Coimisiún Pleanála, the OPW and others to understand the potential visual impact on the cultural heritage significance of these nationally important protected sites.

The OPW requests that An Coimisiún Pleanála takes into consideration the concerns raised in this letter.

**Terri Sweeney Meade FRIAI, RIBA**

**Assistant Principal Architect**

*National Monuments, National Historic Properties & Capital Works Delivery*

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