

## 2. BACKGROUND TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

This chapter of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report ('EIAR') presents information on renewable energy and climate change policy and targets, the strategic, regional and local planning context for the Proposed Project, planning history, scoping and consultation, as well as setting out the nature of the cumulative impact assessment process undertaken.

### 2.1 Introduction

The 'Proposed Project' will be known as the 'Maughanaclea Renewable Energy Development' and is being brought forward in response to local, regional, national and European policy regarding Ireland's transition to a low-carbon economy, associated climate change policy objectives and to reduce Ireland's dependence on imported fossil fuels for the production of electricity.

As detailed in Section 1.1.1 in Ch.1: Introduction, for the purposes of this EIAR, the various project components are described as 'Proposed Project', 'Proposed Wind Farm', 'Proposed Grid Connection', the 'Site', 'Proposed Wind Farm site'. Please see Section 1.1.1 of this EIAR for further details. A detailed description of the Proposed Project is provided in Ch. 4: Description of the Proposed Project of this EIAR.

This chapter of the EIAR presents the policies and targets which have been put in place at the various levels of Government, both national and international in relation to renewable energy and climate change. The details below set out the need for the Proposed Project to aid Ireland in meeting its national targets and European commitments in relation to climate change and decarbonisation. It also summarises EIA scoping and consultation undertaken and the cumulative impact assessment process.

The overall Proposed Project comprises the construction of 14 no. wind turbines and associated infrastructure. It is proposed to include the connection to the national grid via underground electrical cabling to the existing Dunmanway 110kV Substation, located approximately 17.3km southeast of the Proposed Wind Farm site.

The Proposed Project comprises the provision of a wind farm and grid connection which will generate electricity for export onto the national grid. The need to decarbonise and reduce emissions has always been imperative, however, in recent years the urgency involved has become clearer to all stakeholders. The Climate Action Plan (CAP) first published by the Government in 2019, and updated in 2021, 2023, 2024 and 2025 sets out a roadmap to halve emissions by 2030 and reach net zero no later than 2050. Central to this is the set of measures set out to increase the proportion of renewable electricity to up to 80% by 2030 and a target of 9GW from onshore wind. The CAP places front and centre the facts that without urgent action, global warming is likely to be more than 2°C above pre-industrial levels by 2060, with 'devastating' impacts on nature and 'irreversible changes to many ecosystems' arising.

Furthermore, the Programme for Government released in January 2025 "*The Government is committed to achieving 80% of Ireland's electricity generation from renewable sources by 2030. To reach this goal, we will establish a clear regulatory pathway, enable network upgrades, improve port facilities, and ensure a dependable schedule of renewable energy auctions. We are focused on ensuring that local communities benefit from Ireland's renewable potential, with job creation, community ownership, and tangible economic returns.*"

The primary driver behind the Proposed Project is the need to provide additional renewable energy to offset the use of fossil fuels within the electricity generating sector. Increasing electricity generation from wind power represents the most economical renewable option to reduce emissions within the power generation sector and is the most mature technology available to achieve national targets that have been

established for decarbonisation. The current proposal represents the provision of a significant wind energy proposal and will contribute considerably towards Ireland satisfying its 2030 and 2050 renewable energy targets.

## 2.1.1 Statement of Authority

MKO has developed extensive expertise and experience over the last 15 years in preparing Background and Planning Policy Context Chapters for a range of projects, including multiple large scale wind energy developments.

This chapter was led by Alan Clancy MIPI with support from Sean McCarthy, Alan McBride and Adrian Moran. Alan Clancy is a Senior Planner at MKO, who has over 9 years of experience in private practice. Alan holds a BA in Geography & History and a Master's in Planning and Sustainable Development. Alan has experience across a range of sectors including in the commercial, residential, industrial and renewables sectors, Alan's key strengths and areas of expertise are in development management, provision of planning advice, and project management. Since joining MKO, Alan has assisted with various projects including Strategic Infrastructure Developments, lodgement and management of Planning Applications, Development Plan Submissions and preparing Development Potential Reports. Alan is a member of the Irish Planning Institute.

Alan McBride is a Project Planner within the Renewables team at MKO with over 9 years of experience in both private practice and local authorities in Ireland and the UK. Alan holds BA (Hons) in Geography & History and Postgraduate Diploma in Urban and Regional Planning. Prior to taking up his position with MKO in November 2024, Alan worked as a Planner with Gravis Planning in Dublin and held previous posts with the London Borough of Bexley and the London Borough of Newham in England. Alan has experience in strategic planning, development management, environmental assessment, and research and analysis. Within MKO, Alan project manages and provides planning support on a variety of development management projects including for large-scale residential developments, infrastructure developments, and renewable energy projects. Alan also works as part of large, multidisciplinary teams preparing planning applications and is responsible for the preparation of the planning policy elements of ELARs.

Adrian Moran is a Planner with MKO having joined the company in April 2024. Adrian holds a BA (Hons) in History and Archaeology from University of Galway and an MSc (Hons) in Planning and Development from University of Galway. Since joining MKO, Adrian has been involved in a range of renewable energy projects including onshore and offshore wind, solar and grid infrastructure developments. His main responsibilities include preparing planning application documents and reports, preparing inputs for Environmental Impact Assessment Reports and liaising with multidisciplinary project teams.

This chapter was reviewed by Sean McCarthy. Sean is a Project Director in the Planning Team at MKO with over 10 years of experience in both private practice and local authorities. Sean holds a BSc. (Hons) in Property Studies from ATU and a Masters in Regional & Urban Planning for Heriot Watt University in Edinburgh. Prior to taking up his position with McCarthy Keville O'Sullivan in September 2015, Sean worked as a Planning Officer with the Western Isles Council in Scotland in the UK and prior to that worked as a Graduate Planner with Tipperary County Council. Sean is a chartered member of the Royal Town Planning Institute with extensive experience in residential, commercial, industrial, quarries and healthcare development projects. Sean has been involved in complex and large-scale development projects from inception through to planning permission both as a project manager and working as part of wider design teams. Sean has extensive experience in working on Strategic Housing Development Projects/Large Scale Residential Development Projects and EIAR projects. Within MKO, Sean plays a large role in the management and confidence building of junior members of staff and works as part of a large multi-disciplinary team to produce planning applications.

## 2.1.2 Renewable Energy Resources

Renewable energy resources are constantly replenished through the cycles of nature, unlike fossil fuels, which are finite resources that are becoming increasingly scarce and expensive to extract. Renewable energy resources offer sustainable alternatives to our dependency on fossil fuels as well as a means of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and opportunities to reduce our reliance on imported fuels. These resources are abundantly available in Ireland, yet only a fraction has been tapped so far<sup>1</sup>.

A gradual shift towards increasing Ireland's use of renewable energy is no longer viable. There is an urgency now to ensure real changes occur without delay. Renewable energy development is recognised as a vital component of Ireland's strategy to tackle the challenges of combating climate change and ensuring a secure supply of energy. Ireland is heavily dependent on the importation of fossil fuels to meet its energy needs. In 2023, over 81% of Ireland's energy was imported from abroad, higher than the European Union (EU) average of almost 60% (National Energy Security Framework, 2022). This high dependency on energy imports is highly risky and Ireland is currently extremely vulnerable both in terms of meeting future energy needs and ensuring price stability. As such, expanding indigenous renewable energy supply is critical for energy security and price stability. The provision of the Proposed Project would aid in achieving the shift to decarbonising the electricity sector and energy security in Ireland.

## 2.1.3 Need for the Proposed Project

Ireland's Climate Action Plan 2024 and Climate Action Plan 2025 sets ambitious yet essential targets for renewable energy, including 9GW of onshore wind capacity - with at least 5GW of offshore to be delivered by 2030 - and an 80% share of renewable electricity by the same year. However, multiple assessments, including the Climate Change Advisory Council (CCAC) Annual Review and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) emissions projections, confirm that Ireland is not on track to meet these targets. Significant gaps remain in renewable energy deployment, particularly in grid capacity expansion, as well as onshore and offshore wind energy development, while continued reliance on fossil fuels threatens national and EU climate commitments.

Failure to meet binding EU targets will expose Ireland to financial penalties, increased carbon credit costs, and continued dependence on fossil fuel imports—posing serious risks to energy security and economic stability. Furthermore, Ireland's national interest, as outlined in Section 143(1) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended (the Act), requires the rapid expansion of renewable energy, making this a matter of strategic economic and social importance.

Every viable renewable energy project plays a crucial role in meeting Ireland's climate targets. The approval of well-planned, appropriately located renewable energy projects, such as the Proposed Project is not just beneficial—it is imperative. Without decisive action to facilitate renewable energy deployment, Ireland risks missing national and EU commitments, incurring financial penalties, and undermining energy security.

Please see the accompanying Planning Report and Section 1.5.1 of Ch.1: Introduction of this EIAR for further information on the need for the Proposed Project.

## 2.2 Climate Change Policy and Targets

International and national policy consistently identifies the need to reduce GHG emissions and stresses the importance of reducing global warming. The context of international policy has altered over the last 30-years from being of a warning nature to the current, almost universally accepted belief, that there is a

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) website, [www.seai.ie](http://www.seai.ie)

climate change emergency occurring both within Ireland and at a broader global scale. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)’s Sixth Assessment Report<sup>2</sup> published in 2021 provides a stark assessment of global climate change and presents evidence that climate changes will increase in all regions of the globe over the coming decades and that much of the damage caused by climate change up to this point is now likely irreversible, such as the rise in sea levels over the 21st century. The World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) report ‘*State of the Global Climate 2024*’, published in March 2025, states that the year 2024 was the warmest year on observational record, with temperatures exceeding 1.5 degrees above pre-industrial levels<sup>3</sup>.

“*The Status of Ireland’s Climate 2020*” produced by MET Éireann<sup>4</sup>, similarly reflects on clear and distinct impacts arising from climate change effects within an Irish context:

**Greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise:**

- Background carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) concentrations reached 414 ppm in 2020 which is approximately a 50% increase compared to pre-industrial levels.
- Methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) concentrations are at 1940 parts per billion (ppb) - which is approximately a 170% increase compared to pre-industrial levels.
- Nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O) concentrations are now above 330 ppb - which is approximately a 20% increase compared to pre-industrial levels.

**Annual average amounts of precipitation are increasing:**

- Annual precipitation was 6% higher in the period 1989 to 2018, compared to the 30- year period 1961 to 1990. The decade 2006 to 2015 was the wettest on record.

**Annual average air temperature is rising:**

- The annual average surface air temperature in Ireland has increased by approximately 0.9°C over the last 120 years, with a rise in temperatures being observed in all seasons.
- An increase in the number of warm spell days the last 60 years with very little change in cold spell duration.

**Sea level continues to rise:**

- Satellite observations indicate that the sea level around Ireland has risen by approximately 2-3mm/year since the early 1990s. Analysis of sea level data from Dublin Bay suggests a rise of approximately 1.7mm/year since 1938 which is consistent with global average rates.

**The ocean is becoming more acidic:**

- Measurements in the surface waters to the west of Ireland between 1991 and 2013 indicate an increase in ocean acidity which threatens calcifying species such as corals, shellfish and crustaceans.

**The ocean is getting warmer:**

- The average sea surface temperature at Malin Head over the 10 years between 2009 and 2018 was 0.47°C above the 1981-2010 mean.

**There is an increase in river flows across most of the country:**

<sup>2</sup> *Climate Change 2021 ‘The Physical Science Basis’ (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, August 2021)*

<sup>3</sup> *State of the Global Climate 2024 (World Meteorological Organisation, March 2025)*

<sup>4</sup> *Climate Status Report for Ireland 2020 (Environmental Protection Agency, Marine Institute, Met Éireann, August 2021)*

- Data analysis from the last 50 years identifies an increase in the magnitude of the river flows across most of the country
- There is evidence in more recent years of an increase in potential drought conditions especially in the east.

**The area of forests and artificial surfaces has increased:**

- Land cover observations since 1990 show increases in the area covered by both artificial surfaces and forests and a decrease in wetland areas which include peatlands. There was an increase of 38% in the volume of trees between 2006 and 2017.

In 2023, Met Éireann issued the “*Provisional State of the Irish Climate Report 2023*”<sup>5</sup>, provided an update on the impact that climate change is having on the Irish climate:

- 2023 was the warmest year on record for Ireland (record length 124 years).
- For the first time, Ireland’s average annual temperature rises above 11 °C.
- 2023 saw the warmest June on record.
- 2023 saw the wettest March and the wettest July on record.
- For the first time in 23 years, four months of the year were within their top 5 warmest months on record (average stays between one and two months every year since the year 2000.)

The IPCC’s Sixth Assessment Report does not, however, conclude that a climate catastrophe is inevitable, but rather, there remains a ‘narrow path’ to determine the future course of climate, mainly by cutting emissions down to net zero. The Proposed Project will contribute to the decarbonisation of the energy sector and reduce harmful emissions. In this regard, it is compliant with national and international climate change policy and targets.

## 2.2.1 International Climate Policy

### United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

In 1992, countries joined an international treaty, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), as a framework for international efforts to combat the challenge posed by climate change. The UNFCCC seeks to limit average global temperature increases and the resulting climate change. In addition, the UNFCCC seeks to cope with impacts that are already inevitable. It recognises that the climate system is a shared resource whose stability can be affected by industrial and other emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases. The framework set no binding limits on greenhouse gas emissions for individual countries and contains no enforcement mechanisms. Instead, the framework outlines how specific international treaties (called "protocols" or "Agreements") may be negotiated to set binding limits on greenhouse gases.

### Kyoto Protocol

The Kyoto Protocol operationalises the UNFCCC by committing industrialised countries and economies in transition to limit and reduce GHG emissions in accordance with agreed individual targets. Ireland is a Party to the Kyoto Protocol, which came into effect in 2005, and as a result of which, emission reduction targets agreed by developed countries are now binding.

In Doha, Qatar, on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2012, the “*Doha Amendment to the Kyoto Protocol*” was adopted. The amendment includes:

<sup>5</sup> Published 28<sup>th</sup> December 2023; updated 10<sup>th</sup> January 2024

- New commitments for Annex I Parties to the Kyoto Protocol who agreed to take on commitments in a second commitment period from 1st January 2013 to 31st December 2020;
- A revised list of greenhouse gases (GHG) to be reported on by Parties in the second commitment period; and
- Amendments to several articles of the Kyoto Protocol which specifically referenced issues pertaining to the first commitment period and which needed to be updated for the second commitment period.

Under the protocol, countries must meet their targets primarily through national measures, although market-based mechanisms (such as international emissions trading) can also be utilised.

### COP21 Paris Agreement

COP21 was the 21<sup>st</sup> session of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the UNFCCC. Every year since 1995 (excluding 2020 due to COVID-19), the COP has gathered the 196 Parties (195 countries and the European Union) that have ratified the Convention in a different country, to evaluate its implementation and negotiate new commitments. COP21 was organised by the United Nations and held, in Paris, from 30<sup>th</sup> November to 12<sup>th</sup> December 2015. COP21 closed with the adoption of the first international climate agreement (concluded by 195 countries and applicable to all). The 12-page text, made up of a preamble and 29 articles, provides for a limitation of the global average temperature rise to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and **to limit the increase to 1.5°C**. It is flexible and takes into account the needs and capacities of each country. The IPCC's 6<sup>th</sup> Assessment Report (2021) further collaborates this need to limit any increase in global average temperature to 1.5°C, stating that (underlined for emphasis):

*“Humanity has emitted 2,560 billion equivalent tons of CO<sub>2</sub> since 1750, and we only have a budget of 500 more if we want to limit warming to 1.5°C.*”

*By following a trajectory of very low GHG emissions (SSP1-1.9), the threshold of 1.5°C will be reached in the short term, between 2021 and 2040, before being very slightly exceeded (1.6°C anticipated over the period 2041-2060) then respected in the long term (1.4°C anticipated over the period 2081-2100).*

*“Everything is not lost, but we must pursue the Paris Agreement’s most ambitious goal of limiting warming to 1.5°C.”*

An article published by the IPCC on the 6<sup>th</sup> of October 2018 titled ‘*Global Warming of 1.5°C*’, notes the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways; in the context of mitigation pathways, strengthening of the global response to the threat of climate change, sustainable development, and efforts to eradicate poverty. This special report is part of an invitation contained in the Decision of the 21<sup>st</sup> Conference of Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to adopt the Paris Agreement and provides an update on the impact of climate change if emissions are not reduced.

### COP25 Madrid

COP25, the 25<sup>th</sup> session of the COP, was held between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> of December 2019 in Madrid. The conference was characterised by repeated warnings from civil society (NGOs and corporates) on emerging evidence and scientific consensus on climate change risk. Specifically, it was noted that there are only c. ‘10 years left’ before the opportunity of limiting global warming to 1.5°C is no longer feasible. As such, the only remaining approach to limiting raising global temperatures is a ‘7.6% reduction of global GHG emissions every year between 2020 and 2030, and to reach net zero emissions by 2050’. However, consensus was not achieved between States on finalising the operating rules of the Paris Agreement and to ensure that it became operational by 2020. Three issues which emerged between States from the COP25 are summarised below:

- There was no uniform consensus between States to raise countries’ climate ambitions, e.g. to make increased commitments in light of growing climate change data. Some States were opposed to imposing any obligation on countries to submit enhanced pledges next year, arguing it should be each country’s own decision. All states were required to submit a review of their commitments for COP26 in 2020. At the current level of climate targets, within a decade, the objective of the Paris Agreement will no longer be achievable;
- There was no agreement on finalising Article 6, the foundations for international cooperation to combat climate change. The aim was to establish the rules for new international mechanisms for financing and transferring GHG emission reductions; and
- There was no agreement on financing (Green Climate Fund); specifically, relating to both loss and damage caused by climate change.

Despite the lack of consensus on the above challenges, the COP25 did achieve more limited success with regard to the introduction of the “*San Jose Principles for High Ambition and Integrity of International Carbon Markets*”, which sets out the framework on which a robust carbon market should be built. These principles include, but are not limited to:

- Ensures environmental integrity and enables the highest possible mitigation ambition;
- Delivers an overall mitigation in global emissions, moving beyond zero-sum offsetting approaches to help accelerate the reduction of global GHG emissions;
- Prohibits the use of pre-2020 units, Kyoto units and allowances, and any underlying reductions toward Paris Agreement and other international goals; and,
- Ensures that double counting is avoided and that all use of markets toward international climate goals is subject to corresponding adjustments.

These principles received backing from 23 EU nations, including Ireland, as well as countries in Latin America, 5 Pacific islands, and 2 Caribbean nations.

## COP26 Glasgow

COP26 took place in Glasgow, Scotland between the 31<sup>st</sup> of October and 12<sup>th</sup> November 2021. The summit was centred around the fact that “*climate change is the greatest risk facing us all.*” The UK, as hosts for the summit, have developed a ten-point plan to deliver a green industrial revolution, seeking to lead the world in tackling and adapting to climate change.

The key items COP26 seeks to achieve are:

- Secure global net zero by mid-century and keep 1.5 degrees within reach;
- Adapt to protect communities and natural habitats;
- Mobilise finance; and,
- Work together to deliver

All world leaders at the summit confirmed the need to **urgently** address the gaps in ambition and work together to achieve climate action. The summit highlighted that the Paris Agreement is working, with leaders outlining national targets and efforts to further reduce emissions. There was a clear commitment to working together to achieve climate aims, with significant announcements including:

- “*Over 40 leaders joined the Breakthrough Agenda, a 10-year plan to work together to create green jobs and growth globally, making clean technologies and solutions the most affordable, accessible and attractive option before 2030 – beginning with power, road transport, steel, hydrogen and agriculture.*”
- Over 120 countries covering more than 90% of the world’s forests endorsed the Glasgow Leaders’ Declaration on Forests & Land Use committing to work collectively to halt and reverse forest loss and land degradation by 2030, backed by the biggest ever commitment of public funds for forest conservation and a global roadmap to make 75% of forest commodity supply chains sustainable.

- A Just Energy Transition Partnership was announced to support South Africa’s decarbonisation efforts; a powerful example of collaboration between an emerging economy and international partners.
- The launch of the Global Methane Pledge saw over 100 countries committing collectively to reduce global methane emissions by 30% by 2030.”

### COP27 Sharm el-Sheikh

COP27 took place in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt from the 6<sup>th</sup> of November to the 20<sup>th</sup> of November 2022. The Conference of the Parties (COP) is a supreme decision-making body of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). COP 27 centred around three major topics:

- Closing the emissions gap to keep 1.5°C alive
- Loss and Damage
- Climate Finance

COP27 officially ended on the 18th of November, but due to the nature of negotiations an outcome text and the final press conference was not held until November 20th. The first outcomes of the negotiations of the COP27 agenda were seen in the first draft document. A consolidated final document followed and while it removed much of the vague wording of the draft, it also removed some critical key points, particularly in relation to the strengthening of actions required by developed nations. The most significant outcomes from COP27 are outlined below:

- **Phase down/out language:** The final agreement was delayed due to the stance of China and India, among others, who were not comfortable with the ‘*phase out*’ of coal wording in the draft text. This led to the watering down of this commitment to a ‘*phase down*’ of coal use. The hope was that COP27 would work to include further language on coal and fossil fuel reduction efforts. However, the wider commitment to phase out all fossil fuels, led by India, and backed by the US and the EU, was taken out and can be marked as the biggest disappointment of COP27.
- **1.5°C Pathway:** The 1.5°C warming limit has been retained. It gives key political signals that the phase down of all fossil fuels is happening.
- **Climate Finance & Loss and Damage:** There has been the launch of an initiative by the V20 and G7 known as the Global Shield Against Climate Risk (GSACR). The intention of this initiative has been framed almost as an insurance policy backed by the World Bank to prepare and protect those most vulnerable to climate change disasters.

### COP 28 – Dubai

The 28th session of the COP to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, was held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates from 30<sup>th</sup> November to 13<sup>th</sup> December 2023. The main objective of COP was to assess the progress made by all parties on the implementation of the 2015 Paris Agreement through the concluding phase of the ‘global stocktake’, which began after COP26 in 2021.

A key outcome from COP 28 was the agreement to phase out fossil fuels and increase renewable energy capacity. The agreement calls for a tripling of renewable energy capacity globally by 2030. This was the first time that the COP explicitly addressed the need to end the use of fossil fuels. The agreement was signed by the Irish government among 116 other nations. The acceleration of the permitting of renewable projects and related infrastructure is identified as a crucial enabler to achieve the renewable energy targets set out under the agreement.

## COP29 – Baku

The 29<sup>th</sup> COP of the UNFCCC (COP29) was held in Baku, Azerbaijan, from November 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024, to November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024.

COP29 focused on accelerating global efforts to address climate change, in particular global efforts related to climate finance. The New Collective Quantified Goal on Climate Finance (NCQG) was agreed in the final days of COP; while developing countries advocated for at least USD 1 trillion annually by 2035, developed nations agreed to triples finance to developing countries, with commitments increasing from USD 100 billion annually to USD 300 billion annually by 2035. The NCQG has already drawn criticism for being inadequate given the global financial need of developing nations to mitigate and adapt to climate change effects and due to its lack of strong terminology in relation to the requirements of developed nations and detailed implementation strategies.

At COP29, significant progress was made in the discussions surrounding carbon markets, with nearly 200 nations agreeing on critical rules under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement. These rules aim to establish an UN-backed international carbon market. The adoption of these rules is seen as a crucial step towards operationalising a robust and credible carbon market. Despite the advances, concerns were expressed about the potential for weak governance and risks of exploitation in the system; these issues must be addressed to ensure the market's full functionality.

## COP30 - Belém

COP30 took place in Belém, Brazil between the 10<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> of November 2025, marking the first UN climate summit hosted within the Amazon region. It was framed as the “Implementation COP”, progressing the post-Paris Agreement framework from pledges to delivery after the first Global Stocktake (GST-1). Key actions arising from COP30 include:

- › Launch of the ‘Global Implementation Accelerator’, a voluntary initiative designed to support rapid, high-impact interventions. It creates a structured space for countries to receive technical support, identify barriers and coordinate investment strategies. Its remit covers a wide spectrum of mitigation and adaptation priority areas, including renewable energy deployment, battery storage, methane reduction, digital grid management, and crucial nature-based interventions.
- › Through the Belém Package, Parties committed to accelerating “zero- and low-emission technologies” in hard-to-abate sectors such as industry, transport and power.
- › COP 30’s redefined Action Agenda included 117 ‘Plans to Accelerate Solutions’ (PAS) across sectors, many of which target low-carbon energy, industrial decarbonisation, and clean system deployment.
- › COP30 set a long-term ambition to mobilise USD 1.3 trillion annually by 2035 for climate action. This finance is intended to help scale clean energy infrastructure (such as renewables, storage and grid infrastructure), support adaptation, and enable just transitions.

COP30 made strong progress on tools, mechanisms and political momentum for scaling renewable energy, improving efficiency and enabling just transitions. However, the inability to deliver a clear, binding fossil fuel phase-out remains a major barrier to aligning global energy systems with the 1.5°C pathway.

## European Green Deal – European Climate Law (2021)

The European Green Deal, initially introduced by the European Commission in December 2019, sets out the ‘blueprint’ for a transformational change of the 27-country bloc from a high- to a low-carbon economy, without reducing prosperity and while improving people’s quality of life, through cleaner air and water, better health and a thriving natural world. The Green Deal is intended to work through a framework of regulation and legislation setting clear overarching targets, e.g. **a bloc-wide goal of net**

**zero carbon emissions by 2050 and a 55% cut in emissions by 2030 (compared with 1990 levels).** This is a substantial increase compared to the existing target, upwards from the previous target of at least 40% (2030 Climate & Energy Framework), and furthermore, these targets demonstrate the ambition necessary to keep the global temperature increase to well below 2°C and pursue efforts to keep it to 1.5°C as per the Paris Agreement. With regard to the energy sector, the Green Deal focuses on 3 no. key principles for the clean energy transition, which will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and enhance the quality of life for citizens:

1. Ensuring a secure and affordable EU energy supply;
2. Developing a fully integrated, interconnected and digitalised EU energy market; and
3. Prioritising energy efficiency, improving the energy performance of our buildings and developing a power sector based largely on renewable sources (e.g. the Proposed Project)

The European Climate Law<sup>6</sup> writes into law the objectives set out above in the European Green Deal for Europe's economy and society to become climate-neutral by 2050. Climate neutrality by 2050 means achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions for EU countries as a whole, mainly by cutting emissions, investing in green technologies and protecting the natural environment. The Climate Law includes:

- A legal objective for the Union to reach climate neutrality by 2050;
- An ambitious 2030 climate target of at least 55% reduction of net emissions of greenhouse gases as compared to 1990, with clarity on the contribution of emission reductions and removals;
- A process for setting a 2040 climate target, taking into account an indicative greenhouse gas budget for 2030-2050 to be published by the Commission;
- A commitment to negative emissions after 2050;
- The establishment of European Scientific Advisory Board on Climate Change, that will provide independent scientific advice;
- Stronger provisions on adaptation to climate change; and
- Strong coherence across Union policies with the climate neutrality objective

The law aims to ensure that all EU policies contribute to this goal and that all sectors of the economy and society play their part. All 27 no. EU Member States have committed to turning the EU into the first climate neutral continent by 2050. One third of the 1.8 trillion-euro investments from the Next Generation EU Recovery Plan, and the EU's seven-year budget, will finance the European Green Deal. On 14<sup>th</sup> July 2021, the European Commission adopted a set of proposals<sup>7</sup> to make the EU's climate, energy, transport and taxation policies fit for reducing net greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030, compared to 1990 levels.

Achieving these emission reductions in the next decade is crucial to Europe becoming the world's first climate-neutral continent by 2050. This milestone will only be achieved through the permitting and construction of renewable energy projects, such as the Proposed Project.

### 2.2.1.2 Project Compliance with International Climate Policy

Based on a review of key international climate policy documents, it is clear that the Proposed Project will contribute to reducing dependence on fossil fuels for electricity generation by providing clean, renewable electricity to Ireland's national grid, thus contributing to wider international goals, including a reduction in carbon emissions. This shift supports the objectives of the UNFCCC to limit global temperature increases driven by climate change, as well as the goals set out in the Kyoto Protocol and various COP agreements outlined above. By making a just transition to more renewable forms of

<sup>6</sup> Regulation (EU) 2021/1119 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 June 2021 establishing the framework for achieving climate neutrality and amending Regulations (EC) No 401/2009 and (EU) 2018/1999 ('European Climate Law') published in the Official Journal on 9 July 2021 and came into force on 29 July 2021.

<sup>7</sup> 'Fit for 55': delivering the EU's 2030 Climate Target on the way to climate neutrality (July 2021)

electricity generation, the level of carbon emissions will drop as our reliance on non-renewable forms of energy lessen.

## 2.2.2 National Climate Change Policy

### Programme for Government – Securing Ireland’s Future (January 2025)

The Programme for Government 2025 – Securing Ireland’s Future (January 2025) places specific emphasis on climate change, recognising that time is critical in addressing the climate crisis. The Programme states that the Government is committed to taking *“decisive action to radically reduce our reliance on fossil fuels and to achieve a 51% reduction in emissions from 2018 to 2030, and to achieving net-zero emissions no later than 2050”*.

The Programme states that the next ten years are a critical period in addressing the climate crisis, and therefore, a deliberate and swift approach to reducing more than half of Ireland’s carbon emissions over the course of the decade (2020-2030) must be implemented. The programme states that the Government are committed to reducing GHG emissions by an average 7% per annum over the next decade in a push to achieve a net zero emissions by the year 2050.

With regard to renewable energy generation, the Programme notes that the Government is committed to the rapid decarbonisation of the energy sector. The Programme states the Government’s ongoing support and commitment to take *“the necessary action to deliver at least 70% renewable electricity by 2030”*. This target has been updated by subsequent Climate Action Plans.

### Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021

The Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021 (‘the Climate Act’) legally binds Ireland to achieve net-zero emissions no later than 2050, and to a 51% reduction in emissions by the end of this decade.

The Climate Act provides the framework for Ireland to meet its international and EU climate commitments and to become a leader in addressing climate change. As indicated by the premise of the legislation, the reduction of emissions is a key proponent of the Climate Act and incorporates the following key provisions:

- Embeds the process of setting binding and ambitious emissions-reductions targets in law;
- Provides for a national climate objective, which commits to pursue and achieve no later than 2050, the transition to a climate resilient, biodiversity-rich, environmentally sustainable and climate-neutral economy;
- Provides that the first two five-year carbon budgets proposed by the Climate Change Advisory Council should equate to a total reduction of 51% over the period to 2030, relative to a baseline of 2018;
- The role of the Climate Change Advisory Council has been strengthened;
- The government must adopt carbon budgets that are consistent with the Paris Agreement and other international obligations;
- Actions for each sector will be detailed in the Climate Action Plan which must be updated annually; and
- Local Authorities must prepare individual Climate Action Plans which will include both mitigation and adaptation measures and will be updated every five years.

Under Section 15 of the Climate Act, public bodies are obliged to, in so far as practical, perform their functions in a manner consistent with the latest Climate Action Plan, the National Energy & Climate Plan 2021 – 2030, and other national climate mitigation and adaptation plans. Cork County Council (CCC), as a public body with consenting functions, must comply with this obligation in determining the subject application.

The Proposed Project will supply approximately 67.2MW of renewable electricity to the national grid, which represents a significant opportunity to contribute to the 51% reduction in emissions being sought, which is as outlined above as a legally binding requirement. The Proposed Project is therefore considered compliant with the relevant policies and objectives set out at both the European (e.g. European Green Deal) and national tiers of governance in this regard.

### Carbon Budgets

The first national carbon budget programme proposed by the CCAC, approved by Government and adopted by both Houses of the Oireachtas in April 2022 comprises three successive 5-year carbon budgets . The total emissions allowed under each budget are shown in Table 2-1 below.

Table 2-1 Proposed Carbon Budgets of the Climate Change Advisory Council

	2021 – 2025 Carbon Budget 1	2026 – 2030 Carbon Budget 2	2031 – 2035 Provisional Carbon Budget 3
	All Gases		
Carbon Budget (Mt CO <sub>2</sub> eq)	295	200	151
Annual Average Percentage Change in Emissions	-4.8%	-8.3%	-3.5%
The figures are consistent with annual emissions in 2018 of 68.3 Mt CO <sub>2</sub> eq reducing to 33.5 Mt CO <sub>2</sub> eq in 2030, thus allowing compliance with the 51% emissions reduction target by 2030.			

Section 6C of the Climate Act provides that the Minister shall prepare, within the limits of the carbon budget, the Sectoral Emissions Ceilings. These ceilings set out the maximum amount of greenhouse gas emissions that are permitted in each sector. The Government approved Sectoral Emissions Ceilings on 28 July 2022. The electricity sector is allocated a sectoral ceiling of 40 Mt CO<sub>2</sub> eq for the first budget (2021-2025) and a sectoral ceiling of 20 Mt CO<sub>2</sub> eq for the second budget period (2026-2030). In 2022, the electricity sector emissions were 10.1 Mt CO<sub>2</sub> eq.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) reported in May 2025<sup>8</sup> that the first two carbon budgets (2021-2030) – which aim to support the achievement of the 51% emissions reduction target - would not be met. In regard to the first carbon budget, it is projected that it will be exceeded by 12 Mt CO<sub>2</sub>eq in the ‘With Existing Measures (WEM)’ scenario and by 8 Mt CO<sub>2</sub>eq in the ‘With Additional Measures (WAM)’ scenario. Section 6D – paragraph 5 – of the Climate Act states that non-achievement of the first carbon budget would see the excess emissions carried forward into the second budget period and the second carbon budget would be reduced by that amount. If this occurs this would make achievement of the second budget substantially more difficult. Taking into account the projected excess from the first carbon budget, it is projected that the second carbon budget will be exceeded by 114 MtCO<sub>2</sub>eq in the WEM scenario and 77 MtCO<sub>2</sub>eq in the WAM. As a result of this, it is stated that “*far higher emissions cuts will be needed to comply with Budget period 3 and subsequent carbon budgets*”.

According to the EPA, Ireland is not on track to meet the targets for the first and second carbon budget periods, as set out by the CCAC. As such, it is imperative that projects such as the Proposed Project are consented as they have the potential to decrease carbon emissions through the provisions of renewable electricity to the national grid, thus decreasing the country’s reliance on carbon-emitting fossil fuels.

<sup>8</sup> [Ireland’s Greenhouse Gas Emissions Projections 2023-2050](#), EPA, May 2025

## Report of the Joint Committee on Climate Action - Climate Change: A Cross-Party Consensus for Action (2019)

In March 2019, the Joint Committee on Climate Action Change released a report detailing a cross party consensus for action. In 2019 there was already concern that Ireland’s performance in meeting international and national obligations was poor, and concern remained regarding emission projections the ability to meeting 2030 targets under relevant EU Directives.

The report states that the transformation of Ireland’s energy system will be required for the country to meet its future 2030 and 2050 GHG emission targets; specifically, in order to reach net zero emissions by 2050, Ireland will be required to fully decarbonise electricity generation. Therefore, there is a clear incentive for developing, and safeguarding, Ireland’s capacity in renewable energies and renewable electricity. Since this report was published, the Climate Act has been enacted and there have been recent progress / future scenario assessments (e.g. EirGrid’s ‘*All Island Generation Capacity Statement 2022 – 2031*’ (October 2022)).

Given the clear concern that the county’s future emissions targets may be missed, it is crucial that projects, such as the Proposed Project, which can contribute in a meaningful manner towards climate change targets, and which can be provided without significant adverse environmental effects arising, are brought forward and supported with favourable consideration through the planning system and constructed.

## Climate Action Plan 2023

The Climate Action Plan 2023 (CAP23) was published in December 2022 by the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications. This outlines the actions required to 2035 and beyond to meet Ireland’s commitment to becoming carbon neutral by 2050. CAP23 sets out a roadmap to deliver on Ireland’s climate ambition and is aligned to ensure that Ireland achieves its legally binding target under the Climate Act of net-zero greenhouse gas emissions no later than 2050. A target aims for a reduction in emissions of 51% over the period 2018 to 2030 and in doing so, prevent / mitigate the potentially devastating consequences of climate change on Ireland’s environment, society, economic and natural resources.

The CAP23 states that to do so, Ireland must harness the untapped indigenous renewable resources and has a target of achieving 80% of electricity generation from renewable sources by 2030 (unchanged from the previous Climate Action Plan, 2022) with a target of 9GW of that being produced by onshore wind. Measures set out in CAP23 to achieve these targets include to ‘accelerate and increase the deployment of renewable energy to replace fossil fuels’ (Section 12.1.4 CAP23). It is clear from the message and ambition of CAP23 that the drive to deploy renewable energy projects such as the Proposed Project in Ireland are critical to achieving the aims and objectives of CAP23 including the 9GW of onshore wind energy by 2030 and carbon neutrality by 2050.

*“Achieving these ambitions will require a coordinated effort across Ireland and every economic sector will be involved. It requires no less than a national transformation over the coming years in how we work, travel, heat our homes, source our energy and use our land”.*

*“Decarbonisation of the electricity sector is, as noted in CAP23, key to the decarbonisation of other sectors who will depend on electrification including transport, heating and industry. The increase in portion of renewable electricity of 80% by 2030 will come in part from a targeted 9GW of onshore wind. The plan notes: “Achieving further emissions reductions between now and 2030 requires a major step up in how we accelerate and increase the deployment of renewable energy to replace fossil fuels, deliver a flexible system to support renewables, and manage electricity demand”.*

Chapter 12 sets out the state of play, targets and actions for the decarbonisation of the Electricity sector. Carbon emissions from electricity have fallen by 45% between 2005 and 2020, falling by 19% between

2005-2012 and by 33% between 2012 and 2020. This trend is largely due to the availability of renewable energy generated electricity (a sixfold increase between 2005 and 2020) and an associated reduction in the use of carbon heavy fuels such as peat and coal.

Due to the scale of the challenge, and the recognition of central role of the electricity sector in achieving sector wide targets, the electricity sector has been allocated the smallest carbon budget and will require the steepest carbon emissions decline of all sectors – namely a reduction in carbon emission by -75% relative to 2018 baseline. Carbon budgets 1 and 2 allow for 30.02 MtCO<sub>2</sub>eq from the electricity sector up to 2025 and 20 MtCO<sub>2</sub>eq. from 2026-2030. This means an average of 8 MtCO<sub>2</sub>eq. per annum. Emissions for the period 2021 were 9.98 MtCO<sub>2</sub>eq., which is in exceedance of 8 MtCO<sub>2</sub>eq., which means that to keep on track, electricity will now have to achieve annual emissions of c. 7.5 MtCO<sub>2</sub>eq. from 2022 to 2025.

The measures set out for the electricity sector include *inter alia*:

- Reduce annual CO<sub>2</sub>eq. emissions from the sector to 3 MtCO<sub>2</sub>eq by 2031 (75% reduction compared to 2018);
- Accelerate and increase the deployment of renewable energy to replace fossil fuels;
- Accelerate the delivery of onshore wind, offshore wind and solar through a competitive framework to reach 80% of electricity demand from renewable energy by 2030;
- Target 6GW of onshore wind and to 5 GW of solar by 2025;
- Target 9 GW onshore wind, 8 GW Solar and at least 5 GW of offshore wind by 2030;
- Align the relevant constituent elements of the planning and permitting system to support accelerated renewable energy development, supported by national policy and associated methodologies to inform regional and local planning policies, noting that Development Plans are obliged to set out objectives to facilitate energy infrastructure.

Having regard to the targets and measures set out above, it is clear that there is strong policy support for the provision of renewable energy generators, such as the Proposed Project.

### Climate Action Plan 2024

The Climate Action Plan 2024 ('CAP 24') builds on CAP 23 by refining and updating the status of the actions required to deliver the decarbonisation required under the carbon budgets and sectoral emissions ceilings. The renewable electricity generation targets are unchanged from the CAP 23 (9GW of onshore wind & 80% renewable electricity share).

CAP 24 includes the latest trends in the electricity sector:

- In 2022, renewable generation accounted for 38.6% of electricity, an increase from 35% in 2021.
- Electricity accounted for 14.4% of Ireland's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in 2022.
- To meet the first carbon budget the electricity sector requires a decarbonisation rate of 17.3% per annum in the period 2023-2025. For context, the decarbonisation rate between 2018 and 2022 was 1.4% per annum.

CAP 24 acknowledges the urgency and importance of the decarbonising the electricity sector. The plan states:

*“Given that the programme of large-scale offshore wind deployment is expected to be realised towards end decade, deployment rates for onshore renewables will need to increase to match demand growth to ensure we keep electricity emissions within range of the carbon budgets. This requires a major upscaling and accelerating in current deployment of renewables, particularly onshore wind.” (emphasis added)*

The scale of the challenge is apparent when quantified:

*“As an example, the historical average deployment of onshore wind installed capacity connected between 2008 and 2020 inclusive was ~280 MW per annum from 19 projects (with an annual maximum of 612 MW). To achieve the necessary emissions abatement, an approximately eight-times increase of renewable energy deployment to **2.3 GW annually** would be needed between **2024 and 2030.**”*

CAP 24 identifies the alignment of local and national policy as a critical to accelerate renewable energy rollout.

*“Greater alignment between local plans and renewable energy targets at national and regional level to support investment in and delivery of onshore wind and solar renewable energy is also critical”.*

Having regard to the targets and measures set out above, it is clear that there is strong policy support for the provision of additional renewable energy generators, such as the Proposed Project.

### Climate Action Plan 2025

The Climate Action Plan 2025 (CAP25) represents the third statutory update to Ireland’s climate roadmap under the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021. Building on the foundations laid by previous plans, CAP25 refines and strengthens the strategies necessary to deliver Ireland’s legally binding carbon budgets and sectoral emissions ceilings. It sets out a clear trajectory to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 51% by 2030 and to achieve climate neutrality no later than 2050.

A cornerstone of CAP25 is the decarbonisation of Ireland’s electricity system through a substantial increase in renewable energy generation. The plan reaffirms ambitious targets for renewable electricity share which includes 80% by 2030, and 50% by 2025. This is to be achieved through the accelerated deployment of onshore wind (2 GW by 2025; 9 GW by 2030), offshore wind (at least 5GW by 2030), and solar energy (up to 5 GW by 2025; 8 GW by 2030).

#### 2.2.2.2 Project Compliance with National Climate Policy

The Proposed Project will generate renewable electricity which will supply to the national grid. This renewable energy will help Ireland address the challenge of decarbonising electricity generation as well as addressing the country’s over-dependence on imported fossil fuels. Therefore, it is considered that the Proposed Project is in compliance with climate policy. The Proposed Project will make a significant contribution to achieving the CAP 25 target of 9GW of onshore wind energy by the year 2030.

Furthermore, the Proposed Project will aid Ireland in adhering to, or limiting the exceedance of, the country’s carbon budgets. As Ireland is not on track to meet the targets for the first and second carbon budget periods, it is imperative that carbon emissions are reduced. Currently, the electricity sector is rapidly approaching the designated sectoral ceiling of 40 MtCO<sub>2</sub>eq for the first carbon budget period from 2020 to 2025. The national renewable energy targets and the carbon budgets are integral to the government’s response to the climate crisis.

### 2.3 Renewable Energy Policy and Targets

This section of the EIAR provides a breakdown of international and national renewable energy policy with regards to the Proposed Project. Under this section, the following are discussed:

- EU Renewable Energy Policy
- National Renewable Energy Policy

National policy has developed in line with European and international policies, targets and commitments, in that the importance and urgency of decarbonising the energy generation sector, the economy in general and reducing GHG emissions has become increasingly more apparent.

The Proposed Project complies with the nationally stated need to provide a greater amount of renewable energy onto the national grid and will further reduce the national reliance on fossil fuels for electricity generation.

## 2.3.1 European Renewable Energy Policy

### Renewable Energy Directive

The Renewable Energy Directive is the EU legal framework for the development of renewable energy across all sectors of the EU economy, supporting clean energy cooperation across EU countries. Since the introduction of the Renewable Energy Directive (RED) in 2009, it has undergone several revisions. Since its adoption in 2009, the share of renewable energy sources in energy consumption, across the EU, has increased from 12.5% in 2010 to 23% in 2022<sup>9</sup>. Of the 27 EU member states the lowest proportion of renewable energy in gross final energy consumption was recorded in Ireland (13.1%). Crucially, the Renewable Energy Directive sets the overall target for renewable energy in the EU.

#### RED I - 2009

Renewable Energy Directive 2009 (RED I - the original RED) (2009/28/EC), adopted in 2009, set binding targets for EU member states to achieve a 20% share of renewable energy in final energy consumption by 2020. It established a framework for national renewable energy action plans, sustainability criteria for biofuels and bioliquids, and a system of guarantees of origin for renewable energy.

#### RED II – 2018

RED II, the first major amendment to the RED, (2018/2001/EU) entered into force in December 2018, as part of the Clean Energy for all Europeans package. In RED II, the overall EU target for Renewable Energy Sources consumption by 2030 was raised to 32%.

#### RED III – 2023

In November 2023, a revision of the Renewable Energy Directive<sup>10</sup> (RED III), came into force. RED III increases the EU wide renewable energy target from 32% set under the previous revision of the directive to at 42.5%, with an ambition to reach 45% by 2030. The increase was proposed under the publication of REPowerEU plan in May 2022. The Directive also introduces specific targets for Member States in the industry, transport, and building (district heating and cooling) sectors.

Under RED III, EU member states must identify areas for the acceleration of renewables where projects will undergo a simplified and fast-track procedure. The deployment of renewables will also be of “overriding public interest” in order to limit the number of legal challenges on new renewable energy installations. These measures came in response to REPowerEU which found that permitting is the biggest bottleneck for deploying wind at scale, with approximately 80 GW of wind power capacity stuck in permitting procedures across Europe.

There is an 18-month period to transpose most of the directive's provisions into national law, with a shorter deadline of July 2024 for some of the provisions related to permitting for renewables, in

<sup>9</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/en/web/products-eurostat-news/w/ddn-20231222-2>

<sup>10</sup> Directive (EU) 2018/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2018 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources (recast)

particular Article 16(f) which establishes the legal presumption that the construction and operation of renewable energy development and storage assets are in the

*"overriding public interest and serving public health and safety when balancing legal interest in individual cases for the purposes of Article 6(4) and Article 16(1), point (c), of Directive 92/43/EEC [the 'Habitats Directive'], Article 4(7) of Directive 2000/60/EC [the 'Water Framework Directive'] and Article 9(1), point (a), of Directive 2009/147/EC.[the 'Birds Directive']"*.

On 6 August 2025, the European Union (Planning and Development) (Renewable Energy) Regulations 2025 ([S.I. No. 274 of 2025](#)) were adopted for the purpose of giving effect to Articles 15e(5), 16, 16b, 16c(2), 16d, 16e and 16f of the RED III Directive.

The legislation introduces new decision timelines based on a “completeness check” (ss.34E, 37JB, 295B): 52 weeks for new wind farms, 30 weeks for repowering projects, and one to two years for IROPI cases (two years for projects over 150 kW, one year for projects under 150 kW or repowering). Importantly, renewable energy developments, including related grid and storage infrastructure, are now presumed to be in the **overriding public interest**.

### Energy Roadmap 2050

The Energy Roadmap 2050 was published by the European Commission in 2011 and analyses the transition of the contemporary energy system in ways that would be compatible with the GHG reductions targets as set out in the Renewable Energy Directive (Directive 2009/28/EC) while also increasing competitiveness and security of supply. To achieve these targets and objectives, the Roadmap states that significant investments will need to be made in new low-carbon technologies and renewable energy, e.g. wind energy infrastructure, energy efficiency and grid infrastructure. Five main routes are identified to achieving a more sustainable, competitive and secure energy system in 2050:

- High Energy Efficiency;
- Diversified Supply Technologies;
- High Renewable Energy Sources;
- Nuclear energy; and
- Carbon capture and storage.

The analysis found that decarbonising the energy system is technically and economically feasible. The Roadmap notes that all scenarios show the biggest share of energy supply technologies in 2050 comes from renewables. In this regard, it should be noted that the CCAC stated within their 2024 Annual Review that:

*“Progress to reduce emissions is not sufficient for Ireland to meet its national and EU climate obligations. Reliance on fossil fuels needs to end, and urgent action is required to ensure that people, places and nature can adapt to the changing climate and prepare for rapidly emerging climate risks. The current rate of policy implementation is too slow and fragmented, and more effective engagement across all segments of policy and society is required to empower sustainable decision-making and to understand and remove barriers to action.”*

As such, a major prerequisite for a more sustainable and secure energy system is a higher share of renewable energy up to and beyond 2030 to 2050. Each of the scenarios assumes in the analysis that increasing the share of renewable energy and using energy more efficiently are crucial, irrespective of the particular energy mix chosen.

The Proposed Project will aid in achieving the scenarios set out in the Energy Roadmap 2050 as if consented, the Proposed Project will increase the share of renewable energy being produced onto the national grid thereby reducing the reliance on more unsustainable forms of electricity production.

## European Green Deal

The European Green Deal, further detailed in Section 2.2.1, was launched in December 2019 and proposes to increase the binding target of renewable sources in the EU’s energy mix from 32% to **40% by 2030** via amendments to the Renewable Energy Directive as per the ‘Fit for 55’ package (July 2021)<sup>11</sup>. The Deal recognises that 75% of the EU’s GHG emissions stems from the production and use of energy, hence emphasising the need to decarbonise the EU’s energy system. The deal identifies three key principles to support a clean energy transition:

1. *Ensuring a secure and affordable EU energy supply*
2. *Developing a fully integrated, interconnected and digitalised EU energy market*
3. *Prioritising energy efficiency, improving the energy performance of our buildings and developing a power sector based largely on renewable sources<sup>12</sup>.*

## REPowerEU

REPowerEU, launched in May 2022 by the European Commission, proposes an outline of a plan to make Europe independent from Russian fossil fuels, starting with gas, due to the high and volatile energy prices, and security of supply concerns following Russia’s unprecedented military attack on Ukraine. Currently, the EU imports 90% of its gas consumption, with Russia providing around 45% of those inputs. Russia also accounts for around 25% of oil and 45% of coal imports. Phasing out dependence on fossil fuels can be done well before 2030, increasing the resilience of the EU-wide energy system based on two pillars:

1. *Diversifying gas supplies, via higher Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) and pipeline imports of biomethane and renewable hydrogen production and imports from non-Russian suppliers.*
1. *Reducing faster the use of fossil fuels by boosting energy efficiency, increasing renewables and addressing infrastructure bottlenecks.*

With full implementation of the measures in REPowerEU Plan, at least 155 billion cubic metres (bcm) of fossil gas use could be removed, which is equivalent to the volume imported from Russia in 2021. Nearly two thirds of that reduction can be achieved within a year. A part of this plan includes:

*‘Speeding up renewables permitting to minimise the time for roll-out of renewable projects and grid infrastructure improvements’.*

In September 2023, the European Parliament agreed to update the Renewable Energy Directive. The updates including raising the share of renewables in the EU’s final energy consumption to 42.5% by 2030 with Member States encouraged to achieve 45% and a more efficient approval procedure for deploying renewables in Europe. In addition, as a part of the REPowerEU Plan, the European Commission has proposed a series of additional targeted amendments to the renewable energy directive to reflect the ongoing changes in the energy landscape and the continued invasion of Ukraine. This will make the sector more efficient and reach the set goals faster.

In addition, the REPowerEU Plan highlights the overriding public interest in achieving renewable energy targets. The REPowerEU Plan states that: “the revised proposal operationalises the principle of **renewable energy as an overriding public interest**, introduces the designation of ‘**go-to**’ areas and other ways to shorten and simplify permitting while also minimising potential risks and negative impacts on the environment.” This highlights the importance of public interest and incentive to achieve the renewable energy target, highlighting the importance of appropriate designation of sufficient areas for wind energy development by local authorities within the EU.

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/eu-plan-for-a-green-transition/>

<sup>12</sup> [https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal/energy-and-green-deal\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal/energy-and-green-deal_en)

### 2.3.1.2 Project Compliance with EU Policy

The Proposed Project is fully aligned with, and supported by, relevant EU energy and climate policy. It will contribute to the objectives of the 2030 Climate and Energy Framework, including the EU-wide binding targets of achieving at least 27% renewable energy and 27% energy efficiency by 2030. Additionally, the Proposed Project supports the increased ambition to raise the share of renewables in the EU's energy mix from 32% to a minimum of 42.5% by 2030.

The EU Energy Roadmap 2050, which outlines pathways to meet long-term climate and energy goals, highlights that all projected scenarios foresee renewables as the dominant source of energy supply by 2050. As such, the Proposed Project aligns with this long-term vision.

The RePowerEU plan, which aims to enhance energy security and accelerate the integration of renewables into the EU grid, explicitly calls for faster permitting processes for renewable projects and improvements to grid infrastructure. The Proposed Project directly supports these objectives and is therefore considered to be strongly underpinned by current EU energy policy.

The EU Energy Roadmap 2050 and the RePowerEU Plan are applicable to the current planning application and EIAR, and they provide further justification for granting consent for the Proposed Project.

## 2.3.2 National Renewable Energy Policy

### White Paper on 'Ireland's Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Future' 2015 - 2030

On 19th June 2020, the updated Green Paper on Energy Policy in Ireland was published. The Paper which was originally published on 14th May 2014 marked the start of a public consultation process on the future of Ireland's energy policy over the medium to long-term. The Department of Communications, Climate Action & Environment (now the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications or DECC) acknowledged that energy is an integral part of Ireland's economic and social landscape and that *"a secure, sustainable and competitive energy sector is central to Ireland's ability to attract and retain Foreign Direct Investment and sustain Irish enterprise. The three key pillars of energy policy are to focus on security, sustainability and competitiveness"*.

Following an extensive consultation process, the Government published the White Paper 'Ireland's Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Future 2015–2030' in December 2015. This document, produced by the then Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (DCENR), provides an updated energy policy framework to guide Ireland's transition to a low-carbon energy system through 2030 and towards 2050. It outlines the Energy Vision 2050, which targets an 80–95% reduction in energy sector GHG emissions (compared to 1990 levels), primarily through increased renewable electricity generation and greater use of electricity and bioenergy in heating and transport.

The policy framework was developed to guide policy and actions that the Irish Government intends to take in the energy sector up to 2030 and also reaching out to 2050 to ensure a low carbon future that maintains Ireland's competitiveness and ensures a supply of affordable energy. The Energy Vision 2050, as established in the White Paper, describes a *'radical transformation'* of Ireland's energy system which will result in GHG emissions from the energy sector reducing by between 80% and 95%, compared to 1990 levels. The paper advises that a range of policy measures will be employed to achieve this vision with emphasis on the generation of electricity from renewable sources, which there are plentiful indigenous supplies and increasing the use of electricity and bio energy to heat homes and fuel transport.

The White Paper highlights onshore wind as Ireland's leading and most cost-effective renewable resource, noting its high efficiency and lower support costs due to the country's strong wind profile. It

also recognises the growing competitiveness of solar technology and its potential to enhance energy security, meet renewable targets, and stimulate economic growth.

*“Onshore wind continues to be the main contributor (18.2% of total generation and 81% of RES-E in 2014). It is a proven technology and Ireland’s abundant wind resource means that a wind generator in Ireland generates more electricity than similar installations in other countries. This results in a lower cost of support.”*

The Green Paper on Energy Policy in Ireland 2015-2030 was updated and republished in 2020 and updated again in January 2021. The updated Paper outlines that:

*“The 2020 target of 40% RES-E is likely to require a total of 3,500-4,000 MW of onshore renewables generation capacity, compared to the 2,500 MW available at end December 2014, of which wind generation accounted for 2,200MW. **To achieve our target, the average rate of build of onshore wind generation will need to increase to up to 260 MW per year. The current rate of build is about 170 MW per year.**”*

### National Energy Security Framework

More recently, the National Energy Security Framework (DECC, April 2022) highlights clearly the impacts the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the resulting war has had on Europe’s energy system. The resulting decision by the European Union to phase out the import of Russian gas, oil and coal has brought to the fore the importance of security of supply and how energy policy is designed for long-term resilience. It takes account of the need to decarbonise society and economy, to reduce Ireland’s emissions by 51% over the decade to 2030 and reach net zero emissions by 2050. According to the SEAI’s Energy in Ireland (2020) report, oil accounts for 55.6% of Ireland’s primary energy requirement making it one of the highest rates of oil dependency in the EU. The International Energy Agency, of which Ireland is a member country, includes a 10-point plan to cut oil use which calls for an acceleration in the deployment of wind and solar projects. Ireland’s response per the Framework is set out over three themes:

- Theme 1 – managing the impact on consumers and businesses
- Theme 2 – ensuring security of energy supply in the near-term
- Theme 3 – reducing our dependency on imported fossil fuels in the context of the phasing out of Russian energy imports across the EU.

In relation to theme 3, the Framework highlights that replacing fossil fuels with renewables, including wind energy, will be a focus area of work. The Framework calls for *“Supportive policies across Government and State agencies”* which *“can reduce barriers and fast track permitting for renewable energy generation projects. Similarly, renewable energy developers need to match this through taking a leadership role in delivering high quality applications to relevant consenting authorities, meeting project milestones on time and minimising delays.”* There are a number of ‘Responses’ set out in the Framework aimed at reducing reliance on imported fossil fuels and increasing indigenous renewable energy generation, including Response 25 which seeks the alignment of all elements of the planning system to support accelerated renewable energy development.

The Government published an update to this in November 2023 which outlines a new strategy to ensure energy security in Ireland for this decade, while ensuring a sustainable transition to a carbon neutral energy system by 2050. The Energy Security Package emphasizes the need to prioritize, monitor, and regularly review energy security during the transition period. It proposes measures focusing on:

1. Reduced and Responsive Demand
2. Transition to Renewables
3. Building More Resilient Systems
4. Implementing Robust Risk Governance

The report details mitigation measures under each area, such as expanding indigenous renewable energy capacity, diversifying fuel sources, and enhancing governance structures. Lessons from European energy supply disruptions and domestic electricity sector challenges inform the strategic approach.

Six key pillars guide the response and recommendations outlined in *"Energy Security in Ireland to 2030,"* which includes a public consultation and external reviews. The Government plans to release follow-up reports every five years, with implementation oversight by the Government's Energy Security Group.

Having regard to the above, it is clear that the provision of additional renewable energy generation, such as the Proposed Project is vital in helping to secure the State's energy supplies and reduce reliance on imported fossil fuels.

### Energy Security in Ireland to 2030 – Energy Security Package

Published in November 2023, the energy security package titled 'Energy Security in Ireland to 2030' builds on the policies set out in the NESF. The energy security package is based on the recognition of the following fact:

*"Ireland's future energy will be secure by moving from an oil-, peat-, coal- and gas-based energy system to an electricity-led system maximising our renewable energy potential, flexibility and being integrated into Europe's energy systems."*

Independent research undertaken as part of the package, McCarthy Report<sup>13</sup>, provides an analysis of developments in the electricity sector in Ireland. The McCarthy Report makes the following observation in relation to the consenting process:

*"The problem of delays encountered by major infrastructure projects, including in the electricity system, due to planning and environmental consent issues was evident. They had been commented upon by the International Energy Agency in its 2019 review of Ireland which named planning delays as the principal challenge to delivery of policy for the sector."*

A key finding from the technical analysis conducted as part of the energy security package is the interdependence of energy security on two essential pillars: *'harnessing our indigenous renewable energy resources at speed and at scale and the rapid electrification of energy demand'*. As such, the energy security package provides additional measures to supplement the existing measures introduced under previously published government policy documents. Those additional measures most relevant to the Proposed Project is Action 10 which is *"To implement Planning and Consenting System Reforms and provide greater certainty to the sector."*

The energy security package aims to ensure that the planning system is fully aligned and resourced to fully support accelerated renewable energy development. It also aims to ensure renewable energy projects are prioritised in line with the recast Renewable Energy Directive and RePowerEU.

The Proposed Project will support the government's objectives in ensuring the State's energy security. The Proposed Project serves as a domestic renewable energy generator capable of providing clean electricity to the national electricity grid, contributing to a renewables-led system.

#### 2.3.2.2 Project Compliance with National Renewable Energy Policy

The National Energy Security Framework outlines several steps to accelerate Ireland's shift to renewable energy initiatives. It's evident that the Proposed Project aligns with this framework by

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/276441/eb496e01-5c01-4594-af09-74342b4ac971.pdf#page=null>

increasing the proportion of renewable energy on the national grid, thus expediting Ireland's transition to a low-carbon energy future.

## 2.4 Climate and Renewable Energy Target Progress

At a European level, the latest data shows that, as of 2023, 24.5% of energy consumed in the EU came from renewable energy sources<sup>14</sup>. This represents an increase of 1.5% compared to 2022 levels. While progress is being made to increase the share of renewable energy, it is clear that all EU member states need to intensify their efforts to collectively comply with the target of 42.5% set in the latest revision of the renewable energy directive.

Of the 27 EU member states, Ireland had one of the lowest proportions of renewable energy at 15.3% in 2023<sup>15</sup>. It is evident that Ireland is not performing well when compared against our European counterparts and that urgent action is required to increase the overall share of renewable energy in our gross final energy consumption. When it comes to the share of renewable energy in electricity, Ireland does perform better generating 36.8% in 2022, but still below the EU average of 41.1%<sup>16</sup>.

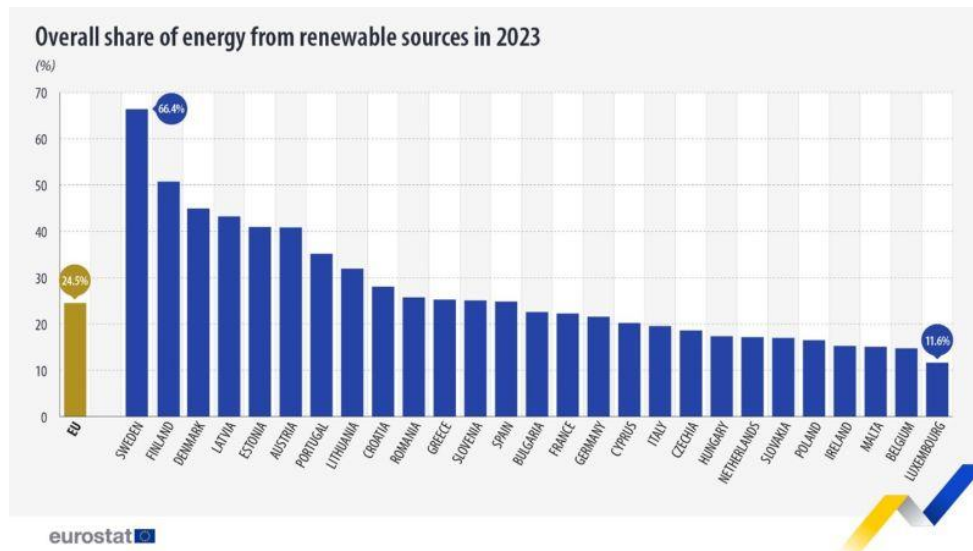


Figure 2-1: Overall share of energy from renewable sources (source: Eurostat)

### Ireland's Greenhouse Gas Emissions Projections

In May 2024, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) published *Ireland's Greenhouse Gas Emissions Projections 2023–2050*, outlining progress towards national and EU climate targets. The report produced two scenarios: *With Existing Measures* (WEM), based on policies in place up to 2022, and *With Additional Measures* (WAM), which included further planned actions such as those in the Climate Action Plan 2024 (CAP24). Despite the inclusion of these additional measures, Ireland was projected to exceed both carbon budgets for 2021–2030 by a wide margin, miss the 51% emissions reduction target (compared to 2018), and fall short of sectoral emissions ceilings across most sectors. The WAM scenario also indicated that Ireland would not meet its 42% EU ESR emissions reduction target by 2030, even when accounting for flexibilities. Notably, the Energy Industries sector was projected to see significant emissions reductions, driven by the expansion of wind and other renewable electricity generation.

<sup>14</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Renewable\\_energy\\_statistics](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Renewable_energy_statistics)

<sup>15</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/nrg\\_ind\\_ren/default/table?lang=en](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/nrg_ind_ren/default/table?lang=en)

<sup>16</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/nrg\\_ind\\_ren\\_custom\\_9264705/default/bar?lang=en](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/nrg_ind_ren_custom_9264705/default/bar?lang=en)

In May 2025, the EPA published an updated report on Ireland’s Greenhouse Gas Emission Projections, titled ‘Ireland’s Greenhouse Gas Emissions Projections 2024–2055’, which reaffirmed and further emphasised the previous 2023-2050 trends.

The main findings of the report are the following:

- *Ireland is not on track to meet the 51 per cent emissions reduction target (by 2030 compared to 2018) which include many 2024 Climate Action Plan measures. Greenhouse gas emissions are projected to be 9 to 23 per cent lower by 2030 (compared to 2018) which places Ireland further from the 2030 national climate target compared to previous assessments.*
- *Budget period 1 (2021-2025) of 295 Mt CO<sub>2</sub>eq is projected to be exceeded by between 8 to 12 Mt CO<sub>2</sub>eq. Budget period 2 (2026-2030) of 200 Mt CO<sub>2</sub>eq is also expected to be exceeded by a significant margin of 77 to 114 Mt CO<sub>2</sub>eq (with carryover from Budget period 1).*
- *Sectoral emissions ceilings for 2030 are projected to be exceeded by the Buildings, Electricity, Industry and Transport sectors;*
- *Ireland is not projected to meet its EU target, set under the Effort Sharing Regulation, of a 42 per cent emissions reduction by 2030 (compared to 2005) even with flexibilities applied. This assessment shows that greenhouse gas emissions will be reduced by 10 to 22 per cent by 2030 (compared to 2005) without the use of flexibilities and by 13 to 26 per cent with the use of flexibilities.*
- *Additional measures and accelerated implementation of existing measures is necessary to meet both National and EU targets. Projected gaps to National and EU 2030 targets reported this year are larger than last year due to more conservative delivery of measures and associated estimates of emission reductions by 2030.*
- *From 10.6 Mt CO<sub>2</sub>eq in 2018, emissions from the Energy Industries sector are projected to decrease to between 3.4 and 4.4 Mt CO<sub>2</sub>eq in 2030 (a 59 to 68 per cent reduction). Renewable energy generation at the end of the decade is projected to range from 60 to 68 per cent of electricity generation.*

It is stated in the report that the target of 80% share renewable electricity (RES-E) is not projected to be reached. In addition to this, the CAP24 target of 9GW of onshore wind, is projected to fall short in the WAM scenario, with a predicted 7.1MW delivered.

### National Energy Projections (November 2024)

The National Energy Projections report, published by the SEAI in November 2024, sets out the most recent updates to Ireland’s progress towards its binding European and National renewable energy targets.

In 2023 RED II set an EU wide target for overall RES of 32% RES in 2030. Member states set their national contributions to the EU-wide target, with Ireland setting it’s at 34.1% in 2030. RED III increased the binding EU-wide target for overall RES to at least 42.5% with Ireland subsequently increasing the target to 43% in 2030.

The decarbonisation of the electricity generation is critical considering the need to electrify other sectors such as heating and transport in order to achieve the sectoral decarbonisation targets. By 2030, renewable energy sources are anticipated to dominate electricity generation, particularly experiencing a significant surge later in the decade attributed to the integration of substantial offshore wind projects.

The most notable conclusion drawn from the Report is the significant gap between projections across both the WEM and WAM scenarios and the legally binding national and EU emission reductions targets. The Report states that even with full implementation of CAP24, Ireland is projected to miss its agreed national and EU 2030 targets for energy efficiency, renewable energy share and greenhouse gas emissions reduction.

Figure 1.27 of the Report, copied below, clearly illustrates the gap between the current installed wind capacity and the relevant Climate Action Plan (CAP) targets.

**Figure 1.27: Ireland’s installed wind capacity with 2024 estimates, projections to 2030, CAP targets**

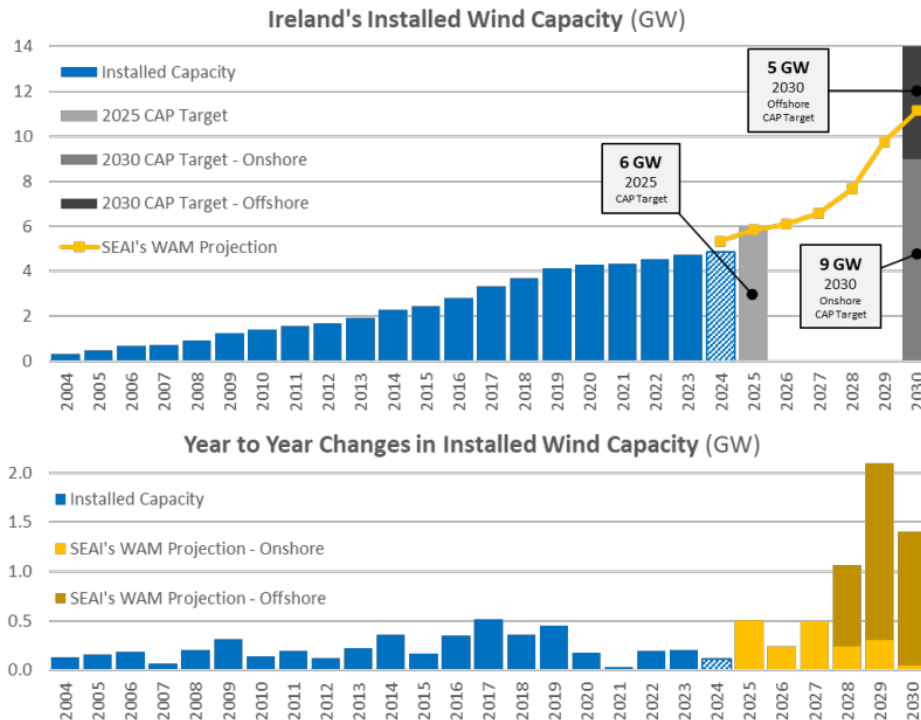


Figure 2-2: Ireland's installed wind capacity with 2024 estimates, projections to 2030, CAP targets

The SEAI projections explore the risk scenarios WEM and WAM, the aim being to address the gap between current policy trajectories and the most ambitious planned policies scenarios. The SEAI scenario modelling do not consider the CAP25 and CAP24, but rather CAP23. The SEAI projections under the ‘WAM scenario indicate a total installed capacity of 11.2GW by the end of 2030. The Report goes on to note that “Over the last 10 years, Ireland has added wind capacity at an average rate of 0.26GW per annum, although this has dropped to a rate of 0.14GW over the last 5 years. To align with the pace of the WAM projections needed to deliver on the 80% RES-E target, the roll out of onshore wind capacity needs to return to the rate previously achieved between 2016 and 2019...”

The Report projects GHG emissions under the WEM and WAM scenarios. It notes that since April 2023 there has been a “significant increase in net electricity imports across the interconnectors with the UK” and “electricity net-imports were far higher than other years, and higher than projected in the WEM or WAM scenarios...”. The Report considers the emission ceiling of the first two carbon budget periods –carbon budget 1 (CB1) ceiling 2021-2025 (five year cumulative)(MtCO<sub>2</sub>eq) and carbon budget 2 (CB2) ceiling 2026-2030 (five year cumulative)(MtCO<sub>2</sub>eq) in both the WEM scenario and WAM scenario. In the WEM scenario, total greenhouse gas emissions exceed CB1 by 9% by 2025. This overshoot means that 13% of the CB2 budget is consumed before the CB2 period begins. The second sectoral ceiling is then breached during 2028, with the exceedance reaching 27% by 2030. Under the WAM scenario the CB1 ceiling is exceeded by 6% and this overshoot means that 9% of the CB2 budget is consumed before the CB2 period begins. In this scenario the CB2 ceiling is exceeded by 17% by 2030.

It is clear from the projections outlined above that unprecedented action is required as soon as possible: “Where any exceedance occurs, steeper reductions are required to compensate, leading to a larger reduction required by 2030.

## Energy in Ireland (December 2024)

In December 2024, the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) released in annual publication ‘*Energy in Ireland*’ report which looks at trends in national energy use and at the underlying driving forces, such as the economy and weather, and more recently the impacts of high energy prices. It also examines greenhouse gas emissions from energy use, energy security, cost competitiveness, and our progress towards EU renewable energy targets.

The Report identifies that Ireland’s national energy-related emissions in 2023 were at their lowest level in over 30 years. Energy-related emissions in 2023 were 31.4 MtCO<sub>2</sub>eq, down 8.3% on 2022 levels, and lower even than those observed during the height of COVID impacts in 2020. Energy-related emissions fell by over 2.8 MtCO<sub>2</sub>eq in 2023 - the largest annual reduction observed in 12 years. The following are some of the key points, relating to renewable energy and energy emissions:

- Ireland’s national energy-related emissions have fallen for seven of the last ten years.
- 14.1% of Ireland’s primary energy was renewable in 2023, with fossil fuel remaining the dominant source of Ireland’s energy.
- Wind generation provided 33.7% of electricity supply in 2023.
- 2023 electricity emissions were 7.6 MtCO<sub>2</sub>eq, the lowest on record, down 22% on 2022 levels.
- 2023 was the first year in which fossil fuel generation accounted for less than half of Ireland’s gross electricity supply.
- In 2023, Ireland had 4.74 GW of installed wind capacity, up 4.5% on the previous year.

The Report states that over the last 10-years, Ireland has added wind capacity at an average rate of 0.26 GW per annum, although this has dropped to a rate of 0.14 GW over the last 5-years. To align to the pace of the WAM scenario projections needed to deliver on the 80% RES-E target, the roll-out of onshore wind capacity needs to return to the rate previously achieved between 2016 and 2019. The Report then goes on to state the following:

***“Increasing wind generation through added wind infrastructure is key to decarbonising Ireland’s electricity supply. The decarbonisation of electricity maximised the positive impact of sustainability technologies like heat pumps and electric vehicles. The recent slow-down in added wind capacity is impacting Ireland’s transition to a sustainable energy future. Renewable capacity must be added faster than electricity demand increases. We must do everything we can to support the roll-out of both onshore and offshore wind and grid-connected solar PV capacity.”*** (emphasis added)

## The Climate Change Advisory Council Annual Review 2024

*The Climate Change Advisory Council (CCAC) open their ‘Annual Review 2024-Summary for All’ quite starkly, stating “... **progress to reduce emissions is not sufficient for Ireland to meet its national and EU climate obligations.** Reliance on fossil fuels needs to end, and urgent action is required to ensure that people, places and nature can adapt to the changing climate and prepare for rapidly emerging climate risks. **The current rate of policy implementation is too slow and fragmented,** and more effective engagement across all segments of policy and society is required to empower sustainable decision-making and to understand and remove barriers to action.”* (emphasis added)

*In addition, the standout recommendation from the CCAC is that “So that Ireland can end its reliance on fossil fuels, Government should cease subsidising fossil fuel consultation and increase funding and make it more accessible to enable and accelerate the rapid uptake of low-carbon technologies and alternatives across all sectors.”*

In relation to the electricity sector specifically planning reform continues to be cited as a key area requiring urgent attention.

## The Climate Change Advisory Council Annual Review 2025 – Electricity

The CCAC published its annual review in April 2025 where it outlines detailed observations and recommendations for the Electricity sector in Ireland. This review emphasises the urgent need for Ireland to accelerate its transition to renewable energy to meet its 2030 electricity capacity targets and adhere to sectoral emissions ceilings. The CCAC states:

*“To meet the carbon budgets, emissions from the Electricity sector will need to reach zero by the end of the 2030s. In 2024, electricity emissions fell by approximately 7% relative to 2023, reaching the lowest level since record-keeping began in 1990. This was driven by a continued decline in the use of coal for electricity generation, coupled with a notable rise in imported electricity for the second consecutive year. Renewable energy is still not being rolled out fast enough, and insufficient investment in the electricity grid means that some of the renewable energy we currently generate cannot be used. Emissions are currently projected to exceed the sectoral emissions ceiling, even in the most optimistic scenario.”*

Key observations in relation to Renewable Electricity are outlined below:

- *In 2024, 1.6 GW of onshore wind (0.7 GW) and solar (0.9 GW) projects received planning permission, but only 0.5 GW (0.2 GW wind, 0.3 GW solar) were connected, which is well below the 1.8 GW annual target needed to achieve 2030 targets.*
- *Grid constraints led to 1,266 GWh (10.1% of the total available wind energy) of wind and energy being curtailed.*
- *During 2024, an additional 0.5 GW (0.2 GW wind and 0.3 GW solar) of new utility-scale renewable capacity was connected, representing a decrease compared with the 0.6 GW connected in 2023 and significantly below the 1.8 GW annual average increase in capacity that is required to meet 2030 targets.*

## Ireland’s Climate Change Assessment (January 2024)

In January 2024, the EPA published Irelands Climate Change Assessment (ICCA). This assessment provides a comprehensive overview and breakdown of the state of knowledge around key aspects of climate change with a focus on Ireland. The ICCA report is presented in four volumes.

- Volume 1: Climate Science – Ireland in a Changing World
- Volume 2: Achieving Climate Neutrality in 2050
- Volume 3: Being Prepared for Irelands Future
- Volume 4: Realising the Benefits of Transition and Transformation

The ICCA Synthesis Report states that having peaked in 2001, Irelands GHG emissions have reduced in all sectors except agriculture. However, Ireland currently emits more GHGs per person than the EU average. The ICCA Synthesis Report goes on to state that there has been an identified gap in policy that indicates that Ireland will not meet its statutory GHG emission targets. Achieving net zero carbon dioxide emissions by 2050 requires significant and unprecedented changes to Ireland’s energy system. Policies tailored to suit different stages of technology development are critical for achieving a net zero energy system. Established technologies, such as wind energy, solar photovoltaics and bioenergy will be key in meeting short-term emission reduction targets (i.e. 2030), whereas offshore wind infrastructure is expected to be the backbone of future energy systems. This can only be achieved with appropriate support schemes, regulation and investments for synergistic growth of offshore wind and other renewable technologies.

In relation to Ireland’s target of achieving net zero carbon dioxide emissions by 2050 and the role renewable energy will contribute to this, the ICCA Synthesis Report states the following:

*“There are well-established ‘no-regret options’ that need to happen now, which can get us most of the way to net zero carbon dioxide emissions. Beyond that, there are ‘future energy choices’*

*relating to the scale and magnitude of technologies that will help get us all the way. Ireland's no-regret options are demand reduction (e.g. through energy efficiency and reduced consumption), electrification (e.g. electric vehicles and heat pumps), deployment of market-ready renewables (e.g. wind energy and solar photovoltaics) and low-carbon heating options (e.g. district heating), while our future choices include hydrogen, carbon capture and storage, nuclear energy and electro fuels. Renewable energy can increasingly provide our future energy needs but will need to be complemented with carbon dioxide removals to achieve a net zero energy system in hard-to-abate sectors”.*

## 2.5 Planning Policy Context

This section of the EIAR provides the strategic planning context of the Proposed Project. As is examined below, the Proposed Project is in line with national, regional and local policies, frameworks, guidelines and plans. This section has been broken down to the following sections:

- National Policy Context
- Regional Policy Context
- Local Policy Context
- Other Relevant Material Considerations

As a renewable energy project, the Proposed Project is consistent with the overall national policy objectives to increase penetration and deployment of renewable energy resources and has been designed in the context of the relevant wind energy and other guidelines. The specific compliance with the National, Regional and Local/County Development Plan provisions is dealt with in detail in the sections below.

### 2.5.1 National Planning Policy

#### The Planning and Development Act 2024

The Planning and Development Act 2024 (the new Act) was signed into law by the President on the 17<sup>th</sup> of October 2024, after passing in both Houses of the Oireachtas. At the time of lodgement of this planning application, the current Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) (the Act) remains in place until the new Act is commenced by Ministerial Orders, with the Government indicating that this will be done on a phased basis.

The Government has approved an Implementation Plan for the Planning and Development Act 2024, which sets out the schedule for its phased commencement. The Implementation Plan also outlines a series of initiatives aimed at supporting training and stakeholder engagement across the planning sector to ensure a smooth transition to the new legislative framework. Concurrently, work is ongoing to revise and update the supporting regulations that will underpin the operation of the new Act.

#### National Planning Framework: Project Ireland 2040

The National Planning Framework (NPF), published in February of 2018, forms the top tier of the national planning policy structure which establishes the policy context for the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSES) and local level development plans. In an effort to move away from developer led system to one informed by the needs and requirements of society up to 2040, a number of objectives and policies have been put in place in the NPF in order for the country to grow and develop in a sustainable manner, including:

- Developing a new region-focused strategy for managing growth;
- Linking this to a new 10-year investment plan, the Project Ireland 2040 National Development Plan 2018-2027;

- Using state lands for certain strategic purposes;
- Supporting this with strengthened, more environmentally focused planning at local level; and
- Backing the framework up in law with an Independent Office of the Planning Regulator.

The NPF notes that the population of Ireland is projected to be roughly 5.7 million by 2040. This population growth will place further demand on both the built and natural environment. In order to strengthen and facilitate more environmentally focused planning at the local level, the NPF states that future planning and development will need to:

*“Tackle Ireland’s higher than average carbon-intensity per capita and enable a national transition to a competitive low carbon, climate resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050, through harnessing our country’s prodigious renewable energy potential.”*

A key focus throughout the NPF is the fostering of a transition toward a low carbon, climate-resilient society. In this regard, one of the stated key elements of the NPF is an Ireland which has a secure and sustainable renewable energy supply and facilitates the ability to diversify and adapt to new energy technologies. Key features identified in the NPF to facilitate the transition towards a low carbon energy future include:

- A shift from predominantly fossil fuels to predominantly renewable energy sources.
- Increasing efficiency and upgrades to appliances, buildings and systems.
- Decisions around development and deployment of new technologies relating to areas such as wind, smart grids, electric vehicles, buildings, ocean energy and bio energy.
- Legal and regulatory frameworks to meet demands and challenges in transitioning to a low carbon society.

Relevant to the Proposed Project, the **National Strategic Outcome 8** (*Transition to Sustainable Energy*), notes that in creating Ireland’s future energy landscape, new energy systems and transmission grids will be necessary to enable a more distributed energy generation which connects established and emerging energy sources, i.e. renewables, to major sources of demand. The successful transition to a low-carbon power system will depend on the pillars of 1) *Sustainability*, 2) *Security of supply* and 3) *Competitiveness*. A common theme underpinning these pillars is the need for a fit-for-purpose transmission and distribution energy network. Specifically, the NPF states that reinforcement of the distribution and transmission network to facilitate planned growth and distribution of a more renewables focused source of energy across the major demand centres, e.g. the functional purpose of the extant grid connection.

The following National Policy Objectives (NPO) are applicable to the Proposed Project.

- **NPO 21:** *Enhance the competitiveness of rural areas by supporting innovation in rural economic development and enterprise through the diversification of the rural economy into new sectors and services, including ICT-based industries and those addressing climate change and sustainability.*
- **NPO 54:** *Reduce our carbon footprint by integrating climate action into the planning system in support of national targets for climate policy mitigation and adaptation objectives, as well as targets for greenhouse gas emissions reductions.*

Also relevant to the Proposed Project, Ireland’s national energy policy under **Objective 55** aims to ‘promote renewable energy use and generation at appropriate locations within the built and natural environment to meet national objectives towards achieving a low carbon economy by 2050’. The NPF aims to ensure that decisions that are made today meet our future needs in a sustainable manner.

*“The manner in which we plan is important for the sustainability of our environment. Our planning system has influence across a wide range of sectors, both directly and indirectly and*

*interacts with many common issues related to effective environmental management, including water services, landscape, flood risk planning, protection of designated sites and species, coastal and marine management, climate mitigation and adaptation, and land use change.”*

An overarching objective of the NPF is to foster a transition toward a low carbon, climate-resilient society, which reflects the policy ethos established at the European level of governance (e.g. climate change and renewable energy targets). In this regard, one of the key themes of the NPF is the realisation of an Ireland which has a secure and sustainable renewable energy supply and the ability to diversify and adapt to new energy technologies. The NPF references the national Climate Policy Position which established the fundamental objective of achieving transition to a competitive, low carbon, climate resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050. The NPF emphasises that rural areas have a strong role to play in securing a sustainable renewable energy supply for the country and acknowledges that *“rural areas have significantly contributed to the energy needs of the country and continue to do so”*. In this regard, the NPF states:

*“In meeting the challenge of transitioning to a low carbon economy, the location of future national renewable energy generation will, for the most part, need to be accommodated on large tracts of land that are located in a rural setting, while also continuing to protect the integrity of the environment”.*

The NPF acknowledges that GHG emissions from the energy sector must be reduced by at least 80% by 2050 when compared to 1990 levels while ensuring a secure supply of energy exists. New energy systems and the maintenance / safeguarding of existing grid assets will be necessary for a more distributed, renewables focused energy system required to harness Ireland’s considerable indigenous energy sources and *“connect the richest sources of that energy to the major sources of demand”*.

In regard to the above, it is clear that the provision of new renewable energy generation is in line with the aims and objectives of the NPF which seeks to transition to a low carbon economy.

### National Planning Framework First Revision (2025)

On the 8th of April 2025, the Government approved the National Planning Framework First Revision (Revised NPF) which was subsequently passed through both Houses of the Oireachtas. The Revised NPF aims to address changes that have occurred in Ireland since 2018.

The Revised NPF provides an updated projection for the population of Ireland, with the population expected to increase to 6.1 million by 2040. This population growth will place further demand on both the built and natural environment, and subsequently, the services required to meet said demands. In order to strengthen and facilitate more environmentally focused planning at the local level, the Revised NPF states that future planning and development will need to:

*“Tackle Ireland’s higher than average carbon-intensity per capita and enable a national transition to a competitive low carbon, climate resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050, through harnessing our country’s prodigious renewable energy potential.”*

**National Strategic Outcome 8** (*‘Transition to a Carbon Neutral and Climate Resilient Society’*) notes that in creating Ireland’s future energy landscape, new energy systems and transmission grids will be necessary to enable a more distributed energy generation which connects established and emerging energy sources, i.e. renewables, to major sources of demand.

Chapter 9: Climate Transition and Our Environment, aims to address key national environmental challenges including the transition to a climate neutral economy, sustainable land management, renewable energy and resource efficiency. As per **NPO 70**, the Revised NPF highlights the importance of renewable energy infrastructure to achieve national climate action targets.

*“Promote renewable energy use and generation at appropriate locations within the built and natural environment to meet national objectives towards achieving a climate neutral economy by 2050.”*

Regional Renewable Energy Capacity Allocations have been introduced under the Revised NPF. This was one of the key actions for CAP24 and is supported under CAP25. The Northern and Western Region, in which the Proposed Project is located, is allocated a target of installing an **additional 1,389 MW of onshore wind energy by 2030**.

Under **NPO 74** Regional Assemblies are required to plan for the delivery of the regional renewable electricity capacity allocations outlined in the Revised NPF and identify allocations for each of the local authorities within their RSES. Furthermore, **NPO 75** requires Local Authorities to plan for the delivery of Target Power Capacity (MW) allocations consistent with the relevant RSES, through their City and County Development Plans. At the time of writing, no local Target Power Capacity allocations have been established, however it is clear from the regional allocation that the Northern and Western Region is set to deliver a significant amount of onshore wind energy in the coming years.

The introduction of renewable energy targets represents a more active and prescriptive approach to land use planning for renewable energy development. The Revised NPF aligns the national target of 9GW of onshore wind energy with the policies and objectives of Local Authorities. In regard to this, it is clear that the provision of new renewable energy generation through the Proposed Project is in line with aims and objectives of the Revised NPF, which seeks to transition to a carbon neutral economy.

### National Development Plan 2021-2030

The National Development Plan 2021 – 2030 (NDP) was published on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2021 and sets out the major public investment projects identified by Government which are to play a significant role in addressing the opportunities and challenges faced by Ireland over the coming years such as Covid-19, Brexit, housing, health, population growth, and most relevant to the subject development, climate change. It is stated that the NDP 2021 – 2030 will be the *‘largest and greenest ever delivered in Ireland’*, and in this regard, the NDP highlights that extensive consultation was undertaken to ensure that the plan adequately supports the implementation of climate action measures. Reflecting on the recent publication of the IPCC’s 6<sup>th</sup> Assessment Report, the NDP notes that the Irish Government is fully committed to ‘playing its part’ to ensure that the worst climate change damage can be avoided, e.g. significant reductions in CO<sub>2</sub> and other greenhouse gas emissions as assisted by the achievement of both European and National renewable energy targets. Specifically, the NDP states that,

*“The next 10 years are critical if we are to address the climate crisis and ensure a safe and bright future for the planet, and all of us on it.*

*The investment priorities included in this chapter [Ch. 13] must be delivered to meet the targets set out in the current and future Climate Action Plans, and to achieve our climate objectives. The investment priorities represent a decisive shift towards the achievement of a decarbonised society, demonstrating the Government’s unequivocal commitment to securing a carbon neutral future.”*

Notwithstanding this, the NDP acknowledges that it is not its role to set out a specific blueprint for the achievement of Ireland’s climate targets but, as noted above, to facilitate capital investment allocations for the climate and environmental strategic priorities.

One of the NDP’s strategic climate priorities is the need for low-carbon, resilient electricity systems; specifically, the plan commits to increasing the share of renewable electricity up to 80% by 2030. This is characterised by the NDP as an *‘unprecedented commitment to the decarbonisation of electricity supplies’*, which is certainly an ambitious and an explicit driver for the continued operation of renewable generators such as the Proposed Project. The focus of investment in renewable energy infrastructure is to contribute to a long-term, sustainable and competitive energy future for Ireland.

### 2.5.1.2 Project Compliance with the National Planning Policy

With regard to the above, it is considered that the Proposed Project is in line with and supported by the NPF, Revised NPF, and the NDP.

The Revised NPF projects a population increase of approximately one million people by 2040 and therefore recognises the strain and demand this will put on Ireland's energy system. In order to ensure Ireland delivers on our renewable energy and carbon emission reduction targets, the NPF recognises the need for increased renewable energy onto the national grid.

The NDP is clear in its priority to reach a low-carbon, climate resilient society over the lifetime of the NDP. The Proposed Project, if permitted, will provide clean, renewable electricity to the national grid, furthering development objectives of the NDP, namely the target to increase the share of renewable electricity up to 80% by 2030.

This shift from fossil fuels is dependent upon schemes such as the one proposed to generate renewable energy. Given the projected population increase, it is considered that if the share of renewable energy onto the grid is not increased, Ireland will fail to reach the National and International targets on emission reductions. The addition of 14 no. wind turbines, with an estimated electricity generation capacity of 67.2MW, will contribute to Ireland's national targets and support the country in meeting its renewable energy and carbon emission reduction goals at the EU level.

### 2.5.2 Regional Policy

#### Southern Regional Assembly Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy

The Southern Regional Assembly (SRA) was established in 2015 and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Southern Region (Carlow, Clare, Cork, Kerry, Kilkenny, Limerick, Tipperary, Waterford and Wexford) came into effect on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2020. The RSES provides a long-term, strategic development framework for the future physical, economic and social development of the Southern Region. The RSES seeks to achieve balanced regional development and full implementation of Project Ireland 2040 – the National Planning Framework.

Adopted on the 31<sup>st</sup> of January 2020, the principal statutory purpose of the RSES is to support the implementation of the Project Ireland 2040 NPF and NDP and the economic policies and objectives of the Government. The RSES aims to build on the region's strengths and potential to become a more prosperous, sustainable, climate resilient and attractive region for the benefit of all its people up to 2040 and beyond.

*“The RSES primarily aims to support the delivery of the programme for change set out in Project Ireland 2040, the National Planning Framework (NPF) and the National Development Plan 2018-27 (NDP). As the regional tier of the national planning process, it will ensure coordination between the City and County Development Plans (CCDP) and Local Enterprise and Community Plans (LECP) of the ten local authorities in the Region.”*

The RSES is committed to the implementation of the Climate Action Plan 2019 (superseded by CAP 25) by playing its part in the development of renewable energy. The ambition is reflected in the Regional Policy Objectives (RPO's) which sets out the key regional policies for the 12-year lifetime of the plan.

➤ **RPO 87: Low Carbon Future:** *The RSES is committed to the implementation of the Climate Action Plan 2019 by playing its part in the development of renewable energy. This is clearly reflected in the Regional Policy Objectives (RPO's) which sets out the key regional policies for the lifetime of the plan, from 2018 – 2030*

The RSES recognises the Region’s ample resources in regard to renewable energy. Over the next ten years there is a predicted growth in electricity demand and extra generating capacity will be required to accommodate this demand. Wind energy is recognised as a major source of renewable energy generation capable of providing clean electricity to the grid and meeting Ireland’s energy needs.

*“The RSES recognises and supports the many opportunities for wind as a major source of renewable energy. Opportunities for both commercial and community wind energy projects should be harnessed, having regard to the requirements of DoHPLG Guidelines on Wind Energy. Wind Energy technology has an important role in delivering value and clean electricity for Ireland.”*

To achieve national and EU targets in the context of the electricity sector, the RSES notes that further investment is required to develop alternative renewable energies with greater interconnection to energy resources. This key enabling action is captured under Strategic Aim 8 which sets out the need to *“safeguard and enhance the environment through sustainable development, prioritising action on climate change across the region, driving the transition to a low carbon and climate resilient society.”* Both the NPF and RSES emphasise, however, that the planning process is well placed to implement and integrate climate change objectives.

- **RPO 9 (Holistic Approach to Delivering Infrastructure):** *It is an objective to ensure investment and delivery of comprehensive infrastructure packages to meet growth targets that prioritise the delivery of compact growth and sustainable mobility as per the NPF objectives including for renewable energy climate change adaptation.*

The RSES sets out a number of Regional Policy Objectives (RPOs) designed to facilitate greater integration of renewables into the national grid. The RSES notes that there is significant potential to use renewable energy across the Region to achieve climate change emission reduction targets. As such, the RSES supports renewable industries such as the Proposed Project.

- **RPO 50 (Diversification):** *It is an objective to further develop a diverse base of smart economic specialisms across the rural Region, including innovation and diversification in (among other things) renewable energy as a dynamic driver for the rural economy.*
- **RPO 87 (Low Carbon Energy Future):** *The RSES is committed to the implementation of the Government’s policy under Ireland’s Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Future 2015-30 and Climate Action Plan 2019. It is an objective to promote change across business, public and residential sectors to achieve reduced GHG emissions in accordance with current and future national targets, improve energy efficiency and increase the use of renewable energy sources across the key sectors of electricity supply, heating, transport and agriculture.*
- **RPO 95 (Sustainable Renewable Energy Generation):** *It is an objective to support implementation of the National Renewable Energy Action Plan (NREAP), and the Offshore Renewable Energy Plan and the implementation of mitigation measures outlined in their respective SEA and AA and leverage the Region as a leader and innovator in sustainable renewable energy generation.*
- **RPO 96 (Integrating Renewable Energy Sources):** *It is an objective to support the sustainable development, maintenance and upgrading of electricity and gas network grid infrastructure to integrate renewable energy sources and ensure our national and regional energy system remains safe, secure and ready to meet increased demand as the regional economy grows.*
- **RPO 99 (Renewable Wind Energy):** *It is an objective to support the sustainable development of renewable wind energy (on shore and offshore) at appropriate locations*

and related grid infrastructure in the Region in compliance with national Wind Energy Guidelines.

- **RPO 100 (Indigenous Renewable Energy Production and Grid Injection):** It is an objective to support the integration of indigenous renewable energy production and grid injection.

In particular, **RPO's 96, 99, and 100** reflect the strong support for renewable energy throughout the RSES. The Proposed Project will generate clean, renewable electricity contributing to the objectives of the RSES. In relation to the integration of renewable energy resources, the Proposed Project will support the use of existing grid infrastructure and the injection of renewable electricity into the grid. The Proposed Project is therefore in alignment with policy at a regional level.

The RSES also acknowledges the need to develop a strong grid to support the integration of renewable energy on to the national electricity grid. The RSES sets out a number of infrastructural RPOs, relevant to the Proposed Project which indicate that the Region's continued support and investment in renewable energy generation:

- **RPO 220 Integrated Single Electricity Market (I-SEM):** It is an objective to support the Integrated Single Electricity Market (I-SEM) as a key priority for the Region and seek the sustainable development and reinforcement of the energy grid including grid connections, transboundary networks into and through the Region and between all adjacent Regions subject to appropriate environmental assessment and planning processes.
- **RPO 221 Renewable Energy Generation and Transmission Network:** a. Local Authority City and County Development Plans shall support the sustainable development of renewable energy generation and demand centres such as data centres which can be serviced with a renewable energy source (subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the planning process) to spatially suitable locations to ensure efficient use of the existing transmission network; b. The RSES supports strengthened and sustainable local/community renewable energy networks, micro renewable generation, climate smart countryside projects and connections from such initiatives to the grid. The potential for sustainable local/community energy projects and micro generation to both mitigate climate change and to reduce fuel poverty is also supported, The RSES supports the Southern Region as a Carbon Neutral Energy Region.
- **RPO 222 Electricity Infrastructure:** It is an objective to support the development of a safe, secure and reliable supply of electricity and to support and facilitate the development of enhanced electricity networks and facilitate new transmission infrastructure projects that might be brought forward in the lifetime of this plan under EirGrid's (2017) Grid Development Strategy (subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the planning process) to serve the existing and future needs of the Region and strengthen all-island energy infrastructure and interconnection capacity.

### 2.5.2.2 Project Compliance with Regional Policy

The RSES for the Southern Region clearly outlines its objective to support the development of renewable energy within the Region, such as the Proposed Project. It is considered that the provision of the Proposed Project would facilitate this objective and is particularly in line with **RPO 96, 99 and 100**.

In the region, a noticeable trend has emerged to recognise and take advantage of emerging opportunities related to the shift towards a decarbonized economy, particularly in the realm of renewable energy generation and therefore the Proposed Project is considered to be in line with Regional Policy.

### 2.5.3 Local Policy

### 2.5.4 Cork County Council Development Plan

#### Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028

The Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028 (CCDP) came into effect on 6th June 2022 and was subject to a Ministerial Direction in accordance with section 31(4)(c) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended however the requirements of this Direction did not relate to renewable energy and has no impact on the Proposed Project, subject of this EIAR.

Climate change mitigation and adaptation objectives have been incorporated into the policies of the CCDP. This is to ensure that climate change has been consistently integrated into the policy themes addressed by the CCDP. Chapter 17 of the CCDP outlines the County’s climate change policy and aligns itself with wider policies with the recognition that *‘national and regional planning policy and national and international climate change policy determine climate change commitments which Cork County Council must meet...’*. In relation to renewable energy and climate action, the relationship between increased renewable energy production and a reduction in GHG emissions is recognised.

**Objective 17-2** states:

*‘In order to achieve a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, an increase in renewable energy production, an increase in energy efficiency and enhanced biodiversity, support the transition to a low carbon, competitive, climate resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050 through implementation of the polices of this plan...’*

With regard to renewable energy, Chapter 13 of the CCDP sets out the policy context for the County’s energy strategy. County Cork’s role in the delivery of renewable energy resources is acknowledged within the CCDP, with the statement that *“Cork is well positioned to become self-sufficient in renewable energy and contribute to the achievement of national energy targets”*. The CCDP sets out a number of County Development Plan Objectives relating to renewable energy, including the following:

- › **Objective ET 13-1 (a): Energy** - Ensure that County Cork fulfils its potential in contributing to the sustainable delivery of a diverse and secure energy supply and to harness the potential of the county to assist in meeting renewable energy targets and managing overall energy demand.
- › **Objective ET 13-2(a): Renewable Energy** - Support Ireland’s renewable energy commitments as outlined in Government Energy and Climate Change policies by facilitating the development of renewable energy sources such as wind, solar, geothermal, hydro and bioenergy and energy storage at suitable locations within the county where such development has satisfactorily demonstrated that it will not have adverse impacts on the surrounding environment (including water quality), landscape, biodiversity or amenities.
- › **Objective ET 13-2 (b): Renewable Energy** - Support and facilitate renewable energy proposals that bring socio-economic benefit to the local community. The Council will engage with local communities and stakeholders in energy and encourage developers to consult with local communities to identify how they can invest in/gain from significant renewable energy development.
- › **Objective ET 13-21: Electricity Network**
  - a) Support and facilitate the sustainable development, upgrade and expansion of the electricity transmission grid, storage, and distribution network infrastructure.
  - b) Support the sustainable development of the grid including strategic energy corridors and distribution networks in the region to international standards.

- c) *Facilitate where practical and feasible, infrastructure connections to wind farms, solar farms, and other renewable energy sources subject to normal proper planning considerations.*
- d) *Proposals for development which would be likely to have a significant effect on nature conservation-sites and/or habitats or species of high conservation value will only be approved if it can be ascertained, by means of an Appropriate Assessment or other ecological assessment, that the integrity of these sites will not be adversely affected.*

› **Objective ET 13-22: Transmission Network**

- a) *To co-operate and liaise with statutory and other energy providers in relation to power generation in order to ensure adequate power capacity for the existing and future needs of the County including business and residential demands.*
- b) *Proposals for new electricity transmission networks will need to consider the feasibility of undergrounding or the use of alternative routes especially in landscape character areas that have been evaluated as being of high landscape sensitivity. This is to ensure that the provision of new transmission networks can be managed in terms of their physical and visual impact on both the natural and built environment and the conservation value of European sites.*
- c) *Proposals for development which would be likely to have a significant effect on nature conservation-sites and/or habitats or species of high conservation value will only be approved if it can be ascertained, by means of an Appropriate Assessment or other ecological assessment, that the integrity of these sites will not be adversely affected.*

From the above objectives, it is evident that there is strong support at local level for the development of renewable energy projects in County Cork in accordance with the CCDP. **Objective 13-4** is particularly relevant to the Proposed Project as it offers clear support for the development of onshore wind energy projects, including the siting of such developments at locations that utilise existing infrastructure, as is the case with the Proposed Project.

### Cork County Council Climate Action Plan 2024-2029

The Cork County Council Climate Action Plan, 2024-2029 (Cork CAP) sets out a strong precedent for the Council’s responsibility to ensure the County’s reduction in carbon emissions in line with the Climate Act.

*“The Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021, which also frames Ireland’s legally binding climate ambition, requires a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by Cork County Council of 51% by 2030 from the 2016/2018 average baseline and a 50% increase in energy efficiency from a 2009 baseline.”*

**Objective 4.3.1.1** and **Objective 4.8.1.1** of the Cork CAP clearly sets out the Council’s intention to reduce GHG emissions within the electricity sector through the development of renewable energy infrastructure projects.

- › **Objective 4.3.1.1** - *51% reduction in green house gases from the 2016/2018 baseline resulting from the council’s electricity usage.*
- › **Objective 4.8.1.1** - *Support the development of renewable energy infrastructure.*

**Objective 4.8.1.1** is underpinned by **Action 4.8.1.1.2** which looks to *“Promote renewable energy generation, storage, and distribution infrastructure in accordance with the CDP within the county, whilst promoting the need to consider environmental protection requirements at the outset of and during such projects.”*

These objectives outlined above would be significantly aided by the Proposed Project and its potential to connect 67.2MW of renewable electricity to the grid, and as such, the Proposed Project is aligned with the Cork CAP.

### Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028: Wind Energy Strategy

**Section 13.6** of the CCDP outlines the Wind Energy Strategy (WES) for the County. The WES provides a clear framework for the Council's objectives and methodology for identifying suitable locations for wind energy development in the county. The WES includes a number of Objectives which clearly demonstrates the support for the siting of wind energy projects within the County:

- **Objective ET 13-4: Wind Energy** - In order to facilitate increased levels of renewable energy production consistent with national targets on renewable energy and climate change mitigation as set out in the National Energy and Climate Plan 2021-2030, the Climate Action Plan 2021, and any updates to these targets, and in accordance with Ministerial Guidelines on Wind Energy Development, the Council will support further development of on-shore wind energy projects including the upgrading, repowering or expansion of existing infrastructure, at appropriate locations within the county in line with the Wind Energy Strategy and objectives detailed in this chapter and other objectives of this plan in relation to climate change, biodiversity, landscape, heritage, water management and environment etc.
- **Objective ET 13-5 (a): Wind Energy Projects** - supports a plan led approach to wind energy development in County Cork through the identification of areas for wind energy development. The aim in identifying these areas is to ensure that there are minimal environmental constraints, which could be foreseen to arise in advance of the planning process.
- **Objective ET 13-5 (b): Wind Energy Projects** - On-shore wind energy projects should focus on areas considered 'Acceptable in Principle' and 'Areas Open to Consideration' and generally avoid "Normally Discouraged" areas as well as sites and locations of ecological sensitivity.
- **Objective ET13-9: National Wind Energy Guidelines** - Development of on-shore wind should be designed and developed in line with the 'Planning Guidelines for Wind Farm Development 2006' and 'Draft Wind Energy Development Guidelines 2019' and any relevant update of these guidelines.
- **Objective ET13-10: Development in line with Best Practice** - Ensure that wind energy developments in County Cork are undertaken in observance with best industry practices, and with full engagement of communities potentially impacted by the development. In accordance with the Code of Practice 'Good Practice for Wind Energy Development Guidelines 2016', wind energy development operators are required to put in place an effective complaints procedure in relation to all aspects of wind energy development projects, where members of the public can bring any concerns they have about operational difficulties, including noise and nuisance to the attention of the wind energy development operator.

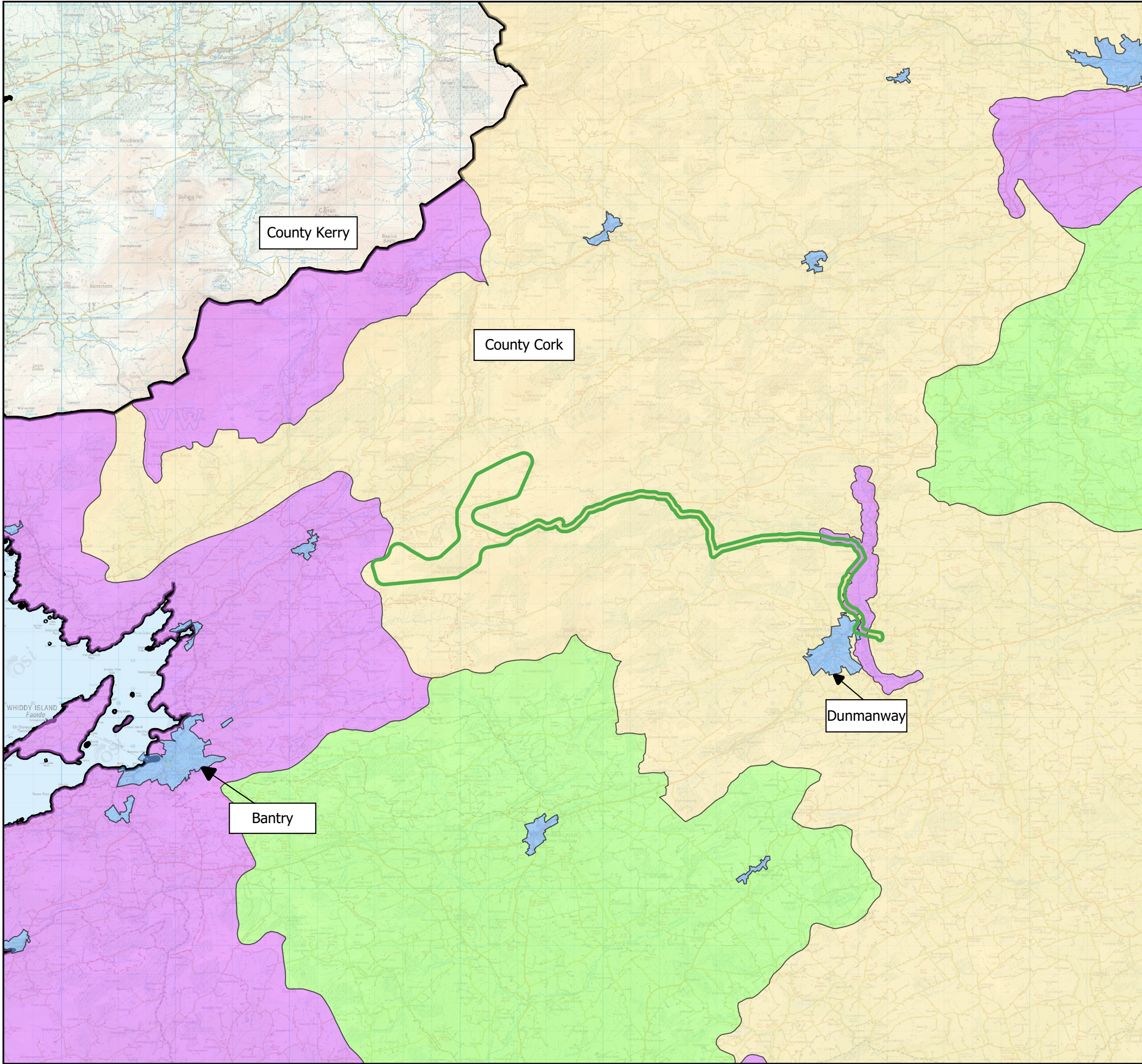
The WES characterises the county into 3 different policy areas aimed at facilitating large scale commercial wind energy developments. These policy areas are based on a number of criteria, including accessibility to the electricity distribution grid, used to identify suitable areas for wind energy developments. The WES areas and descriptions are set out in **Table 2-2** below.

Table 2-2: Cork County Council Wind Energy Strategy Area Designations

Cork County Council – Wind Energy Strategy Areas	
Strategy Areas	Description
<i>Acceptable in Principle</i> -	<i>Commercial wind energy development is normally encouraged in these areas subject to protection of residential amenity particularly in respect of noise, shadow flicker, visual impact and the requirements of the Habitats, Birds, Water Framework, Floods and EIA Directives and taking account of protected species of conservation concern.</i>

<p><i>Open to Consideration -</i></p>	<p><i>Commercial wind energy development is open to consideration in these areas where proposals can avoid adverse impacts on:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› <i>Residential amenity particularly in respect of noise, shadow flicker and visual impact;</i></li> <li>› <i>Urban areas and Metropolitan/Town Green Belts;</i></li> <li>› <i>Natura 2000 Sites (SPA's and SAC's), Natural Heritage Areas (NHA's), proposed Natural Heritage Areas and other sites and locations of significant ecological value.</i></li> <li>› <i>Architectural and archaeological heritage;</i></li> <li>› <i>Visual quality of the landscape and the degree to which impacts are highly visible over wider areas.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>In planning such development, consideration should also be given to the cumulative impacts of such proposals.</i></p>
<p><i>Normally Discouraged-</i></p>	<p><i>Commercial wind energy developments will be discouraged in these areas which are considered to be sensitive to adverse impacts associated with this form of development (either individually or in combination with other developments). Only in exceptional circumstances where it is clear that adverse impacts do not arise will proposals be considered.</i></p>

The Proposed Wind Farm is wholly located within the policy area designated as 'Open to Consideration' (OTC), as shown in **Figure 2-3**.



**Map Legend**

- EIA Site Boundary
- Cork Wind Energy Strategy Areas**
- Urban Area
- Open to Consideration
- Acceptable in Principle
- Normally Discouraged

County Kerry

County Cork

Dunmanway

Bantry



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Drawing Title  
**Cork County Development Plan -  
 Wind Energy Strategy 2022-2028**

Project Title  
**Maughanaclea Renewable Energy Development**

Drawn By CF	Checked By RK
Project No. 240225	Drawing No. Figure 2-3
Scale 1:130,000	Date 2025-09-30



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### 2.5.4.2 Project Compliance with Local Policy

In summary, the CCDP and associated Cork CAP and WES fully recognise the importance of tackling climate change through the increased supply of renewable energy. Cork County Council seeks to support and facilitate the sustainable provision of a reliable energy supply in the County, with emphasis on increasing energy supplies derived from renewable resources. Furthermore, there are a range of policies in place which support the development of renewable energy.

The Proposed Wind Farm is located in area deemed OTC, demonstrating the site's appropriateness for wind energy development, subject to detailed assessment. Accordingly, the Proposed Wind Farm is considered to be compliant with the relevant provisions of the CCDP and represents proper planning and sustainable development in the functional area of CCC.

## 2.6 Other Relevant Onshore Wind Energy Planning Policy Publications

The following relevant onshore wind planning policy publications and/or best practice guidelines were considered in the design and assessment of the Proposed Project.

### Wind Energy Development Guidelines 2006

In June 2006, the then Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DoEHLG) published the Wind Energy Development Guidelines, 2006 (the Guidelines (DoEHLG, 2006)) under Section 28 of the Act. The aim of the Guidelines (DoEHLG, 2006) was to assist the proper planning of wind power projects in appropriate locations around Ireland. The Guidelines (DoEHLG, 2006) also highlight general considerations in the assessment of all planning applications for wind energy. They set out advice to planning authorities on planning for wind energy through the development plan process and in determining applications for planning permission. They contain guidelines to ensure consistency of approach throughout the country in the identification of suitable locations for wind energy development.

Each wind energy development has its own characteristics and defining features, and it is therefore impossible to write specifications for universal use. The Guidelines (DoEHLG, 2006) should be applied practically and do not replace existing national energy, environmental and planning policy. At time of writing, the Draft Guidelines (DoHPLG, 2019) have not yet been adopted, and the relevant guidelines for the purposes of section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, remain to be the Guidelines (DoEHLG, 2006). Notwithstanding this, however, due to the timelines associated with the planning process for renewable energy projects and the commitment within the CAP25 to publish new wind energy guidelines for onshore wind in Q1 2026 it is possible that the Draft Guidelines (DoHPLG, 2019) may be adopted during the consideration period for the current planning application. Without benefit of the revised wind energy development guidelines for onshore wind, it is considered that since noise emissions and shadow flicker are controllable via inbuilt turbine technologies, therefore, the Proposed Wind Farm is capable of compliance with any future guideline limits in this regard.

### Draft Wind Energy Development Guidelines 2019

The Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (DoHPLG) published the Draft Revised Wind Energy Development Guidelines (the Draft Guidelines (DoHPLG, 2019)) in December 2019. A consultation process in relation to the Draft Guidelines (DoHPLG, 2019) concluded on the 19th of February 2020. A further review of the Draft Guidelines (DoHPLG, 2019) is currently underway by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DoHLGH) and the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications (DoECC), particularly in relation to noise limits. Since the publication of the Draft Guidelines (DoHPLG, 2019), there have been significant changes in national

policy regarding renewable energy targets, giving further impetus to the importance of the further review. The Draft Guidelines (DoHPLG, 2019) set out that that the proper planning and sustainable development of areas and regions must be considered when local authorities prepare their development plans and assess planning applications, irrespective of the significant role renewable energy has to play in tackling climate change.

The Draft Guidelines (DoHPLG, 2019) note that potential impacts of wind energy development proposals on the landscape, including the natural and built environment, must be considered along with the legitimate concerns of local communities. With this in mind, and in line with the previously stated “preferred draft approach”, the Draft Guidelines (DoHPLG, 2019) primarily focus on addressing a number of key aspects including, but not limited to:

- Acceptable noise thresholds and monitoring frameworks;
- Residential Visual amenity setback;
- Control of shadow flicker;
- Compliance with Community consultation and dividend requirements, as included within the obligatory Community Report; and
- Consideration of the siting, route and design of the Proposed Grid Connection as part of the whole project.

The design of the Proposed Project has been developed with the provisions of the Draft Guidelines (DoHPLG, 2019) in mind (for example in relation to 4 times turbine tip height set back distance from third party sensitive receptors) and the inclusion of a standalone community report.

As stated above, the submission period for the Draft Guidelines (DoHPLG, 2019) closed in February 2020. Arising from the consultation, concerns were raised in relation to a number of themes including, but not limited to; noise, visual amenity, set back and shadow flicker. With regards to noise, a number of the received submissions noted that the provisions put forward in the Draft Guidelines (DoHPLG, 2019) were unworkable and could impact the viability of the entire onshore wind sector. The noise proposals, in particular, were met with substantial criticism from the acoustics community, who raised concerns about the scientific basis, practicality, and potential unintended consequences of the proposed noise limits and monitoring requirements. In relation to set back distances there was strong criticism with regards to this distance being measured to the curtilage of a property due to this measurement being ambiguous and difficult to implement. Furthermore, questions were raised surrounding the strict measures proposed for shadow flicker; the Draft Guidelines (DoHPLG, 2019) put forward the provision that *‘there will be no shadow flicker at any existing nearby dwelling or other relevant existing affected sensitive property’* which didn’t allow time for the safe shutting down of turbines.

At time of writing the Draft Guidelines (DoHPLG, 2019) are not yet finalised and have not been adopted. The relevant wind energy guidelines for the purposes of Section 28 of the Act, as amended, remain those published in 2006, the Guidelines (DoEHLG, 2006). Notwithstanding this, however, due to the timelines associated with the planning process for renewable energy projects it is possible that an updated version of the Draft Guidelines (DoHPLG, 2019) may be finalised during the consideration period for the current planning application for the Proposed Project. To this end, on the basis of the details available from the Draft Guidelines (DoHPLG, 2019) it is anticipated that the Proposed Project will be capable of adhering to the relevant noise and shadow flicker standards. While the final guidelines have not yet been published it should be noted that Shadow Flicker and Noise are entirely controllable and are discussed further in Ch. 5: Population and Human Health and Ch.12: Noise and Vibration, respectively. In addition, the Proposed Project maintains a four times tip height set back between turbines and sensitive receptors which is currently the recognised standard for visual amenity purposes, as outlined in the Draft Guidelines (DoHPLG, 2019). Furthermore, comprehensive community consultation has also been undertaken (refer to **Appendix 2-1**) and detail of the Proposed Grid Connection for the Proposed Project has been provided and assessed as part of this EIAR, forming an integral part of this planning application.

## IWEA Best Practice Guidelines for the Irish Wind Energy Industry 2012

The Irish Wind Energy Association (IWEA) (now Wind Energy Ireland) published updated Wind Energy Best Practice Guidelines for the Irish Wind Industry in 2012 (hereafter referred to as the IWEA Guidelines). The IWEA Guidelines aim to encourage and define best practice development in the wind energy industry, acting as a reference document and guide to the main issues relating to wind energy developments. The purpose of the IWEA Guidelines is to encourage responsible and sensitive wind energy development, which takes into consideration the concerns of local communities, planners, and other interested groups. The IWEA Guidelines outline the main aspects of wind energy development with emphasis on responsible and sustainable design and environmental practices, on aspects of development which affect external stakeholders, and on good community engagement practices. In approaching the development of IWEA Guidelines the aim was to be complementary to the Guidelines (DoEHLG, 2006).

## IWEA Best Practice Principles in Community Engagement and Community Commitment 2013

IWEA extended its guidance with the publication of the '*Best Practice in Community Engagement and Commitment*'. IWEA and its members support the provision of financial contributions by wind farm operators to local communities and have sought to formulate best practice principles for the provision of a community commitment. The community engagement document sets out IWEA's best practice principles for delivering extended benefits to local communities for wind farm developments of 5 Megawatts (MW) or above. Best practice principles of community engagement when planning the engagement strategy and preparing associated literature are also outlined in the document. The aim of this document and associated best practice principles is to ensure that the views of local communities are taken into account at all stages of a development and that local communities can share in the benefits.

## DCCAE Code of Practice for Wind Energy Development Ireland – Guidelines for Community Engagement 2016

In December 2016, the (then) Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (DCCAE) issued a Code of Practice for wind energy development in relation to community engagement. The Code of Practice is intended to ensure that wind energy development in Ireland is undertaken in adherence with the best industry practices, and with the full engagement of local communities. Community engagement is required through the different stages of a project, from the initial scoping, feasibility and concept stages, right through from construction to the operational phase. The methods of engagement should reflect the nature of the project and the potential level of impact that it could have on a community. The Code of Practice advises that ignoring or poorly managing community concerns can have long-term negative impacts on a community's economic, environmental or social situation. Not involving communities in the project development process has the potential to impose costly time and financial delays for projects or prevent the realisation of projects in their entirety.

Further details on the community engagement that has been undertaken as part of the Proposed Project are presented below. A Community Report has been prepared by MKO and is included as **Appendix 2-1** to this chapter. This report outlines the steps taken by the Applicant to communicate effectively with the local community in respect of the Proposed Project.

## Department Circular PL5/2017

On the 3rd of August 2017, the (then) Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (DHPLG) issued Circular PL5/2017 to provide an update on the review of the wind energy and renewable policies in development plans, and the advice contained within a previous Departmental Circular PL20-13. Circular PL20-13 advised that local authorities should defer amending their existing

Development Plan policies in relation to wind energy and renewable energy generally as part of either the normal cyclical six-yearly review or plan variation processes and should instead operate their existing development plan policies and objectives until the completion of a focused review of the Guidelines (DoEHLG, 2006). The new circular (PL05/217) reconfirms that this continues to be the advice of the Department.

The Circular also set out the four key aspects of a preferred draft approach being developed to address the key aspects of the review of the Guidelines (DoEHLG, 2006) as follows:

- The application of a more stringent noise limit, consistent with World Health Organisation (WHO) noise standards, in tandem with a new robust noise monitoring regime, to ensure compliance with noise standards;
- A visual amenity setback of 4 times the turbine height between a wind turbine and the nearest residential property, subject to a mandatory minimum distance of 500 metres between a wind turbine and the nearest residential property;
- The elimination of shadow flicker; and
- The introduction of new obligations in relation to engagement with local communities by wind farm developers along with the provision of community benefit measures.

### Commission for Regulation of Utilities: Grid Connection Policy

- The Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU) (previously the Commission for Energy Regulation (CER)) launched a new grid connection policy in March 2018 for renewable and other generators, known as ECP-1, which seeks to allow “shovel ready” projects that already have a valid planning permission, connected to the electricity networks. The principal objective which guides this decision is to allow those projects to have an opportunity to connect to the network, along with laying the foundations for future, more regular batches for connection. August 2018 saw the Applicants for new connection capacity under ECP-1 published. ECP-2 was launched in June of 2020, which set policy for at least three annual batches of connection offers (ECP 2.1, ECP-2.2, and ECP-2.3). On 4th April 2023 the CRU published its Decision on ECP-2.4, confirming a fourth batch under the ECP-2 policy. The first four ECP-2 application windows (2.1 -2.3 and -2.4) opened for the month of September each year. The application window for the fifth annual batch (ECP-2.5) closed on the 30<sup>th</sup> of November 2024. The enduring connection policy regime replaces the previous ‘Gate’ system of grid connection applications. The grid connection application window under ECP-1 was the first time since 2007 that certain renewable energy projects including wind farms had an opportunity to secure a new grid connection offer.
- The design of the Proposed Grid Connection has taken account of the “*preferred draft approach*” and accordingly, has been developed with the provisions of the Draft Guidelines (DoHPLG, 2019) in mind. This grid connection policy will allow for the Proposed Grid Connection, once it is permitted, to connect to the electricity networks under the enduring connection policy regime.

### Renewable Energy Support Scheme

CAP25 is the Government’s plan to give Irish people a cleaner, safer and more sustainable future to halve emissions by 2030 and reach net zero no later than 2050. CAP25 sets out actions across every sector which will ensure we meet our future climate commitments. A key part of the CAP25 is to increase the proportion of renewable electricity to up to 80% by 2030, with a target of 9GW from onshore wind. These measures will be driven by introduction of the Renewable Electricity Support Scheme (‘RESS’) which aims to promote the generation of electricity from renewable sources.

The RESS is an auction-based scheme which invites renewable electricity projects to bid for capacity and receive a guaranteed price for the electricity they generate.

RESS 1 was the first Renewable Electricity Support Scheme run by the Government of Ireland and concluded in 2020. RESS 2 was run in 2022 and concluded in June 2022. The successful projects in RESS 2 represent a potential increase of nearly 20% in Ireland’s current renewable energy generation capacity. They will be delivered between 2023 and 2025. A public consultation was opened in 2022 to refine the Terms and Conditions developed for RESS 2 with a limited and specific set of changes for RESS 3. This consultation closed in December 2022. RESS 3 was ran in 2023 and concluded in September 2023. RESS 4 was ran in 2024 and closed in August of 2024. Of the 43 projects who submitted an Offer Price in respect of the RESS 4 Auction, 27 projects were successful in the auction and 16 projects were unsuccessful in the auction. RESS 5 commenced in May 2025. The auction submission date is September 2025 and the final auction results are expected on the 15 October 2025. Of the 32 qualified projects who submitted an Offer Price in the RESS 5 Final Auction, 22 projects were successful and 10 projects were unsuccessful in the auction.

The RESS ensures that we are on a pathway to meet our ambitious climate targets and lays the foundations of a thriving and cost-effective renewable electricity market. This will support the growth of the green economy, create sustainable work opportunities, and ultimately benefit the consumer as renewables become more cost effective and increase Ireland’s energy security.

The Proposed Project is in accordance with the CAP25 and a grant of permission for the onshore wind energy development will allow for the Proposed Project to participate in the RESS auction and contribute renewable energy generation in achieving Ireland’s CAP25 target of 9GW of onshore wind generation by 2030 and net zero emissions by 2050, along with any targets beyond this.

## 2.7 Planning History

This section of the EIAR sets out the relevant planning history within the planning application boundary and also identifies other wind energy development within the wider area (25km from the proposed turbines).

### 2.7.1 Planning Applications with the application site boundary

A planning search was carried out through the national planning application database and An Coimisiún Pleanála’s online planning portal in February 2026 for relevant planning applications submitted within the past 10 years that fall within the planning application boundary of this application, which are outlined in **Table 2-3** below

Table 2-3: Planning applications within the Proposed Project Planning Application Boundary.

Planning Ref.	Development Description	Decision
17431	10 year permission for the Proposed Project consisting of: (1) A 110kV electricity substation including 2 no. control buildings associated electrical plant and equipment, underground electricity cabling, fencing, alterations to a previously permitted borrow pit and temporary construction compound at the Carrigarierk Wind Farm (An Bord Pleanala Ref. PL04.246353, Cork County	Granted by CCC on 16/04/2018, upheld by ACP on 21/06/2019

	<p>Council Ref. 15/730) in the townland of Carrigdangan; (2) 110kV underground electricity cabling connecting the proposed substation to the existing Dunmanway ESB substation in the townlands of Carrigdangan, Inchincurka, Kilnadur, Aultaghreagh, Aultagh, Ardcahan, Knockduff, Gurteennasowna and Ballyhalwick; (3) 33kV underground electricity cabling connecting the proposed substation to the permitted Carrigarierk Wind Farm through the townlands of Carrigdangan and Gortatanavally and the permitted Shehy More Wind Farm (ABP Ref. PL04.243486; Cork County Council Ref. 13/551), through the townlands of Shehy More, Coolcaum, Coolmountain, Tullagh, Lackabaun, Clogher, Farrannahineeny, Crushterra, Gurteen and Carrigdangan. Together with all ancillary works and apparatus. The Proposed Project is located north of Dunmanway, Co. Cork. This application is accompanied by An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and a Natura Impact Statement (NIS).</p>	
<p>21902</p>	<p>A ten year planning permission for Proposed Project consisting of a 20 kilovolt (kV) electrical powerline grid connection, approximately 10,117 metres in overall length (made up of approximately 9,983 metres of underground cable and approximately 134 metres of Over Head Line with three wooden support single poles), connecting the approved electrical substation at Knockeenboy Wind Farm (Planning Register Reference No. 11/00059 &amp; An Bord Pleanala Ref. PL88.240070) to the existing Dunmanway</p>	<p>Granted by CCC on 21/06/2022</p>

	<p>110kV ESB Networks substation at Ballyhalwick; together with all ancillary works and apparatus. The grid connection will be developed from the approved substation through the townlands of Knockeenboy, Kilronane West, Kilronane East, Moreagh, Nedinagh West, Acres and Ballyhalwick townlands. The Proposed Project is located to the east, south and southwest of Dunmanway, Co. Cork. The planning application is accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and by a Natura Impact Statement (NIS).</p>	
<p>23654</p>	<p>The existing Bandon to Dunmanway 110 kV Overhead Line (OHL), which is approximately 26km long between the existing Bandon 110kV Substation in the townland of Mishells, Co. Cork (approximately 1km north of Bandon, Co. Cork) and the existing Dunmanway 110kV Substation in the townland of Ballyhalwick, Co. Cork (approximately 0.4km east of Dunmanway Co. Cork). The existing OHL is located in the townlands of Acres, Aghalinane, Ballyhalwick, Balteenbrack, Behagh, Caher, Carhoon West, Castlelands, Derrycool, Dromidiclogh, Dromidiclogh West, Gortnamucklagh, Gurteen, Gurteenroe, Kilnacranagh East, Kilnacranagh West, Laragh, Lissacroneen, Mallowgaton, Mishells, Murragh, Roughgrove East, Roughgrove West, Sranaviddoge, Teadies Upper, Toom and Tullyglass, Co. Cork. An uprate (refurbishment) of the existing Bandon to Dunmanway 110kv OHL, which consists of the : (i) replacement ("restringing") of the existing OHL conductor</p>	<p>Granted by CCC on 11/06/2024</p>

	<p>wires with a new higher capacity conductor including installation of a new fibre optic communication connection; (ii) replacement of 12 no. of the 13 no. existing steel towers including 11 no. angle masts (AM) and 1 no. end mast (EM) and their foundations with similar structures and member replacement and new bolts at 1 no. EM. Any replacement AMs will be constructed at, or immediately adjacent to the existing structures that they will replace, with a height difference of between 0.5-1.5m; (iii) Replacement of 16 no. of the 127 no. existing intermediate Polesets (IMPs); with similar structures. Any replacement IMPs will be constructed in situ, with the exception of IMP128 which will be replaced at an offset of 10m. The height differences of the replacements will be 1m, with the exception of IMP113 and IMP115 which will be a 2m and 3m increase in height respectively, (iv) Carrying out of civil works for tower foundation strengthening at 1 no. location; (v) Replacement of hardware and fittings at all locations, including insulators, clamps, anti-climb guards, vibration dampers, and installation of new jumper arrangements, suspension weights, plump poles, pole bolts and anti-climb guards; (vi) replacement of a crossarm at 1 no. location; (vii) all associated works within the existing Dunmanway Substation to accommodate the uprated 110 kV OHL and all associated site development works including above and below the ground works to gain access to the existing structures including timber cutting and vegetation clearance, painting, renumbering of replacement st</p>	
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18575	To construct extension to dwelling	Granted by CCC on 20/12/2018
25126	Construct a new dwelling house	Granted by CCC on 04/06/2025
2448	Construction of extensions to the sides and rear of an existing dwelling house, alterations to the existing dwelling house and installation of a new septic tank and percolation area and all associated site works	Granted by CCC on 22/04/2024
21186	Permission for retention of existing cattle house with two no. slatted slurry tanks, permission to construct a new cattle house with two slurry tanks and carry out all associated site works	Granted by CCC on 11/06/2021
20523	Full Planning Permission for a) relocation of entrance to dwelling as granted under planning application number 13/544 b) closure of existing entrance to dwelling as granted under planning application number 13/544 c) all associated siteworks	Granted by CCC on 23/12/2020
21857	Renovation and alterations to existing farmhouse. Installation of new foul water drainage system. Landscaping works and alteration to entrance	Granted by CCC on 02/08/2022

## 2.7.2 Wind Energy Developments within 25km of the Proposed Turbines

A planning search was carried out in March 2026 to establish permitted, operational and proposed wind energy developments within 25km of the proposed turbines for the purposes of informing the potential cumulative effects (see Section 2.9.2 of this Chapter for further details). The search was carried out using the relevant local authority, the Commissions' and EIA planning portals in

In total, no. 41 applications relating to wind energy were identified within 25km of the proposed turbines, no. of which relate to single or no. wind turbine developments and a further no. of which relate to larger multiple turbine wind farm development. These are outlined in **Table 2-4** below:

Table 2-4: Wind Energy Developments within 25km of the proposed turbines

Planning Ref.	Wind Farm Name	Applicant	Description	Decision	Status	No. of Turbine	Approximate Distance to Nearest Turbine (km)
Cork CC Pl. Ref. 059586  ABP Ref. PL04.216875	<b>Ballybane Wind Farm</b>	Ballybane Windfarms Ltd	Wind farm to consist of 13 no. wind turbines with blade tip height of up to 100m, electrical substation and control building, 60m high meteorological mast, site entrances, access tracks, hardstandings and ancillary site works	Granted by ABP 14/09/2006	Existing	13	12km
Cork CC Pl. Ref. 09849, Pl. Ref. 1376  ABP Ref. PL88.235028	<b>Ballybane Wind Farm</b>	Ballybane Windfarms Ltd	Ten year planning permission for a wind farm of up to 6 wind turbines (hub height 64m and rotor diameter of 71m - tip height of 99.5m), access roads, hardstandings, underground cabling, rock borrow pit and ancillary site works - forming an extension to the existing Glanta Commons Windfarm.	Granted by ABP 05/08/2010	Existing	6	13.5km
Cork CC Pl. Ref. 15320	<b>Ballybane Wind Farm</b>	Ballybane Windfarms Ltd	A ten year planning permission for up to two wind turbines with a tip height of up to 110 metres, site access roads, hardstanding areas, underground cabling and all ancillary site works - forming an extension to the existing Glanta Commons Wind	Granted by CCC 15/09/2016	Existing	2	

<p>Cork CC Pl. Ref. 146760</p> <p>ACP Ref. ABP-308210-20</p>	<p><b>Barnadivine Wind Farm</b></p>	<p>Barna Wind Energy (BWE) Ltd.</p>	<p>The construction of six wind turbines, with a maximum tip height of up to 131m and associated turbine foundations and hardstanding areas, 1 no. permanent meteorological mast up to 90m in height, upgrade of existing and provision of new site tracks and associated drainage, new access junction and improvements to public road to facilitate turbine delivery, 1 no. borrow pit, underground electrical and communications cables, permanent signage and other associated ancillary infrastructure. This application is intended to replace the development already granted permission under PL04.219620 (05/5907) and subsequently extended under 11/6605. This application is seeking a 10-year planning permission. An Environmental Impact Statement and AA Screening Report have been prepared in respect of the planning application.</p>	<p>Granted permission by ABP, 06/11/2025</p>	<p>Granted</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>21.7km</p>
<p>Cork CC Pl. Ref. 15730</p> <p>ABP Ref. PL04.246353</p>	<p><b>Carrigarierk Wind Farm</b></p>	<p>Keel Energy Limited</p>	<p>Ten year planning permission for the construction of a wind farm of up to 5 No. wind turbines, with a maximum ground to blade tip height of up to 140m, upgrading of existing and provision of new internal access roads, provision of a wind anemometry mast</p>	<p>Granted by ABP 28/10/2016</p>	<p>Existing</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>8.9km</p>

			(height up to 90 metres), 2 no. borrow pits, underground electricity cabling, underground grid connection electrical cabling including all associated infrastructure, junction accommodation works for the proposed delivery route, 1 no. electricity sub-station with control building and associated equipment, 1 no. construction compound, upgrading of the existing site access junction, permanent signage and all ancillary site works.				
Cork CC Pl. Ref. 215372  ABP Ref. PL04.313261	<b>Carrigarierk Wind Farm Extension</b>	Keel Energy Limited	The Proposed Project includes the provision of: 1. Up to 3 no. wind turbines with a maximum overall ground to blade tip height of up to 176.5 metres along with the associated foundations and hard-standing areas, serviced/accessed via the existing Carrigarierk Wind Farm infrastructure, permitted under An Bord Pleanála Planning References 04.246353 and 301563-18 ( Cork County Council Planning References 15/730 and 17/431); 2. An operational life of the Proposed Project aligned with that of the existing Carrigarierk Wind Farm (25 years from 2021); 3. Underground electrical (33kV) and communication cabling connecting the proposed turbines to the existing 110kV	Granted by ABP 12/10/2023	Permitted	3	9.4km

			substation in the townland of Carrigdangan; 4. Upgrade of existing tracks and provision of new site access roads and hardstand areas; 5. 1 no. borrow pit; 6. A temporary construction compound; 7. Forestry felling; 8. Operational stage site signage; 9. Site drainage; and, 10. All associated site development works and apparatus. The application is accompanied by a Natura Impact Statement and Environmental Impact Assessment Report.				
ABP Ref. PL04.246742, SU04.307939	<b>Clenrath Wind Farm</b>	Clenrath Windfarm Limited	Application to An Bord Pleanála for Substitute Consent for the Cleanrath wind farm development in the townlands of Reananerree, Cloontycarthy, Cleanrath North, Derrineanig, Cleanrath South, Milmorane, Coombilane, Rathgaskig, Augeris, Gorteenakilla, Carrignadoura, Gurteenowen, Gurteenflugh, Lyrenageeha and Lackabaun, Co. Cork.	Granted by ABP 16/01/2024	Existing	9	12.6km
Kerry CC Ref. 043152	<b>Clydaghroe Wind Farm</b>	John Creedon	Develop a wind farm to include 2 wind turbines and service roadways. An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) has been included.	Granted n by KCC 16/11/2004	Existing	2	

Kerry CC Ref. 07306	<b>Clydaghroe Wind Farm</b>	John Creedon	The development will consist of 1 wind turbine and service roadway. EIS submitted.	Granted by KCC 25/04/2007	Existing	1	
Kerry CC Ref. 06/1680	<b>Clydaghroe Wind Farm</b>	Tadgh O’Criodain	Construct a wind farm, the development will consist of two wind turbines, two transformers, a control and metering building, a meteorological mast, site tracks and all associated works.	Granted by KCC 11/08/2006	Existing	2	
Cork CC Ref. 006380	<b>Coomatallin Wind Farm</b>	Eirtricity Developments Ltd	Windfarm consisting of 7 no. wind turbines, meteorological mast (50m high), electrical sub- station, control building, up- grading entrance & anc. works	Granted by CCC 13/08/2001	Existing	4	17.6
ABP Ref. PA08.321029	<b>Cummeenabuddoge Wind Farm</b>	Cummeenabuddoge Wind Designated Activity Company	10 year planning permission for wind energy development consisting of 17 no. wind turbines and related works.	Case is due to be decided by 22/04/2025	Proposed	17	23.5
Cork CC Ref. 98680	<b>Currabwee Wind Farm</b>	Patrick Kingston	Construction and operation of a windfarm consisting of 8 no. 600 kW wind turbines and associated buildings	Granted by CCC 04/11/1998	Existing	7	14.5
Cork CC Ref. 25/6398, PL88.500665	<b>Curraglass Wind Farm</b>	Windleaf Ltd	Construction and operation of a windfarm consisting of 3 no. wind turbines (14.4MW) and associated works.	Case is due by 25/05/2026	Proposed	3	4km

<p>Cork CC Ref. 125270</p> <p>ABP Ref. PL04.245082</p>	<p><b>Derragh Wind Farm</b></p>	<p>Framore Ltd</p>	<p>The development will consist of a wind farm consisting of 6 turbines (each with a maximum hub height of 100, maximum rotor diameter of 100m, and with a total tip height of 150m), a sub-station including one control building and associated internal equipment, one borrow pit, new internal access roads, upgrading of existing internal access roads, underground cables, and ancillary work.</p>	<p>Granted by ABP 15/06/2016</p>	<p>Existing</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>12km</p>
<p>Cork CC Ref. 25/6052<sup>17</sup> 10857, 22153</p> <p>ABP Ref. PL88.239767</p>	<p><b>Dereenacreenig<sup>18</sup> Wind Farm</b></p>	<p>George O'Mahony</p>	<p>The development will consist of: Construction of 3 no. wind turbines with an overall ground to blade tip height of 119.3m with a rotor diameter of 82m and a hub height of 78.3m. Construction of 1 no. permanent 20 kV Electrical Substation, all associated electrical plant and equipment, all associated underground cabling, and all ancillary structures and works. Construction of one Temporary Construction Compound with associated temporary site offices, parking areas and security fencing. Upgrade and reuse of existing</p>	<p>Decision due 14/04/2026</p>	<p>Proposed</p>	<p>3</p>	

<sup>17</sup> This site was subject to previous applications for a 7 no. turbine wind farm under Pl. Ref. Nos. 10857, 22153 and ABP Ref, PL88.239767

<sup>18</sup> The spelling of this place name has appeared in different ways throughout the referenced application and for consistency, the subject application has chosen this spelling.

			<p>hardstands. Upgrade and reuse of existing internal site access roads. Provision of Biodiversity Enhancement Area. All associated underground electrical and communications cabling connecting the wind turbines to the wind farm Electrical Substation. Construction of approximately 10.75 km of 20kV overhead line (OHL) Grid Connection, the OHL to be constructed consists of c. 157 wood poles (ranging from 9m to 15m above ground) supporting electrical conductor lines and ancillary structures and equipment. Installation of approximately 3.3km of underground cable ducting Grid Connection and associated electrical cabling, and all other ancillary works including joint bays, culverts, marker posts and all associated developments.</p>				
Ref. 105711	<b>Garranereagh Wind Farm</b>	Sigatoka Ltd.	<p>Construction of a wind farm development comprising of 4 wind turbines with a hub height of up to 80m with blade length of 41m, site roads, hardstands, upgrading of site entrance and associated ancillary works. This application will replace a previous planning permission for a wind farm permitted under planning reg. no. 03/2047 and extended under planning reg. no. 08/9783. (This</p>	Granted by CCC 16/12/2010	Existing	4	

			development requires an EIS and the EIS has been submitted with the application).				
<p>CCC Pl Ref: 25142</p> <p>ABP Ref: PL88.322743</p>	<b>Gortloughra Wind Farm</b>	Gortloughra Wind Farm Limited	<p>Erection of eight wind turbines with an overall ground to blade tip height of 175m consisting of a rotor diameter of 150m; and a hub height of 100m, Construction of permanent Turbine hardstands and Turbine Foundations, Construction of one temporary Construction Compound with associated temporary site offices parking areas and security fencing, Installation of meteorological mast with a height of 100m, Development of one on-site Borrow pit, Construction of new permanent internal site access roads and upgrade of existing internal site access roads to include passing bays and all associated drainage infrastructure, Development of a permanent internal site drainage network and sediment control systems, All associated underground electrical power and communications cabling connecting the wind turbines to the on-site substation, Biodiversity enhancement measures. Recreational community improvements including the erection of 4 no. permanent information Commissions relating to cultural heritage and upgrades to</p>	<p>Refused by CCC on the 14/05/202 14/05/2025, appealed to ABP 10/06/2025</p>	Proposed	8	2km

			amenity tracks across the site, all associated site development works				
ABP Ref. PA04.314602	<b>Gortyrally Wind Farm</b>	Gortyrally Wind Designated Activity Company	Windfarm development of 14 no. turbines with 110kV electrical substation and all related site works and ancillary development.	Granted by ABP 25/02/2025	Permitted	13	13km
ABP Ref. PA08.PA0044	<b>Grousemount Wind Farm</b>	E.S.B. Wind Development Limited	Construction of Grousemount Wind Farm, comprising 38 no. Wind Turbines and all associated works in townlands in County Kerry and County Cork	Granted by ABP 21/07/2016	Existing	38	10
Cork CC Ref: 105711	<b>Inchamore Wind Farm</b>	Inchamore Wind Designated Activity Company	We, Inchamore Wind Designated Activity Company, intend to apply for permission for a ten-year planning permission for a renewable energy development. The entirety of the renewable energy development constitutes the provision of a five-turbine wind farm and all associated works on land in both Counties Cork and Kerry. The development for will consist of : 1) a wind farm with an operational lifespan of 35 years (from date of commissioning of the development), 2) the construction of five turbines with an overall ground to blade tip height ranging from 177m to 185m inclusive; a rotor diameter ranging of 149m to 155m inclusive; and a hub height ranging from 102.5m	Granted by ABP 15/02/2024 & 02/04/2025	Permitted	4	19.5

			<p>to 110.5m inclusive, 3) construction of permanent turbine hardstands and turbine foundations, 4) Construction of one temporary construction compound with associated temporary site offices, parking areas and security fencing. 5) installation of a (35-year life cycle) meteorological mast with a height of 110m and a 4m lightning pole on top, such that the overall structure will be 114m, 6) development of an on-site borrow pit, 7) construction of a new permanent internal site access roads to include passing bays and all associated drainage infrastructure. 8) development of a permanent internal site drainage network and sediment control systems. 9) construction of a permanent 38 kV electrical substation including a control building with welfare facilities, all associated electrical plant and equipment, parking security fencing and gates, all associated underground cabling, wastewater holding tank, and all ancillary structures and works, 10) all associated underground electrical and communications cabling connecting the wind turbines to the on-site wind farm substation, 11) ancillary forestry felling to facilitate construction of the development, 12) all associated site</p>				
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			development works including berms, landscaping, and soil excavation. Advisory note: A planning application is being lodged with Kerry County Council in relation to the elements of the project that are within the townland of Derryreag (Dhoire Aimhréidh) Co.Kerry, including the upgrade of the site entrance off the N22 and permanent forest track upgrade works. The planning application will be accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and Natura Impact Statement (NIS).				
Kerry CC Ref. 07/1605	<b>Kilgarvan II Wind Farm</b>	John O'Donoghue, Helen O'Sullivan And Daniel Quill	Erect six wind turbines hub height 80m, blade diameter 90m, one 80m high meteorological mast, four borrow pits, construction of internal site tracks and associated works	Granted by KCC 02/08/2007	Existing	5	
Kerry CC Ref. 07/4364	<b>Kilgarvan II Wind Farm</b>	John O'Donoghue, Helen O'Sullivan And Daniel Quill	Erect one wind turbine, hub height 80m, blade diameter 90m (as an addition to a five wind turbine development granted permission under planning ref. No. 07/1605) and to construct an internal site track and associated works	Granted by KCC 29/01/2008	Existing	1	
Kerry CC Ref. 03/2508	<b>Kilgarvan II Wind Farm</b>	John Dineen	6 no. 3MW wind turbines, service roadways and control house and 1 no. 60m monitoring mast (temporary) and	Granted by ABP 27/04/2005	Existing	6	

ABP Ref. PL08.209629			river crossing (temp.) and associated works				
Kerry CC Ref. 07/4701	<b>Kilgarvan II Wind Farm</b>	SWS Natural Resources Ltd	Erect one wind turbine (T9), hub height 80m, blade diameter 90m, as an addition to a six wind turbine development granted planning permission by An Bord Pleanála (ABP ref: pl.08.209629 and Kerry County Council planning register ref. 03/2508) and to construct an internal site track and associated works	Granted by ABP 22/02/2008	Existing	1	
ABP Ref. PA08.319741	<b>Kilgarvan Repowering Wind Farm</b>	Ørsted Onshore Ireland Midco Limited	Proposed Windfarm repowering Application of the existing Kilgarvan Wind Farm	Granted by ABP 25/03/2025	Permitted	11	17.5km
Kerry CC Ref. 02/1241	<b>Kilgarvan Wind Farm</b>	Coillte Teoranta And SWS Services Co-Op	Construct a windfarm consisting of 17 wind turbines, an electrical substation with control building, 2 no. 50m high meteorological masts, construct and extend existing internal site tracks and associated works - EIS received	Granted by KCC 27/12/2002	Existing	11	
Kerry CC Ref. 03/2306	<b>Kilgarvan Wind Farm</b>	SWS Group & Coillte	Construct a wind farm extension to planning reg no 1241/02, extension will consist of 4 wind turbines (hub height 80 m, blade diameter 80 m), construction and extension of existing internal site tracks and associated works. EIS received	Granted by KCC 28/10/2003	Existing	4	

<p>Cork CC Ref. 1150, 13/635</p> <p>ABP Ref. PL88.242998</p>	<p><b>Killaveenoge Wind Farm</b></p>	<p>Environ Renewables Ltd</p>	<p>Ten year planning permission to construct a windfarm and all associated infrastructure. The proposed windfarm will comprise the provision of a total of up to 10 No. wind turbines, with a maximum overall blade tip height of up to 131m, upgrading of existing and provision of new internal access roads (including the upgrading of site access junction), provision of a wind anemometry mast (height up to 90 metres), 3 No. borrow pits, an electricity sub-station with control room and associated equipment, underground electricity connection cabling, temporary construction compound and all ancillary site works. The current Proposed Project is intended to replace the wind farm development previously permitted at this location under planning ref 11/50. The planning application is accompanied by an Environmental Impact Statement</p>	<p>Granted by ABP 17/06/2014</p>	<p>Existing</p>	<p>10</p>	
<p>Cork CC Ref. 01/980</p> <p>ACP Ref. 4/5</p>	<p><b>Kilvinane Wind Farm</b></p>	<p>Leonard Draper</p>	<p>Windfarm consisting of 4 wind turbines, electrical substation with control building, 50m meteorological</p>	<p>Refused by  Granted by ACP 19/07/2002</p>	<p>Existing</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>21.2</p>

			mast, upgrading of entrance & assoc. works				
Cork CC Ref. 19/4972	<b>Knocknamork Wind Farm</b>	Knocknamork Ltd	Renewable energy development consisting of the provision of a 7 turbine wind farm, solar photovoltaic array, electricity substation, battery storage compound and all associated works consisting of the following, i. Up to 7 wind turbines with an overall blade tip height of up to 150 metres and all associated foundations and hard-standing areas; ii. Up to 70,000sq.m solar photovoltaic array, with up to 17 associated inverters and 2 no. control cabins; iii. 1 no. borrow pit, iv. 1 No. permanent meteorological mast with a maximum height of up to 100 meters; v. Upgrade of existing and provision of new site access roads, vi. 1 no. 38kV electrical substation with 1 no. control building with welfare facilities, associated electrical plant and equipment security fencing and waste water holding tank; vii battery storage compound accommodating 4 no. battery storage containers, security fencing, and associated electrical plant and equipment, viii. Forestry felling ix. 1 no. temporary construction compound, x. Site drainage xi. All associated internal underground	Granted by CCC 02/01/2020	Permitted	7	22.7

			cabling; xii. 38kV underground grid connection cabling; xiii. All associated site development and ancillary works. The Proposed Project will have an operational life of 30 years from the date of commissioning of the development and the application seeks a ten year planning permission. An Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) have been prepared in respect of the Proposed Project.				
Cork CC Ref. 008/05	<b>Lahanaght Hill Wind Farm</b>	O'Regan James & Collins Vincent	Windfarm to include 3 no. turbines, meteorological mast, control building, substation, new roads & upgrading of existing road	Granted by CCC 24/01/2002	Existing	5	
Kerry CC Ref. 013571	<b>Midas Wind Farm</b>	Everwind Ltd	Construct a wind farm (8 no. turbines) EIS received.	Granted by KCC 03/12/2002	Existing	4	14.7
Kerry CC Ref. 032609	<b>Midas Wind Farm</b>	John O'Donoghue	Erect 5 wind turbines of 60m hub height, 53m rotor blade diameter, on site tracks and cabling	Granted by KCC 18/02/2004	Existing	4	
Kerry CC Ref. 032610	<b>Midas Wind Farm</b>	John D McCarthy	Erect four wind turbines of 60 m hub height, 52 m rotor blade diameter, on-site tracks and cabling	Granted by KCC 18/02/2004	Existing	3	
Kerry CC Ref. 02719	<b>Midas Wind Farm</b>	John Joseph Harrington	Construct a wind farm consisting of 6 no. wind turbine generators, electrical substation, septic tank, percolation area, access roadways, buried cable	Granted by KCC 07/01/2003	Existing	6	

			ducts and a 50 m anemometer mast. eis received				
Kerry CC Ref. 03/1188	<b>Midas Wind Farm</b>	Midas Energy Ltd.	Develop wind farm consisting of 9 no. wind turbines of 78 metres hub height and 80 metres rotor blade diameter; wind monitoring mast of 40 metres height; on-site tracks and electrical control house together with necessary cabling	Granted by KCC 12/11/2003	Existing	6	
Cork CC Ref. 98/1482  ABP Ref. PL04.108950	<b>Milane Hill Wind Farm</b>	B9 ENERGY SERVICES LTD	Windfarm comprising 10 wind turbines, transformers, meteorological mast, control building/compound. Milane Hill, Drimoleague, Co.Cork.	Granted by ABP 25/05/1999	Existing	9	8.7km
Cork CC Ref. 082037	<b>Reenascreena Wind Farm</b>	Reenascreena Wind Farm Ltd	Construction of 5 wind turbines, electrical substation and control building, 50m high meteorological mast, site tracks and associated works.	Granted by KCC 14/01/2009	Existing	5	22.8km
ABP Ref. PL04.243486	<b>Shehy More Wind Farm</b>	Shehy More Windfarm Ltd	Ten year permission to construct wind farm consisting of 12 windturbines and all ancillary site works. Cloghboola, Gortnacarriga, Tooreenalour, Garryantorna, Shehy More	Granted by ABP 23/12/2016	Existing	11	2.6km
Kerry CC Ref. 031359	<b>Sillahertane-Coomagearlaghy II Wind Farm</b>	SWS Natural Resources	Erect 10 Wind Turbines & 1 40m wind monitoring mast (temporary) & control house	Granted by KCC 22/04/2008	Existing	10	12.1km



## 2.8 Scoping and Consultation

### 2.8.1 Scoping

Scoping is the process of determining the content, depth and extent of topics to be covered in the environmental information to be submitted to a competent authority for projects that are subject to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). This process is conducted by contacting the relevant authorities and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) with interest in the specific aspects of the environment with the potential to be affected by the proposal. These organisations are invited to submit comments on the scope of the EIAR and the specific standards of information they require. Comprehensive and timely scoping helps ensure that the EIAR refers to all relevant aspects of the Proposed Project and its potential effects on the environment and provides initial feedback in the early stages of the design iteration process. In this way scoping not only informs the content and scope of the EIAR, but it also provides a feedback mechanism for the proposal design itself.

As part of the constraints mapping process, which is detailed in Ch. 3: Site Selection & Reasonable Alternatives of this EIAR, telecommunications operators, were contacted in January 2025 in order to determine the presence of telecommunications links or aviation assets traversing or located in close proximity to the Proposed Wind Farm site. Following this exercise, an EIAR scoping document, providing details of the Proposed Project, was prepared by MKO and circulated in January 2025. A follow up was issued in March 2025 to the relevant bodies who had yet to respond. The scoping document provided details of the Proposed Project and set out the scope of work for the EIAR. Consultees were invited to contribute to the EIAR by suggesting baseline data, survey techniques and potential impacts that should be considered as part of the assessment process and in the preparation of the EIAR.

### 2.8.2 Scoping Responses

Tables 2-5 list the responses received to the scoping document circulated. Telecommunications operators were scoped at an earlier stage for the purposes of constraints mapping. Copies of all scoping responses received as of March 2026 are included in Appendix 2-2 of this EIAR. The recommendations of the consultees have informed the scope of the assessments undertaken and the contents of the EIAR. Those bodies engaged with at scoping stage are set out below in Table 2-5 and Table 2-6.

Table 2-5: Scoping List and Responses

Consultee	Date of Response
2m (RTÉ transmission Network Ltd.)	29/05/2025 -04/07/2025
Airnav Ireland	No Response
Ajisko Ltd	04/07/2024
An Taisce	No Response
AP Wireless	24/02/2025
Aviation Navigation Ireland	No Response
Bat Conservation Ireland	No Response
Bbnet (EOBO Ltd)	26/08/2024
Beat102103	No Response
BirdWatch Ireland	No Response
Broadcasting Authority of Ireland/ Coimisún na Meán	08/01/2025
BT Communications Ireland	04/07/2024
Cellnex	No Response
Commission for Regulation of Utilities, Water and Energy	No Response

ComReg	26/08/2024
Cork Airport	No Response
Cork County Council	22/07/2024
Cork County Council – Environment Department	No Response
Cork County Council – Heritage and Conservation Department	No Response
Cork County Council – Roads and Transportation Department	No Response
Dense air	No Response
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine	12/03/2025
Department of Defence	20/01/2025
Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage	07/04/2025
Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications	23/01/2025
Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media	No Response
Department of Transport	30/04/2025
Defence Forces	04/07/2024
Digital Forge	No Response
Digiweb	No Response
Eir	10/07/2024
Enet	04/07/2024
Electricity Supply Board (ESB) Telecoms	01/04/2025
ESB Networks	No Response
Failte Ireland	22/07/2025
FASTCOM Broadband Limited	No Response
Forest Service	No Response
Geological Survey of Ireland	Response from DECC
Health Service Executive	04/02/2025
Hibernian Towers	28/08/2024
Iarnród Éireann	21/03/2025
Imagine Networks Services Ltd	04/07/2024
Inland Fisheries Ireland	15/01/2025
Irish Aviation Authority	13/01/2025
Irish Peatland Conservation Council	No Response
Irish Raptor Study Group	No Response
Irish Red Grouse Association	No Response
Irish Water	10/02/2025
Irish Wildlife Trust	11/03/2025
Ivertec Ltd	04/07/2025
JFK Communications Ltd	No Response
JS Whizzy Internet Limited	No Response
Kerry Airport	No Response
Lackabeha Services Ltd T/A Airwaves Internet	05/11/2024
Meteor Mobile Communications Ltd	No Response
NBI Infrastructure DAC	20/02/2025
Office of Public Works	No Response
Radio County sound Ltd	No Response
Radio Services	No Response

Rapid Broadband Ltd	19/02/2025
South West Local Authority Water Programme	No Response
Sport Ireland	No Response
Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland	10/01/2025
Tetra Ireland Communications Ltd.	22/07/2024
The Heritage Council	No Response
Three Ireland (Hutchinson) Ltd	No Response
Towercom	09/07/2024
Transport Infrastructure Ireland	29/01/2025
Viatel Ireland Ltd.	05/11/2024
Virgin Media Ireland Ltd.	05/11/2024
Vodafone Ireland Ltd.	27/08/2024
Waterways Ireland	07/01/2025
Wizzy Internet	05/07/2024

Table 2-6 provides a summary of the details received from the consultees, where relevant queries were raised or information provided. The table also identifies the relevant chapter where the points raised by each of the consultees are addressed.

Table 2-6: Consultee responses and relevant chapters

Consultee	Points Raised by Consultee	Addressed in Chapter
2rn	States that there are no 2rn links in the area, however there is a risk of interference to broadcast services in the area from the Proposed Wind Farm.  2rn therefore requests that a protocol be signed between the developer and 2rn	Ch.15: Material Assets
Ajisko Ltd	States that nothing is of concern for IMS connect.	Not Applicable
AP Wireless	APW don't have any site interest in this area	Not Applicable
BB Net	We don't have anything in this area	Not Applicable
Broadcasting Authority of Ireland/ Coimisiún na Meán	Coimisiún na Meán does not perform an in-depth analysis of the effect of wind turbines or electrical sub stations on FM networks. However, we are not aware of any issues from existing windfarms or electrical sub stations into existing FM networks. Also, the proposed substation is not located close to any existing or planned FM transmission sites.	Not Applicable
BT Communications Ireland	BT Ireland no longer have a microwave network	Not Applicable
ComReg	States that electronic services network/service ("ECN/S") providers may also use licence-exempt spectrum for which ComReg does not hold any information. All ECN/S providers are required to submit a notification of General Authorisation to ComReg, and the full list of all providers (including area of operation) can be found at <a href="https://serviceregister.comreg.ie/Services/Search">https://serviceregister.comreg.ie/Services/Search</a> . ComReg's Siteviewer tool ( <a href="https://www.comreg.ie/industry/radio-spectrum/site-viewer/siteviewer/">https://www.comreg.ie/industry/radio-spectrum/site-viewer/siteviewer/</a> ) may also be helpful in identifying mobile operators within the relevant area.	Not Applicable
Cork County Council	States they don't have any links in that direction	Not Applicable
Defence Forces (Links)	States that a microwave link is being established from Mt. Gabriel to Cork City via Mt. Mullaghanish. The Email recommends contacting Patrick. Kennedy for further details. No response was received.	

<p>Department of Agriculture, Food, and the Marine</p>	<p>States that the developer must obtain a Felling License from The Department for Agriculture, Food, and the Marine before trees are felled or removed. The developer should take note of the contents of Felling and Reforestation Policy document which provide a consolidated source of information on the legal and regulatory framework relating to tree felling.</p>	<p>Ch. 6: Biodiversity</p>
<p>Department of Defence</p>	<p>It is stated that the Department of Defence does not provide observations or advice in the scoping process, except where the relevant parties have been directed by a planning authority to seek the Department’s views. Following on from consultation with the Military authorities, the Department makes the following observations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Turbines should be illuminated by Type C, Medium intensity, Fixed Red obstacle lighting with a minimum output of 2,000 candela to be visible in all directions of azimuth and be operational 24/7.</li> <li>› Obstacle lighting should be incandescent or of a type visible to Night vision equipment. Obstacle lighting must emit light at the near Infra-Red (IR) range of the electromagnetic spectrum, specifically at or near 850 nanometres (nm) of wavelength. Light intensity to be of similar value to that emitted in the visible spectrum of light.</li> </ul> <p>It is stated that any Irish Air Corps (IAC) requirements are separate to Irish Aviation Authority (IAA) requirements.</p>	<p>Ch.15: Material Assets</p>
<p>Department of Housing Local Government and Heritage</p>	<p>The response includes observations/recommendations regarding nature conservation and summarised as follows;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› All aspects of wind farm project, including both the overall turbine and grid connection proposals, need to be assessed together in terms of both EIA/EIS and NIS/AA process to avoid project splitting aspects of the project within the assessment process.</li> <li>› Assessment should include an assessment of the loss of underlying peat within the development site as a cumulative loss of peat overall and should be assessed in terms of a carbon benefit analysis versus restoration to peatland habitats</li> <li>› The Proposed Wind Farm application area is hydrologically linked to the Bandon River SAC 2171 via tributaries and appears also at the eastern end of the application to be partly within the SAC</li> </ul>	<p>Ch. 6: Biodiversity</p> <p>Ch. 8: Land, Soils and Geology,</p> <p>Ch. 9: Hydrology and Hydrogeology</p> <p>Appendix 4-3 Construction and Environmental Management Plan</p> <p>Appendix 4-2 Peat and Spoil Management Plan</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› The Proposed Wind Farm is within the range of the recently re-introduced white-tailed sea eagle, a species listed in Annex I of the EU Birds Directive (Council Directive 2009/147/EC). Collision and mortality risk must be fully assessed for the project and it should be borne in mind that assessment cannot have lacunae and must contain complete, precise and definitive findings and conclusions capable of removing all reasonable scientific doubt. In terms of increasing the risk of collision the siting of turbines on locations on ridges above valleys where eagles are likely to use rising air currents to obtain ‘orographic lift’ to gain altitude<sup>7</sup> would be an additional potential concern. It is not clear if turbine siting will be proposed in an area of higher ‘orographic lift’. It should be assessed as part of the overall assessment whether models, such as that in Hanssen et al. (2020), are applicable at this wind-farm in detecting microsite susceptibility to generating ‘orographic lift’ which may attract eagles into the rotor-swept zones of these turbines. Existing and proposed adjacent windfarms could add to the cumulative risk of collision and narrow a potential corridor of flight activity (directional flight, social behaviour, and soaring). This factor should also be considered during the collision and mortality risk assessment for the project.</li> <li>› There are concerns regarding the potential loss and/or degradation of dry heath, blanket bog and other peatland habitats arising from the overall wind farm proposal. A number of areas of Annex I habitat under the EU Habitats Directive occur within the project area. Detailed consideration should be given to peat/ soil excavation amounts. A detailed plan for the safe storage, disposal and rehabilitation of excavated or disturbed peat /soil would have to form part of the EIAR</li> <li>› A detailed site drainage map would be required and should show all existing watercourses. The associated impacts of quarrying or extraction should be included among the considerations at the earliest stages of project planning and design, and should be assessed fully in the EIAR.</li> <li>› Any tree felling of forested sites should be included as an intrinsic element of the overall development, the impacts and implications of which should be assessed fully in the EIAR</li> <li>› Any improvement or reinforcement works required for access and transport anywhere along the proposed haul route(s) should be included in the EIAR and subjected to ecological impact assessment with the inclusion of mitigation measures, as appropriate.</li> <li>› Any losses of biodiversity habitat associated with this Proposed Project (including access roads and cabling etc.) such as woodland, scrub, hedgerows, peatland and other habitats should be mitigated for.</li> <li>› Annex I habitats which occur outside the Natura 2000 network are important in terms of biodiversity conservation. The presence of the Annex I habitats outside the network should be given due</li> </ul>	
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	<p>consideration as part of the consideration of biodiversity matters generally for the Proposed Project          The loss of Annex I habitats outside SACs should be avoided.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› The EIAR should include the results of the surveys and detail the survey methodology and timing of such surveys including consistency in terms of timed vantage point surveys</li> </ul> <p>The document notes species of concern which should be considered including the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Whooper Swans</li> <li>› White Tailed Sea Eagle</li> <li>› Hen Harrier</li> <li>› Merlin</li> <li>› Golden Plover</li> <li>› Kingfisher</li> <li>› Chough</li> <li>› Short Eared Owl</li> <li>› Peregrine Falcon</li> <li>› Kestrel</li> <li>› Snipe</li> <li>› Woodcock</li> <li>› Meadow pipit</li> <li>› Red grouse</li> <li>› Skylark</li> <li>› Dipper</li> <li>› Marsh Fritillary</li> <li>› Bats</li> </ul> <p>Complete project details including Construction Management Plans (CMPs) need to be provided in order to allow an adequate EIAR and appropriate assessment to be undertaken. Applicants need to be able to demonstrate that CMPs and other such plans are adequate, all mitigation is included and effective and supported by scientific information and analysis and that they are feasible within the physical constraints of the site.</p>	
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	<p>Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) should be consulted with regard to impacts on fish species and the Applicant may find it useful to consult their publication entitled "Planning for watercourses in the urban environment" (2020) which can be downloaded from their web site.</p> <p>Cumulative impact from all windfarms in the area needs to be fully and comprehensively assessed and the data from surrounding sites needs to be considered in the assessment of impacts. Post construction monitoring results and data from nearby windfarms should be considered and their associated EIARs.</p> <p>Where there are impacts on protected species and their habitats, resting or breeding places, licenses may be required under the Wildlife Act 1976-2018 or derogations under the EC (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011, as amended.</p>	
<p>Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications (on behalf of Geological Survey Ireland)</p>	<p>Notes that data that is available on the Geological Survey Ireland website on the following subjects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Land and Soils</li> <li>&gt; Water</li> <li>&gt; Climate Change</li> <li>&gt; Cultural Heritage</li> <li>&gt; Material Assets</li> <li>&gt; The Landscape</li> <li>&gt; Other</li> </ul>	<p>Ch. 8: Land, Soils and Geology</p> <p>Ch. 9: Hydrology and Hydrogeology</p> <p>Ch.11: Climate</p> <p>Ch.14: Cultural Heritage</p> <p>Ch.13: Landscape and Visual</p> <p>Ch.15: Material Assets</p>

Eir	“We have no transmission links within the proposed area and it has no risk to the network for Eir Mobile or the Eir fixed network.”	Not Applicable
Enet	States that they have no links passing through this area currently	Not Applicable
Electricity Supply Board (ESB) (Links)	States that attached is a basic exclusion zone created for the Maughanaclea, Co, Cork. To avoid interference to our links, the development must fall outside of this zone.	Ch.15 :Material Assets
EOBO ltd	States that there are no links in the area	Not Applicable
Failte Ireland	States that the impact of the development needs to be fully considered because of the important tourism amenities in the area (Bear Breffini Way, Gougane Barra, and Wild Atlantic Way Region). Key tourism amenities like walking/hiking trails and tourism attractions should be considered and be included in the EIAR having regard to the proximity of the Proposed Project.  Provided EIAR Guidelines for the Consideration of Tourism and Tourism Related Projects.	Ch. 5 : Population and Human Health  Appendix 5-3 Tourism Impact Assessment
Health Service Executive	Recommends that the following documents are taken into consideration when preparing the EIAR:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (2022), EPA.</li> <li>› Advice Notes on Current Practice in the preparation of EIS (2003), 435kb</li> <li>› Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Coimsiún Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment.</li> <li>› EU publication: Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects Guidance on the preparation of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report, EU, 2017.</li> <li>› Climate Action Plan 2024 CAP 2024 Govt. of Ireland, May 2024</li> <li>› Circular Economy and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2022</li> </ul> States that the EIAR should examine the following:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Description of the receiving environment;</li> </ul>	Ch.1: Introduction  Ch. 3: Reasonable Alternatives  Ch. 4: Description  Ch. 5: Population and Human Health  Ch. 8: Land, Soils and Geology  Ch. 9: Hydrology and Hydrogeology

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› The nature and scale of the impact;</li> <li>› An assessment of the significance of the impact;</li> <li>› Proposed mitigation measures;</li> <li>› Residual impacts.</li> </ul> <p>The National Environmental Health Service (NEHS) recommends that the following matters are included and assessed in the EIAR.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Public Consultation</li> <li>› Population and Human Health including Opportunity for Health Gain</li> <li>› Climate Change</li> <li>› Siting and location of turbines</li> <li>› Noise &amp; Vibration</li> <li>› Shadow Flicker</li> <li>› Air Quality</li> <li>› Surface and Groundwater Quality</li> <li>› Geological Impacts</li> <li>› Ancillary facilities</li> <li>› Cumulative impacts</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Public Consultation</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› The EIAR must show that inclusive public consultation has taken place, using various communication methods to engage all community sectors throughout all development phases—construction, operation, and decommissioning.</li> <li>› The EIAR should clearly link public consultations to how they have influenced the decision-making process.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Strategic Planning Context</u></b></p>	<p>Ch.10: Air Quality</p> <p>Ch.12: Noise and Vibration</p> <p>Appendix 4-3 Construction and Environmental Management Plan</p> <p>Appendix 4-6 Decommissioning Plan</p> <p>Appendix 2-1 Community Report</p> <p>Ch. 6: Biodiversity</p> <p>Ch. 8: Land, Soils and Geology</p> <p>Ch. 9: Hydrology and Hydrogeology</p> <p>Appendix 4-3 Construction and Environmental Management Plan</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› The National Adaptation Framework 2024 and the Cork County Council Climate Action Plan 2024-2029 should be addressed in EIAR.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Population and Human Health including Opportunity for Health Gain</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› NEHS recommends that potential impacts on human health are assessed in each of the three phases of the Proposed Project, construction, operations and decommissioning.</li> <li>› EIAR should assess the potential health gains the Proposed Project offers.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Details of Turbines</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› EIAR should include a map and description of the proposed location of each of the proposed turbines.</li> <li>› Details (height and model) of the turbines to be installed will be available at the time planning permission is sought and will be included in the EIAR.</li> <li>› Details of the foundations for the wind turbine including depth, quantity and material to be used should be included in the EIAR.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Decommissioning</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› The EIAR should detail the eventual fate of the wind turbines and associated material i.e. will the material be recycled or how will it be disposed of in the context of a circular economy.</li> <li>› Information should also be provided regarding the proposed methodology to be used for the disposal of the materials forming the foundations of the wind turbines.</li> <li>› The EIAR should indicate the proposed future use of the development site at the end of the planning permission period.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Climate Change</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› The EIAR should clearly illustrate how the development contributes to obligations under the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015 and amendment of 2021, Climate Action Plan 2024 and</li> </ul>	
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	<p>National Planning Objective 54 under Chapter 9 – Realising our Sustainable Future within the National Planning Framework (Project Ireland 2040).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› In the context of carbon budgets, the EIAR should assess the quantity of GHGs from the Proposed Project at every phase, construction, operations and decommissioning.</li> <li>› Suggested to utilise the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015 – 2030 in terms of assessing the risks to the Proposed Project and how to build resilience not just from the effects of climate change but more broadly also.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Noise &amp; Vibration</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› The potential impacts for noise and vibration from the Proposed Project on all noise sensitive locations must be clearly identified in the EIAR. The EIAR must also consider the appropriateness and effectiveness of all proposed mitigation measures to minimise noise and vibration.</li> <li>› An assessment of the predicted noise impacts during the construction phase and the operational phase of the proposed windfarm development must be undertaken which details the change in the noise environment resulting from the Proposed Project.</li> <li>› The Draft Revised Wind Energy Development Guidelines were published in December 2019. Whilst these have yet to be adopted, any Proposed Wind Farm development should have consideration of the draft Guidelines.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Shadow flicker</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Recommended that a shadow flicker assessment is undertaken to identify any dwellings and sensitive receptors which may be impacted by shadow flicker.</li> <li>› Recommended that turbine selection will be based on the most advanced available technology that permits shut down during times when residents are exposed to shadow flicker. As a result, no dwelling should be exposed to shadow flicker.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Air Quality</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› EIAR should identify the air pollutants of public health concern such as particulate matter and nitrous oxides for example in each of the three phases of the Proposed Project.</li> </ul>	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) should be included in the EIAR which details dust mitigation measures.</li> <li>› Reference should be made to the following literature WHO Air Quality Guidelines 2021, Clean Air Strategy for Ireland 2023 and the TA Luft Air Quality Standard.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Water - Surface and Ground Water Quality</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Any potential significant impacts to drinking water sources should be assessed. Details of bedrock, overburden, vulnerability, groundwater flows, aquifers and catchment areas should be considered when assessing potential impacts and any proposed mitigation measures.</li> <li>› Walk over survey of the Site is undertaken in addition to a desktop analysis of Geological Survey of Ireland data in order to identify the location of private wells used for drinking water purposes.</li> <li>› Any impacts on surface water as a result of the construction of the underground cables should be identified and addressed in the EIAR.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Geotechnical and peat stability report</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› The NEHS recommends that a detailed Peat Stability/Geotechnical Assessment should be undertaken to assess the suitability of the soil for the Proposed Project. The EIAR should include provision for a peat stability monitoring programme to identify early signs of potential bog slides.</li> </ul> <p>Information should be provided on the make and model of the turbines and on construction details for the turbine foundations, including the depth and volume of concrete required</p>	
Hibernian Towers	States that this stage we don't envisage that we would have an objection to this project however if it moves to planning stage, we would have to do a thorough analysis and decide then whether we would object or not	Not Applicable
Iarnród Eireann	States they have no comment to make. There is no operational railway in the area and I don't believe CIE still own any railway alignments in the area. Let me know if you have a specific reason for asking for	Not Applicable

<p>Imagine Group</p>	<p>States at present Imagine have no microwave links affected by this development.          Your mail has been forwarded to our radio planning department. They will respond directly if they have any concerns</p>	<p>Not Applicable</p>
<p>Inland Fisheries Ireland</p>	<p>States that the site of the Proposed Project encompasses the upper, Rivers Owvane, Meelagh and Bandon Catchments</p> <p>and tributaries, significant salmonid fisheries. In this context IFI would ask that the following requirements should be taken into consideration.</p> <p>There should be no drainage or other physical interference with the bed or bank of any watercourse without prior consultation with IFI.</p> <p>Suspended solids and or hydrocarbon contaminated site run-off waters must be controlled adequately so that no pollution of surface waters can occur. More specifically IFI feels the following issues should be addressed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Identifying and zoning the project for environmental impact should a peat slip occur</li> <li>ii. Setting out contingency plan should a peat movement occur.</li> <li>iii. Setting out a plan for the control of silt in such a scenario, including measures to be put in place at the initial stages of construction.</li> </ul> <p>In the event of any watercourse crossings being bridged or culverted the following general criteria should apply,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. The free passage of fish must not be obstructed.</li> <li>ii. The original slope of the river bed should be maintained with no sudden drops on the downstream side.</li> <li>iii. Design details on any proposed crossing should be incorporated at planning stage</li> <li>iv. Bridges are preferable to culverts.</li> <li>v. All instream works should be carried out only in the July-September period.</li> </ul>	<p>Ch. 9: Hydrology and Hydrogeology</p>

	<p>Full cognisance should be given to IFI “Guidelines on protection of fisheries during construction works in and adjacent to waters”</p> <p><a href="https://www.fisheriesireland.ie/media/guidelines-on-protection-of-fisheries-during-construction-works-in-and-adjacent-to-waters">https://www.fisheriesireland.ie/media/guidelines-on-protection-of-fisheries-during-construction-works-in-and-adjacent-to-waters</a></p>	
<p>Irish Aviation Authority</p>	<p>Sates that the IAA has no specific requirements for inclusion in the scoping reports based on the very high-level information presented. More formal observations can be provided when an indicative scheme of turbine coordinates and positions / blade tip heights are available.</p> <p>It is likely that the following general observations would be proffered by the Authority during a formal planning process:  <i>In the event of planning consent being granted, the Applicant should be conditioned to contact the Irish Aviation Authority to:</i></p> <p><i>(1) agree an aeronautical obstacle warning light scheme for the wind farm development,</i>  <i>(2) provide as-constructed coordinates in WGS84 format together with ground and blade tip height elevations at each wind turbine location and</i>  <i>(3) notify the Authority of intention to commence crane operations with at least 30 days prior notification of their erection.</i></p>	<p>Ch.15: Material Assets</p>
<p>Irish Water (Uisce Éireann)</p>	<p>Uisce Éireann noted that:</p> <p>(a) Where the development proposal has the potential to impact an Uisce Éireann Drinking Water Source(s), the Applicant shall provide details of measures to be taken to ensure that there will be no negative impact to Uisce Éireann’s Drinking Water Source(s) during the construction and operational phases of the development. Hydrological / hydrogeological pathways between the Applicant’s site and receiving waters should be identified as part of the report.</p>	<p>Ch. 9: Hydrology and Hydrogeology</p>

	<p>b) Where the development proposes the backfilling of materials, the Applicant is required to include a waste sampling strategy to ensure the material is inert.</p> <p>c) Mitigations should be proposed for any potential negative impacts on any water source(s) which may be in proximity and included in the environmental management plan and incident response.</p> <p>d) Any and all potential impacts on the nearby reservoir as public water supply water source(s) are assessed, including any impact on hydrogeology and any groundwater/ surface water interactions.</p> <p>e) Impacts of the development on the capacity of water services (i.e. do existing water services have the capacity to cater for the new development). This is confirmed by Uisce Éireann in the form of a Confirmation of Feasibility (COF). If a development requires a connection to either a public water supply or sewage collection system, the developer is advised to submit a Pre-Connection Enquiry (PCE) enquiry to Uisce Éireann to determine the feasibility of connection to the Uisce Éireann network.</p> <p>f) The Applicant shall identify any upgrading of water services infrastructure that would be required to accommodate the Proposed Project) In relation to a development that would discharge trade effluent – any upstream treatment or attenuation of discharges required prior to discharging to an Uisce Éireann collection network.</p> <p>h) In relation to the management of surface water; the potential impact of surface water discharges to combined sewer networks and potential measures to minimise and or / stop surface waters from combined sewers.</p> <p>i) Any physical impact on Uisce Éireann assets – reservoir, drinking water source, treatment works, pipes, pumping stations, discharges outfalls etc. including any relocation of assets.</p> <p>j) When considering a development proposal, the Applicant is advised to determine the location of public water services assets, possible connection points from the Applicant’s site / lands to the public network and any drinking water abstraction catchments to ensure these are included and fully assessed in any pre-planning proposals. Details, where known, can be obtained by emailing an Ordnance Survey map identifying the proposed location of the Applicant’s intended development to <a href="mailto:datarequests@water.ie">datarequests@water.ie</a></p>	
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	<p>k) Other indicators or methodologies for identifying infrastructure located within the Applicant’s lands are the presence of registered wayleave agreements, visible manholes, vent stacks, valve chambers, marker posts etc. within the proposed site.</p> <p>l) Any potential impacts on the assimilative capacity of receiving waters in relation to Uisce Éireann discharge outfalls including changes in dispersion / circulation characterises. Hydrological / hydrogeological pathways between the Applicants’ site and receiving waters should be identified within the report.</p> <p>m) Any potential impact on the contributing catchment of water sources either in terms of water abstraction for the development (and resultant potential impact on the capacity of the source) or the potential of the development to influence / present a risk to the quality of the water abstracted by Uisce Éireann for public supply should be identified within the report.</p> <p>n) Where a development proposes to connect to an Uisce Éireann network and that network either abstracts water from or discharges wastewater to a “protected”/ sensitive area, consideration as to whether the integrity of the Site / conservation objectives of the Site would be compromised should be identified within the report.</p> <p>o) Uisce Éireann does not permit building over of its assets. As an Applicant you are required to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- survey the Site to determine the exact location of the assets. Any trial investigations should be carried out with the agreement and in the presence of Uisce Éireann.</li> <li>- Provide evidence of separation distances between the existing Uisce Éireann assets and proposed structures, other services, trees, etc. have to be in accordance with the Irish Water Codes of Practice and Standard Details.</li> </ul> <p>p) Where a diversion of Public Infrastructure may be required subject to layout proposal of the development and separation distances, the Applicant is required to submit a Diversions Enquiry to <a href="mailto:diversions@water.ie">diversions@water.ie</a></p> <p>q) Mitigation measures in relation to any of the above ensuring a zero risk to any Uisce Éireann drinking water sources (Surface and Ground water)</p>	
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Irish Water Links	States they can confirm the Uisce Éireann have no radio links traversing the Proposed Project	
Irish Wildlife Trust	States they do not have the staff capacity to respond to this consultation at the moment but we will endeavour to respond if possible	Not Applicable
Ivertec Ltd	The Proposed Project will not impact our network negatively	Not Applicable
Lackabeha Services Ltd T/A Airwaves Internet	We have no infrastructure in this area	Not Applicable
National Broadband Ireland	NBI have completed our analysis, and we are not operating or have any current plans to operate radio links in or through the vicinity the proposed area. Therefore, NBI have no concerns regarding these development plans.	Not Applicable
Rapid Broadband Ltd	States they don't have any existing or planned links now or in the future at Maughanaclea, Co. Cork	Not Applicable
SEAI	States that SEAI is not a prescribed notifiable body under the Planning Act and we would not be resourced to respond to such notices voluntarily. We hope that any misunderstanding that may have occurred, that has lead you to think we are, is an anomaly	Not Applicable
TetraIreland	States that no impact is anticipated from the development as proposed	Not Applicable
Towercom	States that based on the Site boundary provided, I can confirm that Towercom Limited does not have any existing or planned links in the area. Our closest site is approx. 10km south at Drimoleague	Not Applicable
Transport Infrastructure Ireland	The developer/scheme promoter should have regard, <i>inter alia</i> , to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Consultations should be had with the relevant Local Authority/National Roads Design Office, with regard to the locations of existing and future national road schemes.</li> </ul>	Ch.15: Material Assets

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› TII would be specifically concerned as to potential significant impacts the development would have on the national road network (and junctions with national roads), in the proximity of the Proposed Project including the potential haul route.</li> <li>› The developer, in preparing EIAR, should have regard to TII Publications. The EIAR/EIS should consider the Environmental Noise Regulations 2006 (SI 140 of 2006) and, in particular, how the development will affect future action plans by the relevant competent authority. The developer may need to consider the incorporation of noise barriers to reduce noise impacts (see ‘Guidelines for the Treatment of Noise and Vibration in National Road Schemes’, (1st Rev., National Roads Authority, 2004).</li> <li>› It would be important that, where appropriate, subject to meeting the appropriate thresholds and criteria and having regard to best practice, a Traffic and Transport Assessment (TTA) be carried out in accordance with relevant guidelines, noting traffic volumes attending the Site and traffic routes to/from the site, with reference to impacts on the national road network and junctions of lower category roads with national roads. In relation to national roads, TII’s ‘Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines’ (2014) should be referred to in relation to Proposed Project, with potential impacts on the national road network. The scheme promoter is also advised to have regard to Section 2.2 of TII’s TTA Guidelines, which addresses requirements for sub-threshold TTA. Any improvements required to facilitate development should be identified. It will be the responsibility of the developer to pay for the costs of any improvements to national roads to facilitate the private development proposed as TII will not be responsible for such costs.</li> <li>› The designers are asked to consult TII Publications to determine whether a Road Safety Audit is required.</li> <li>› With respect to any potential turbine and associated delivery haul route(s) which utilise national roads: In relation to any proposed haul route, where abnormal ‘weight’ loads are proposed, separate structure approvals/permits and other licences may be required. All national road structures on the haul route through all the relevant County Council administrative areas should be checked by the Applicant/developer to confirm their capacity to accommodate any abnormal ‘weight’ load proposed. In addition, the haul route should be assessed to confirm capacity to accommodate abnormal ‘length’ loads and any temporary works required are identified.          The national road network is managed by a combination of PPP Concessions, Motorway Maintenance and Renewal Contracts (MMaRC) and local road authorities in association with TII. The Applicant/developer should also consult with all PPP Companies, MMaRC Contractors and road</li> </ul>	
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	<p>authorities over which the haul route traverses to ascertain any operational requirements, including delivery timetabling, etc. to ensure that the strategic function of the national road network is safeguarded. here temporary works within any MMaRC Contract Boundary are required to facilitate the transport of turbine components to site, the Applicant/developer shall contact <a href="mailto:thirdpartyworks@tii.ie">thirdpartyworks@tii.ie</a> in advance, as a works specific Deed of Indemnity will be needed by TII before the works can take place. Additionally, any damage caused to the pavement on the existing national road arising from any temporary works due to the turning movement of abnormal loads (e.g. tearing of the surface course, etc.) shall be rectified in accordance with TII Pavement Standards and details in this regard shall be agreed with the Road Authority prior to the commencement of any development on site.</p> <p>› Any Greenway and National Cycle Network Plan (NCN) proposals in the vicinity of the proposal or haul route require consultation with the local authority internal project and/or design staff is recommended. Notwithstanding any of the above, the developer should be aware that this list is non-exhaustive, thus site and development specific issues should be addressed in accordance with best practice.</p>	
Viatel	States they nothing in this area	Not Applicable
Virgin Media	States Virgin Media Ireland do not have any radio links in the area	Not Applicable
Vodafone	States that they do not have any transmission within the proposed area	Not Applicable
Waterways Ireland	States this is not within any Zone of Influence of our waterways so we will not be commenting	Not Applicable
Whizzy Internet	States they have no links in the area	Not Applicable

### 2.8.3 Community Engagement

The Applicant has engaged with the wider communities with regards to the Proposed Project. Public consultation began in December 2024, through engagement with near neighbours, local representatives, and local community groups. This included door-to-door engagement with near neighbours within a c. 2 km radius of the developable area. A Community Liaison Officer was also appointed and a dedicated project website (<https://maughanacleainfo.com/>) with the relevant project information went live. On the 29<sup>th</sup> of April, the first Public Information Event was held in the Westlodge Hotel, Bantry. The objective of the consultations was to ensure that the views and concerns of all were considered as part of the Proposed Project design and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process. Appendix 2-1 of this EIAR contains a full and detailed community engagement report. The report was prepared to record the consultation carried out with the local community in respect of the Proposed Project. On the 24<sup>th</sup> of November 2025, a second public Information Event was held in Westlodge Hotel, Bantry. The objective of the second consultation was to update the public on the progress of the Proposed Project, following surveys and consultation.

The Proposed Project has the potential to have significant benefits for the local economy, by means of job creation, landowner payments and commercial rate payments. An important part of any renewable energy development, which Maughanaclea Ltd has been at the forefront of developing, is its Community Benefit Fund. The concept of directing benefits from wind farms to the local community is promoted by the National Economic and Social Council (NESC) and the Wind Energy Ireland (WEI) among others. While it may be simpler and easier to put a total fund aside for a wider community area, the Applicant is endeavouring to develop new ways to direct increased gain towards the local community with particular focus on those living closest to the Proposed Project.

The Guidelines state that:

*“While it is not a mandatory requirement, it is strongly recommended that developers of a wind energy project should engage in active consultation and dialogue with the local community at an early stage in the planning process, ideally prior to submitting a planning application”.*

This was further addressed in the Preferred Draft Approach to Wind Energy Development in Ireland (June 2017) which stated the following with respect to planning applications for wind farms:

*“Planning applications must contain a Community Report prepared by the Applicant which will specify how the final proposal reflects community consultation. The Community Report must also outline steps taken to ensure that the Proposed Project will be of enduring economic benefit to the communities concerned”.*

The Draft Revised Wind Energy Guidelines (Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government, 2019) (the draft Guidelines) has retained this position stating the following:

*“In order to promote the observance of best practice, planning authorities should require Applicants to prepare and submit a Community Report with their planning application and a condition on any subsequent planning permission should require developers to carry out the development in accordance with the approved Community Report”.*

Appendix 2-1 outlines the consultation and community engagement initiatives undertaken by the Applicant prior to the submission of the planning application. It also outlines the main issues identified during this process, and how the final proposal reflects community consultation. An important element of this report was to display how the development of the Proposed Project will provide an enduring economic benefit to the communities surrounding the Proposed Project. As outlined in the above sections, and in Appendix 2-1 to this EIAR, this will occur through the potential community benefit

package for residents and community groups, employment during the construction and operation of the Proposed Project, and through the annual rates payable to the local authority.

## 2.8.4 Pre-Planning Meeting

### 2.8.4.1 An Coimisiún Pleanála

Members of the project team and the Applicant met with representatives from An Coimisiún Pleanála on the 28<sup>th</sup> of March 2025 via Microsoft Teams to discuss the Proposed Project under Section 37B of the Act.

Those in attendance were:

- Una Crosse, ACP
- Pauline Fitzpatrick, ACP
- Maeve Flynn, ACP
- Lauren Murphy, ACP
- Feithlinn Morgan, MKO
- Hannah Rice, MKO
- Colm Ryan, MKO
- Robert Kennedy, MKO
- Ciarán Fitzgerald, MKO
- William O'Connor, Maughanaclea Ltd.
- Niall Galvin, Maughanaclea Ltd.

The team gave an overview of the Proposed Project in a power point presentation. Matters discussed included:

- The Applicant
- Site location and context
- Site zoning
- Constraints
- Project scoping
- EIAR structure

The following points were raised in the discussion following the presentation:

- The Commission's representatives began the discussion by seeking clarity from the prospective Applicant in relation to the proposed output with the Applicant stating that the turbine type under consideration would have an output of 4.8MW per turbine.
- The Commission's representatives noted that a specific proposed height was not stated in the presentation and asked the Applicant if it is their intention to seek design flexibility opinion under 37CC of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended. The Applicant clarified that they do not intend on seeking a design flexibility opinion and the exact proposed turbine dimensions will be clarified before seeking closure of this preapplication process.
- The Commission's representatives advised the Applicant that is important they prepare a robust and detailed Landscape and Visual Assessment Report to be submitted as part of the planning application.
- Following on, the Commission's representatives advised the Applicant to be consider existing and Proposed Project in the area, and that cumulative impacts should be clearly identified and considered as part of the planning application.
- The Commission's representatives advised the Applicant to discuss the Proposed Project with Cork County Council in particular with the roads department in relation to the proposed access routes and the Turbine Delivery Route.

- Following on from a query raised by the Commission’s representatives, the Applicant clarified that the access to the northern turbine cluster of the Site off the regional road is proposed to be a permanent access road. However, the Turbine Delivery Route access point is slightly different to the proposed operational access point.
- The Commission’s representatives note that there a number of recorded monuments located within the Site and advised the Applicant to undertake a robust Archaeological Assessment.
- The Commission’s representatives also noted that the Applicant issued a scoping request to prescribed bodies and asked the Applicant to elaborate on this. The Applicant stated that the have received feedback from Inland Fisheries, Failte Ireland, Department of Defence, Uisce Eireann, Transport Infrastructure Ireland, Health and Safety Authority and Geological Survey Ireland. The prospective Applicant advised that the feedback received was quite general and not project specific.
- Following a query raised by the Commission’s representatives the Applicant clarified that the Owngar River and the Gortloughra River are located in Flood Zone A. The Commission’s representatives advised the prospective Applicant to ensure the issues in relation to site drainage are clearly identified and mitigated.
- The Applicant clarified that the grid connection route will be located within the public network.
- The Commission’s representatives asked the Applicant to clarify the extent of tree felling on the Site due to the coniferous forestry land. The prospective Applicant estimated that 24 hectares of tree felling would be required however, this is yet to be finalised.
- The Commission’s representatives advised the Applicant to ensure their Biodiversity and Ornithology studies and surveys are robust.
- Following a query raised by the Commission’s representatives, the Applicant advised that their team ecologist has been in contact with the National Parks and Wildlife Services in particular in relation to Chough sightings in and around the Site.
- The Commission’s representatives concluded the discussion by advising the Applicant of the need to ensure the application documentation is robust.

### Pre-Application Close Out Letter

A letter received from An Coimisiún Pleanála dated the 10<sup>th</sup> of February 2026 stated that under Section 37B (4)(A), it is the opinion of the Commission that the Proposed Project falls within the scope of 37A(2)(a) and (b) of the Act. This confirmed that the Proposed Project constitutes SID and therefore the planning application should be made directly to An Coimisiún Pleanála.

## 2.8.5 Cork County Council

The Applicant engaged with Cork County Council on the 17<sup>th</sup> February 2025 in accordance with Section 247 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) in relation to the Proposed Project. Cork County Council has responded to the Applicant stating

*“I note that An Bord Pleanála have recently advised the Planning Authority that the Board have entered into pre-application consultations in relation to the above described proposed development. Please be advised that as the Board is the consenting authority in this case, the Planning Authority has no role in pre-application consultations at this stage.”*

In light of this response, the Applicant acknowledges the position of Cork County Council, but they will remain available should CCC wish to discuss the project. The Applicant also engaged with engineers from CCC to discuss the proposals. The discussions covered several matters; reinstatement of the grid route, directional drilling to cross the River Bandon and the volume of cables proposed within the public corridor. The proposed grid route was accepted in these discussions and the proposed TDR was deemed to be acceptable.

## 2.9

## Cumulative Impact Assessment

The EIA Directive and associated guidance documents state that as well as considering any direct, indirect, secondary, transboundary, short-, medium-, and long-term, permanent, and temporary, positive and negative effects of the project (all of which are considered in the various chapters of this EIAR), the description of likely significant effects should include an assessment of cumulative impacts that may arise. This description should take into account the environmental protection objectives established at Union or Member State level which are relevant to the project. The factors to be considered in relation to cumulative effects include population and human health, biodiversity, land, soil, water, air, climate, material assets, landscape, and cultural heritage as well as the interactions between these factors.

To gather a comprehensive view of cumulative impacts on these environmental considerations and to inform the EIAR process being undertaken by the consenting authority, each relevant chapter within this EIAR includes a cumulative impact assessment where appropriate.

The potential for cumulative impacts arising from other projects has therefore been fully considered within this EIAR.

A list of all cumulative projects considered as part of the application is included as Appendix 2-3.

## 2.9.1

### Methodology for the Cumulative Assessment of Projects

The EIA Directive includes a requirement to consider ‘*a cumulation of effects with other existing and/or approved projects, taking into account any existing environmental problems relating to areas of particular environmental importance likely to be affected or the use of natural resources.*’ The methodology for the cumulative assessment has been informed by the relevant guidance documents and by the nature and scale of the Proposed Project.

The potential cumulative impact of the Proposed Project and combined with the potential impact of other projects or plans has been carried out with the purpose of identifying what influence the Proposed Project will have on the surrounding environment when considered collectively with approved and existing projects, projects pending a decision from the planning authority, projects in the public domain such as those SID at pre-consultation with An Coimisiún Pleanála, and land-uses in the vicinity of the Site location.

The cumulative impact assessment of projects has three principle aims:

- To establish the range and nature of existing and approved projects within the cumulative impact study area of the Proposed Project.
- To summarise the relevant projects which have a potential to create cumulative impacts.
- To identify the projects that hold the potential for cumulative interaction within the context of the Proposed Project and discard projects that will neither directly nor indirectly contribute to cumulative impacts. (Note: this is done by individual competent experts with respect to their specialist area of expertise.)

Projects were identified through a search of relevant online planning registers as well as informed by local knowledge of the area, particularly in relation to projects that have been circulated within the public domain but have not yet entered the formal planning system, and effects were considered following a review of associated EIARs.

## 2.9.2 Cumulative Study Area

The geographical boundaries of the various zones of sensitivity of and to the Proposed Project from which there may be potential for cumulative impacts to arise relative to each individual EIAR topic, i.e. each chapter, is presented below in Table 2-7. Following consultation with the EIAR team on each individual topic, the maximum geographical extent and justification for this extent was established and is presented below.

Table 2-7: Cumulative Study Areas and Justification

Individual Topic	Maximum Extent	Justification
Population & Human Health (including shadow flicker)	<p><b>Proposed Wind Farm:</b></p> <p>Proposed Wind Farm site Study Area for Population (1.33km)</p> <p>Shadow Flicker Study Area (10xRD buffer from proposed turbines)</p> <p><b>Proposed Grid Connection Route:</b></p> <p>Proposed Grid Connection Study Area for Population (250 from the Proposed Grid Connection)</p> <p>Consideration for the Population &amp; Human Health cumulative extent is also given to the Air &amp; Climate, Noise, Hydrology and Hydrogeology and Landscape &amp; Visual (i.e. Residential Visual Amenity) Cumulative Study areas</p>	<p>The Study Area for Population is identified in Section 5.3.1 in Ch. 5: Population and Human Health as the District Electoral Divisions where the Proposed Wind Farm site is located. For the Proposed Grid Connection Route, the Study Area for Population is identified as 250m from the proposed underground electrical cabling route. Both the Proposed Wind Farm site and Proposed Grid Connection Route Study Areas for Population identified are considered for cumulative effects on Population.</p> <p>For the assessment of cumulative shadow flicker, any other existing, permitted or proposed wind farms are considered where their ten times rotor diameter shadow flicker study area are located within the Shadow Flicker Study Area of max 1.33km (ten times the rotor diameter from proposed turbines) for the Proposed Wind Farm. As the nearest proposed, permitted or existing wind farm is 2km northeast of the closest proposed turbine (T01), the potential for cumulative shadow flicker impacts has been assessed.</p>
Biodiversity (Bats)	<p><b>Proposed Wind Farm:</b></p> <p>10km from Proposed Wind Farm site</p> <p><b>Proposed Grid Connection Route:</b></p> <p>250m from the grid underground electrical cabling route.</p> <p>Consideration for the Biodiversity cumulative extent is also given to the Ornithology and Hydrology and Hydrogeology Cumulative geographical boundaries.</p>	<p>Using the precautionary approach and given the nature and scale of the Proposed Project, the geographical boundary for terrestrial ecological aspects, i.e. habitats, is 10 km for cumulative assessment for the Proposed Wind Farm and 250 m from the Proposed Grid Connection Route.</p>
Ornithology (Birds)	<p>25km buffer from proposed turbines for large infrastructural development, such as wind farms, energy.</p>	<p>NatureScot guidance ‘<i>Assessing the Cumulative Impacts of onshore Wind Energy Developments</i>’ (SNH, 2012; 2018) was consulted while undertaking the cumulative assessment. SNH (2012; 2018) emphasises that its priority is to ‘<i>maintain the conservation status of the species population at the national</i></p>

Individual Topic	Maximum Extent	Justification
		<p>level.’ However, it is acknowledged that consideration should also be allowed for impacts at the regional level ‘where regional impacts have national implications (for example where a specific region holds the majority of the national population)’. Following the guidance of SNH (2012), the cumulative impact assessment has been carried out at the scale of the importance rating of the receptor. A 25km radius of the Proposed Wind Farm site turbines was considered a reasonable approximation of the size of a county and a 5km radius of the Proposed Wind Farm site turbines was considered a reasonable approximation for the local level.</p>
<p>Hydrology and Hydrogeology</p>	<p><b>Proposed Wind Farm:</b>          Nore Catchment for large infrastructural developments such as wind farms, energy and public transport developments. River Sub Basins for all smaller proposed, permitted or existing plans or projects (i.e. private and commercial type developments).  <b>Proposed Grid Connection Route:</b>          Within a 250m buffer zone of the Proposed Grid Connection Route.</p>	<p>Regional surface water catchments are used for cumulative impact assessment with regard large infrastructural developments such as wind farms, energy and public transport developments. The potential for cumulative effects for these developments likely exists on a regional catchment scale (i.e. significant works likely existing in several sub-basins). The Water Study Area for assessing the potential zone of impact and cumulative effects assessment is the Owvane River and Mealagh River catchments, which contains the Proposed Wind Farm site along with a short section of the Proposed Grid Connection route. The Bandon River catchment only contains the Proposed Grid Connection.</p>
<p>Land, Soils and Geology</p>	<p>EIAR Site Boundary</p>	<p>As there is no pathway for offsite cumulative impacts for Land, Soils and Geology, the cumulative study area is the EIAR Site Boundary.</p>
<p>Air &amp; Climate</p>	<p><b>Proposed Wind Farm:</b>          Air Quality Study Area is 1km from Proposed Wind Farm.  <b>Proposed Grid Connection Route:</b>          250m from Proposed Grid Connection Route.</p>	<p>Given dust particles do not generally travel greater than 500m from source (<i>Guidance on the Assessment of Mineral Dust Impacts for Planning</i>, IAQM 2016) the geographical boundary for the cumulative dust impact is 500m.</p> <p>In line with the TII Publication Air Quality Assessment of Proposed National Roads – Standard PE-ENV-01107, December 2022, a geographical boundary of 1km was used for cumulative air quality assessment.</p> <p>The Climate assessment has considered the cumulative effects of the Proposed Projects with other developments on a national basis and within the context of the national Carbon</p>

Individual Topic	Maximum Extent	Justification
		Budget and relevant sectoral emissions ceiling.
Noise & Vibration	<p><b>Proposed Wind Farm:</b> The list of wind farms which were initially considered in cumulative assessment extended to 10 km.</p> <p><b>Proposed Grid Connection Route:</b> 250m from Grid Connection underground electrical cabling route.</p>	The geographical boundary for the cumulative noise assessment is the area within which noise levels from the proposed, consented and existing wind turbine(s) may exceed 35 dB LA90 at up to 10m/s wind speed (Institute of Acoustics document Good Practice Guide To The Application Of Etsu-R-97 For The Assessment and Rating of Wind Turbine Noise).
Cultural Heritage	10km from Proposed Project turbine locations	The study area reflects the 10km study area assessed sites of national significance, including National Monuments under state care or guardianship and any sites subject to a Preservation Order.
Landscape & Visual	<p>25km from Proposed Project turbine locations for visual and landscape effects.</p> <p>15km from Proposed Project turbine locations for effects on landscape character.</p>	<p>The LVIA Study Area was chosen as 25 kilometres for landscape and visual effects as is suggested by guidance:  <i>‘For blade tips in excess of 100m, a Zone of Theoretical Visibility radius of 20km would be adequate’</i> (WEDGs Page 94, DoEHLG, 2006; Page 152, DoHPLG, 2019)</p> <p>Through experience conducting LVIA for other wind energy development projects, the assessment team determined that no significant effects on landscape character are likely to arise beyond distances of 15km from the proposed turbines. Therefore, a LVIA Study Area of 15km is deemed appropriate for effects on landscape character in relation to the assessment of effects upon designated Landscape Character Areas.</p>
Material Assets	<p><b>Proposed Wind Farm:</b> The list of wind farms and other large scale projects which were initially considered in cumulative assessment extended to 10 km.</p> <p><b>Proposed Grid Connection Route:</b> 200m from the grid underground electrical cabling route.</p>	<p>Informed by traffic modelling scenario and the area of influence the Proposed Project has on changing traffic volumes. The potential cumulative traffic effects with the Proposed Project are assessed on the following criteria;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>》 Project status (proposed to operational)</li> <li>》 Degree of overlap with the Proposed Project delivery highway network (low to high)</li> <li>》 Traffic volumes (low to high)</li> </ul> <p>The geographical boundary for the traffic &amp; transport cumulative assessment is defined by the potential for other projects to overlap with the Proposed Wind Farm delivery highway network, and so a 25km buffer from turbines and 250m buffer from the proposed underground electrical cabling route is</p>

Individual Topic	Maximum Extent	Justification
		<p>deemed appropriate to capture other plans and projects with the potential for cumulative effects with the Proposed Project.</p> <p>Please refer to Ch.1: Introduction5 Material Assets for further details on the cumulative assessment methodology.</p>
<p><b>Material Assets:</b> <b>Telecoms, Aviation and Other Utilities</b></p>	<p>The list of wind farms and other projects which were initially considered in cumulative assessment extended to 25km. 250m from the grid underground electrical cabling route.</p>	<p>The geographical boundary for the telecoms cumulative assessment is defined by the potential for other wind farm projects to interfere with broadcast signals that interact with the Proposed Project.</p>

### 2.9.3 Summary

The cumulative impact assessments carried out in each of the subsequent chapters of this EIAR consider all potential significant cumulative effects arising from relevant projects, plans and land uses within the cumulative study area and within the vicinity of the Proposed Project. These include ongoing agricultural practices.

Overall, the Proposed Project will not have any additional impacts over and above what has been assessed and permitted previously, as there are no additional works proposed. Additional detail in relation to the potential significant cumulative effects arising and, where appropriate, the specific suite of relevant mitigation measures proposed are set out within each of the relevant chapters of this EIAR.