



APPENDIX 6

**INVASIVE SPECIES
MANAGEMENT PLAN (ISMP)**

Invasive Species Management Plan

Meenbog Wind Farm, Co.
Donegal





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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 General Introduction

This plan has been prepared to ensure that the Prospective Development does not result in the spread of Invasive Alien Species (IAS) that are listed on the ‘Third Schedule’ of Regulations 49 and 50 of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477 of 2011) and the ‘First Schedule’ of the European Union (Invasive Alien Species) Regulations 2024 (S.I. 374 of 2024).

Only one such species was identified within the Site, during the surveys undertaken to inform the 2017 EIAR and subsequent surveys species include:

- Rhododendron (*Rhododendron ponticum*)

This ISMP has been prepared with reference to current legislation and best practice guidelines in the identification, treatment and management of invasive alien species listed on the ‘Third Schedule’ and the ‘First Schedule’ of the above-mentioned European Union/Communities Regulations. The document does not provide advice or guidance with reference to waste legislation.

The objectives of this report are summarised below:

- Provide site specific best practice guideline measures for the control and management of invasive species.
- Provide detailed recommendations for the management of invasive species listed on the Third Schedule of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477 of 2011) and the ‘First Schedule’ of the European Union (Invasive Alien Species) Regulations 2024 (S.I. 374 of 2024).

1.2 Legislative Framework

Regulations 49 and 50 of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477 of 2011) and Regulation 17(a)/(b) of the First Schedule of the European Union (Invasive Alien Species) Regulations 2024 (S.I. 374 of 2024), include legislative measures to deal with the dispersal and introduction of invasive alien species. These regulations are highlighted below.

Regulation 49 of the Third Schedule of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477 of 2011)

“any person who plants, disperses, allows or causes to disperse, spreads or otherwise causes to grow in any place specified in relation to such plant in the third column of Part 1 of the Third Schedule, any plant which is included in Part 1 of the Third Schedule, shall be guilty of an offence.”

Regulation 50 of the Third Schedule of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477 of 2011)

“a person shall be guilty of an offence if he or she has in his or her possession for sale, or for the purposes of breeding, reproduction or propagation, or offers or exposes for sale, transportation, distribution, introduction or release;

- a) an animal or plant listed in Part 1 or Part 2 of the Third Schedule, (b) anything from which an animal or plant referred to in subparagraph
- b) can be reproduced or propagated, or
- c) a vector material listed in Part 3 of the Third Schedule,”

Regulation 17 of the First Schedule of the European Union (Invasive Alien Species) Regulations 2024 (S.I. 374 of 2024)

- (1) A person shall not
- (a) introduce into the State,
 - (b) keep, including in contained holding,
 - (c) breed, including in contained holding,
 - (d) import into, export from or transport within the State, except for the transportation of species to facilities in the context of eradication,
 - (e) place on the market,
 - (f) use, exchange or offer for exchange,
 - (g) permit to reproduce, grow or cultivate, including in contained holding, or
 - (h) release into the environment,

an invasive alien species of national concern.

- (2) A person shall not
- (a) import or otherwise introduce into the State,
 - (b) place on the market,
 - (c) use, exchange or offer for exchange, or
 - (d) release into the environment,

a vector material.’

1.3

Guidance Documents

The following guidance documents and literature sources were consulted during the preparation of this report:

- TII (2020). *The management of Invasive Alien Plant Species on National Roads*. TII Publications, Transport Infrastructure Ireland.
- Crushell, P., Foss, P., Hurley, C. & O’Loughlin, B. (2011). *County Kerry Invasive Species Survey 2011 - Pilot Mapping Study of the River Lee Catchment, Tralee*. Report prepared for Kerry County Council and The Heritage Council.
- Stokes et al. (2004). Stokes, K., O’Neill, K. & McDonald, R.A. (2004) *Invasive species in Ireland*. Unpublished report.
- Actions for Biodiversity 2017-2021, Ireland’s 3rd National Biodiversity Action Plan.
- Inland Fisheries Ireland (2016) Best Practice for Control of Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*)
- Property Care Association (2015) Guidance Note – Management of Himalayan Balsam
- www.invasivespeciesireland.com

1.4

Statement of Authority

This report and associated assessment have been prepared by Pat Roberts (B.Sc. (Env) MCIEEM) and Matthew Kieran (BSc. Env, Eco). Pat is a full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management. Pat is a highly experienced in the preparation of Invasive Species Management Plans and has over 20 years’ post graduate experience in ecological consultancy. Matthew is a qualified ecologist with 2 years post graduate experience.

2. INVASIVE SPECIES WITHIN THE SITE

2.1 Rhododendron (*Rhododendron ponticum*)

During field surveys to inform the EIAR/IEIAR and 2017 EIAR, a search for IAS listed under the Third Schedule of the European Communities Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477 of 2015) was conducted. One IAS (*Rhododendron ponticum*) was recorded on the Site. Rhododendron was found occasionally within the Site, but there were no large patches, just single bushes or very small clumps and none were recorded within or adjacent to the footprint of the Prospective Development with the exception of the Biodiversity Management and Enhancement Site (BMEP Site) that is included as Appendix 6-4 to the EIAR.

Notwithstanding the above, a detailed IAS survey will be undertaken prior to commencement to update the surveys previously undertaken. This will identify any invasive alien species listed on the First Schedule of the S.I. No. 374/2024 - European Union (Invasive Alien Species) Regulations 2024. The locations of any such species will be recorded and their locations mapped. Should any be located within or adjacent to the footprint of the Prospective Development, the measures set out in the following sections will be undertaken.

2.2 Proposed Management

2.2.1 Site Set Up

Prior to the commencement of any works, the following site setup procedures will be carried out:

- A pre-commencement survey for Invasive Alien Species will be undertaken by a fully qualified ecologist to determine the locations and extent of the species within the Site and to determine whether there have been any changes in the extent of the infestation since the undertaking of the most recent surveys in 2025.
- The locations and extent of any IAS within the Site will be clearly marked out using hazard tape to ensure they are not disturbed. A 10m buffer zone (Higgins, G.T. 2008) surrounding each stand will also be applied using temporary fencing, to avoid disturbance of potentially contaminated soils.
- All staff and contractors working on the Site will be briefed on the findings of the pre commencement IAS surveys and will be provided with training in the identification of the invasive species likely to be recorded on the Site and the measures to be taken to avoid their spread (e.g. avoid where possible and retain buffer zone).

2.2.2 Management of Rhododendron

Rhododendron was not recorded in areas where it is likely to be affected by the Prospective Development with the exception of within the BMEP Site. Where the species can be completely avoided by the Prospective Development, it will be fenced off at a distance of 10m and no works will undertaken within the buffer zone.

Where works will be required within the buffer zone (likely in the BMEP Site). The stand will be identified by the ECoW and shown to the contractor. The plant will be excavated (including roots) with the dead material stacked on an impermeable surface such as a radon barrier or pallette to dry out. The area will be marked and monitored for any regrowth annually for the first five years of operation and periodically thereafter (with periods not exceeding five years). Any regrowth will be removed as above.

Machinery will be thoroughly cleaned down with stiff brushes under the supervision of the ECoW before leaving the contaminated area to avoid the potential to spread the plant throughout the Site. It is not intended to remove any rhododendron from the site.

3.

SITE HYGIENE AND BIOSECURITY MEASURES

The following site hygiene and biosecurity measures will be adhered to for the management of invasive species within the entire Site:

- All works in relation to the invasive species will be supervised by an ECoW.
- All staff will be given a Toolbox Talk, by a suitably qualified person or ecologist, on invasive species removal in relation to Rhododendron and their management on site.
- If any other IAS are recorded on the Site following pre-commencement surveys, they will be clearly marked, fenced off and treated in accordance with the most relevant guidance to ensure that the Prospective Development does not result in their spread.
- The contractor will assign a member of their team as Environmental Officer to ensure the management plan is adhered to throughout the proposed works.
- A designated bio-secure area/exclusion zone will be set up at recorded invasive species locations to prevent disturbance in these areas. Invasive species will be marked with hazard tape in order to identify the species prior to vegetation clearance works and to keep it separate from other brash material.
- All machinery will be thoroughly cleaned down prior to arriving on the site to avoid the potential spread of invasive species from elsewhere.
- Machinery that is used for excavation and onsite removal of invasive material will not be used for any other works until they are fully cleaned down and then visually inspected by a specialist to ensure no fragments of invasive plant material are present.
- Prior to leaving the invasive species exclusion zones, all boots and clothing will be thoroughly brushed down to remove any contaminated material prior to leaving the area.
- As a precautionary measure, machinery will be thoroughly cleaned down before exiting the site to prevent potential spread of invasive species elsewhere.
- Clean down will be carried out using brushes and shovels and power washing will be avoided. This is to prevent potentially contaminated run-off spreading outside the site.
- Material used within the contaminated areas on site e.g. plywood will be thoroughly cleaned down under supervision of the ECoW prior to removal off site.
- Any soil and topsoil required on the Site will be sourced from a stock that has been screened for the presence of any invasive species and where it is confirmed that none are present.

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Higgins, G.T. (2008) *Rhododendron ponticum*: A guide to management on nature conservation sites. Irish Wildlife Manuals, No. 33. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Dublin, Ireland.

IFI <http://www.ifigis.ie/InvasiveSpeciesMap/>.

Irish Water (2016) Information and Guidance Document on Japanese Knotweed

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National Parks & Wildlife Service. The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland 2013.

NRA (2021). Guidelines on management of noxious weeds and non-native invasive plant species on national roads. National Roads Authority.

O'Flynn, C. (2010) Report on the Dirty Dozen Non-Native Invasive Species, Co. Cork. National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC).

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