

Planning Report

Crumhach Wind Farm, Co.
Sligo





DOCUMENT DETAILS

Client: **SSE Renewables (Ireland) Ltd.**

Project Title: **Crumhach Wind Farm, Co. Sligo**

Project Number: **230841**

Document Title: **Planning Report**

Document File Name: **230841 Crumhach – Planning Report – F 2026.08.06**

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Rev	Status	Date	Author(s)	Approved By
01	Draft	15/04/2026	NB/CG	AC
02	Draft	28/05/2026	CG	AC
03	Draft	30/06/2026	CG	AC
F	Final	06/08/2026	CG	AC

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1.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Planning Report has been prepared by MKO on behalf of SSE Renewables (Ireland) Ltd. (the Applicant), who intend to apply to An Coimisiún Pleanála (ACP) for planning permission under the provisions of Section 37E of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) ('the Planning Act'). The Proposed Project will be known as the 'Crumhach Wind Farm' and is located at Crowagh or Dunneill Mountain and adjacent townlands, Co. Sligo.

The Crumhach Wind Farm will consist of the provision to remove the existing 23 no. turbines on the Dunneill (13 no. turbines) and Kingsmountain (10 no. turbines) Wind Farm sites and replace them with 17 no. wind turbines across both wind farm sites and additional greenfield sites. The 17 no. wind turbines will have an overall turbine tip height of 176.6 metres to 180 metres; rotor diameter of 133.2 metres to 150 metres; and hub height of 105 metres to 110 metres, and associated foundations and hard-standing areas. The Crumhach Wind Farm will be henceforth referred to using the following terminology, as defined in **Chapter 1** of the EIAR: 'Proposed Project', 'the Site', 'Proposed Wind Farm', 'Proposed Turbines', 'Proposed Grid Connection Route', 'Existing Wind Farm', and 'Existing Grid Connection'.

The site of the Proposed Wind Farm incorporates the existing Dunneill and Kingsmountain Wind Farm sites, which are to be decommissioned as part of the proposed renewable energy development. The existing Dunneill and Kingsmountain Wind Farms have a joint current generating capacity of approx. 36.1MW. The repowering of the existing Dunneill and Kingsmountain Wind Farms will increase the installed generating capacity to 102 MW and will ensure the supply of renewable energy to the national grid for an additional 35 years.

This Planning Report has been prepared in support of the application for the Proposed Project which is accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and Natura Impact Statement (NIS). The introductory sections of this Planning Report provides an overview of the Proposed Project, the Proposed Project design, the applicant, the site location and context, the site's planning history and a summary of the pre-planning process. The design process is outlined, demonstrating the rationale for the site selection and its suitability for wind energy development. The iterative design process outlines the design stages from the initial design to the final design iteration. Each design iteration responded to the specific constraints on the Proposed Wind Farm Site, as they were identified by site surveys and detailed analysis.

The Proposed Project is strongly supported by European and national policy and legislation. At a European Union (EU) level the Proposed Project is supported by the EU Renewable Energy Directive and REPowerEU. At a national level, the Proposed Project is supported by the National Planning Framework, Climate Action Plan 2025, the National Energy Security Framework, among other national climate and energy policies. The legally binding greenhouse gas emission reduction target and the obligations of public bodies under the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021 (the Climate Act) should also be considered in the assessment of these applications. A full appraisal of all the relevant policy and legislation is provided in **Section 6** of this Planning Report.

The development of viable sites for wind energy development is essential to meet European, national, and local climate and renewable energy targets. Ireland needs to scale up onshore wind energy development at an unprecedented rate to achieve our 9GW target and 80% RES-E target set out in the Climate Action Plan 2024 (CAP 24) and Climate Action Plan (CAP 25). If permitted, the Proposed Project will provide 102 MW of installed renewable, clean energy to our national wind energy capacity. This will not only contribute to the decarbonisation of the electricity sector but will play a role in the decarbonisation of other sectors and the transition to a low carbon, climate-resilient economy.

In addition, the Proposed Project will deliver a range of benefits including, supporting the transition to a low carbon, climate resilient society through continued and enhanced generation of renewable energy at the Site. The Proposed Project will provide clean, renewable electricity to the national grid,

contributing to long term energy security and helping to moderate energy costs, through the displacement of fossil fuelled energy generation. Furthermore, it will provide lasting socio-economic benefits through the creation of sustainable local employment as well as the establishment of a Community Benefit Fund, which will ensure that the Site continues to make a positive contribution to the local community and national renewable energy objectives.

To conclude, it is submitted that, based on the evidence provided in this Planning Report, that the Proposed Project is strongly supported by European, national, regional and local planning policy and will contribute to national and local renewable energy targets.

2.

INTRODUCTION

2.1

Report Structure and Contents

Section 1: Executive Summary – Provides an overview of the report.

Section 2: Introduction – Sets out the report structure and provides a summary of the Proposed Project. This section also provides an overview of Renewable Energy Directive III.

Section 3: Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015 – Sets out Consenting Authorities obligations to meaningfully engage with national climate objectives when exercising their functions.

Section 4: Proposed Project Background – Provides an introduction to the applicant, the site location and context, the planning history and pre-planning consultation.

Section 5: Proposed Project Description – Provides a description of the main elements of the Proposed Project, subject of this planning application.

Section 6: Proposed Project Design Process – Details the progression of the Proposed Project design from site selection through to the final design.

Section 7: Planning Policy Appraisal – Provides a review and evaluation of the Proposed Project against European, national, regional and local policy including the Climate Act.

Section 8: Planning Assessment – Provides a planning assessment of the Proposed Project, including key environmental considerations.

Section 9: Conclusion – Summarises the report.

2.2

Introduction

The Proposed Project will comprise of the removal of 23 no. wind turbines and the provision of 17 no. wind turbines and all associated works in Co. Sligo. A planning application under Section 37E of the Planning Act will be submitted directly to ACP for the Proposed Project. The Proposed Project will be the subject of EIA as it meets the mandatory EIA requirement as set out in Class 3(i) of Schedule 5 of Part 2 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001, as amended. The Proposed Project exceeds 5MWs in scale and proposes more than 5 turbines and therefore is subject to mandatory Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). The EIAR, along with the NIS which accompany this planning application assess all elements of the Proposed Project. Both the EIAR and NIS contain the information necessary for the ACP, to complete the EIA and Appropriate Assessment (AA) as required for the planning permission application.

The Proposed Project will make use of existing cable connections from the Dunneill and Kingsmountain Wind Farms to the existing Cunghill 110 Kilovolt (kV) substation and will consist of a new underground cable connection from a proposed new onsite 110kV substation to the existing Srananagh 220kV substation to connect to the National Grid. This will be subject to a separate, future planning application under relevant legislative framework that is in place at the time of submission, however, it has been fully assessed in the EIAR submitted with this planning application.

For the purpose of this Planning Report and as set out in **Chapter 1** of the EIAR, the following referencing is used:

- The 'Proposed Project' refers to the entirety of the project for the purposes of this EIA in accordance with the EIA directive. The Proposed Project is described in detail in Chapter 4 of the EIAR.
- The 'Site' refers to the primary study area for the EIAR and encompasses an area of approx. 1,546ha.
- Where the 'Proposed Wind Farm' is referred to, this refers to turbines and associated foundations and hard-standing areas, access tracks, temporary construction compounds, onsite 110kV substation, internal underground cabling, onsite LiDAR compounds, peat and spoil management, site drainage, biodiversity enhancement, turbine delivery route (TDR) accommodation works and all ancillary works and apparatus. The Proposed Wind Farm is described in detail in Chapter 4 of the EIAR .
 - The 'Proposed Turbines' refers to the 17 no. turbines associated with the Proposed Wind Farm as outlined above.
- Where the 'Proposed Grid Connection Route' is referred to this encompasses the proposed 110kV underground cabling connecting the proposed onsite 110kV substation to the existing Srananagh 220kV substation, and all ancillary works and apparatus. The Proposed Grid Connection Route is subject will be subject to a separate, future planning application, however, it is described in detail in Chapter 4 of the EIAR.
- Where the 'Existing Wind Farm,' is referred to, this relates to all components of the existing Dunneill and Kingsmountain Wind Farm developments as outlined in Section 1.1.1 of the EIAR.
 - Where differentiation is required between the Dunneill and Kingsmountain Wind Farms within the EIAR, these are called out as necessary.
- Where the 'Existing Grid Connection' is referred to, this relates the existing underground cabling connecting the existing onsite control buildings for the Existing Wind Farm to the existing Cunghill 110kV substation.

The purpose of this Planning Report is to outline the background to the Proposed Project, the key elements of the proposal and to demonstrate that it complies with all relevant planning policy provisions and is in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. This Planning Report provides a comprehensive assessment of the Proposed Project's consistency with the relevant planning policy framework at European, national, regional and local levels.

The Proposed Project will ensure that the valuable wind resources available at this Site is harnessed, using the most up-to-date wind turbine technology. The Site has accommodated wind energy development for over two decades, and the Proposed Project will build upon this established renewable energy infrastructure by making use of the existing onsite 38kV substation and access road network. In the context of the current energy and climate crisis, it is deemed environmentally prudent and a sustainable form of development to utilise existing wind farm infrastructure, avoiding the unnecessary redundancy of established renewable energy infrastructure. Additionally, the Proposed Project will reduce the number of wind turbines at the Site from 23 to 17, while increasing the overall installed generating capacity from 36.1 MW to 102MW, and in doing so delivering substantially more renewable energy to the national grid.

2.3

Rationale for the Proposed Project

Ireland's Climate Action Plan 2025 (CAP 25) sets ambitious yet essential targets for renewable energy, including 9GW of onshore wind capacity—with at least 5GW 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 and wind farm development, while continued reliance on fossil fuels threatens national and EU climate commitments.

In this context, the Sligo County Development Plan 2024-2030 (SCDP) sets out ambitious targets in line with these national and EU commitments. One of Sligo's primary energy policies relates to

‘...facilitating the production of energy from renewable sources and secure the maximum potential from wind energy resources within County Sligo, including the augmentation, upgrading and improvements to existing wind farms.’ The bringing forward of appropriately located and well-designed renewable energy projects, including the Proposed Project will be a crucial factor to meet these ambitious goals.

In this regard, the Proposed Project alone would contribute up to 102MW of installed capacity to the national electricity grid. Its approval would make a significant contribution towards Co. Sligo’s renewable energy ambitions and help bridge the widening gap between policy commitments and actual energy infrastructure development.

In the context of the current energy and climate crisis, it is deemed environmentally prudent and a sustainable form of development to utilise a site which already hosts a wind energy development, as well as utilising the existing wind farm infrastructure rather than allowing this infrastructure and the Site to become redundant. The Proposed Project represents an opportunity to utilise existing wind farm infrastructure with the provision of 17 no. new turbines that will result in an increased generating capacity at the Site, providing clean, renewable electricity to the national grid, which will contribute towards achieving further decarbonisation of Ireland’s electricity generation sector.

2.3.1 Why this Wind Farm is needed

To combat the effects of climate change, Ireland must decarbonise its economy by 2050. There is no “silver bullet” or magic solution to do so. It will take hundreds, if not thousands, of individual renewable energy projects to decarbonise the Irish economy. The scale of the challenge we face to decarbonise the Irish economy is enormous, but the climate change implications of not doing so are even greater. There is no other way to decarbonise a modern society except through renewable energy projects such as the Proposed Project.

In 2020, Ireland was confirmed as a world leader in onshore wind energy, with no other country providing a greater share of its electricity from onshore wind, when a total of 40.23% of the country’s electricity was generated from renewable sources, the vast majority of which came from onshore wind. As a country, we only became world leaders by consenting and building one wind farm at a time. Now, with the Government’s Climate Action Plans requiring the amount of onshore wind energy to increase to 9,000MW by 2030 (just four years away), hundreds of additional wind farms will have to be connected to the national grid over the rest of this decade. To reach this target, at least 5,000 MW of energy needs to be delivered within the next 4 years. In the same way we only achieved our 2020 target of 40% renewable electricity target one wind farm at a time, we will only get to our new target of 9,000 MW of onshore wind energy by 2030, one wind farm at a time.

The Proposed Project will contribute towards the Government’s Climate Action Plan’s 9,000MW target for installed onshore wind energy and target of 80% renewable electricity. The 80% renewable electricity target must be 2030. Not 2040. Not 2050. By 2030.

The global climate is breaking down as a result of greenhouse gas emissions from the burning of fossil fuels. News stories of climate change-related extreme weather events are now a constant in the daily news cycle. On the back of unprecedented extremes experience in summer 2023, UN Secretary-General, in September 2023 issued the following statement¹:

“The dog days of summer are not just barking, they are biting.

*Our planet has just endured a season of simmering -- the hottest summer on record. **Climate breakdown has begun.***

¹ https://www.un.org/sq/en/content/sq/statement/2023-09-06/secretary-generals-message-the-hottest-summer-record?_q=1*1ofxq1o* qa*MTYwNzQ4MzU1LjE3MDE4NDQ3NTI.* qa S5EKZKSB78*MTcwMTq4NzgwNS4xLjAuMTcwMTq4NzgwOS41Ni4wLjA.* qa TK9BQL5X7Z*MTcwMTq4NzQwMS4yLjEuMTcwMTq4NzgwNS4wLjAuMA..

*Scientists have long warned what our fossil fuel addiction will unleash. **Our climate is imploding faster** than we can cope with extreme weather events hitting every corner of the planet.*

Surging temperatures demand a surge in action.

Leaders must turn up the heat now for climate solutions.

*We can still avoid the worst of climate chaos – and **we don't have a moment to lose.***

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 levels². On the 14th January 2026, the WMO issued a press release confirming that 2025 was one of the three warmest years on record, continuing a pattern of the last eleven years having been the eleven warmest on record³.

"The European State of the Climate Report 2024" produced by WMO and European Union⁴ indicated that:

- Global average values of surface air and sea surface temperatures have increased significantly since the pre-industrial era, by around 1.3°C to 1.4°C and 1°C, respectively.
- Since 1999, an average sea level rise of around 3.7mm globally and 2mm-4mm in the European region has been observed.
- A record increase in carbon dioxide (+2.4 ppm) and methane (+12 ppb) has been observed since 2020.
- Glaciers in Scandinavia and Svalbard recorded the highest annual rates of mass loss.
- In 2024, Europe experiences the most widespread flooding since 2013.

"The Annual Climate Statement for 2025" produced by MET Eireann⁵, also gives depicts a clear long-term warming trend in Ireland's climate, characterised by record-high annual and seasonal temperatures, increasing frequency of extreme weather events, and persistent above-average rainfall. The Statement indicates that:

- The average annual air temperature for Ireland in 2025 was 11.14 °C, which is 1.59°C above the 1961-1990 long-term average (LTA) or 0.97°C above the most recent 1991-2020 LTA.
- 2025 was the second warmest year on record, which is only slightly behind the warmest year in 2023 (11.21 °C).
- The last 4 years (2022-2025) were the 4 warmest years on record with 2024 and 2007 tying for 4th warmest, and seven of the top ten warmest years have occurred since 2005.
- The coldest year on record was in 1919 with 8.73 °C, of the top ten coldest years – none have occurred since 2000.
- Provisionally rainfall data suggests 2025 was the 15th wettest year since 1941, 104% of the 1991-2020 LTA, with observed average of 1,338.7 mm.

There is now an overwhelming consensus amongst scientific and political leaders on the need for rapid, dramatic and systemic change to combat the effects of climate change and decarbonise the global and Irish economies through the use of renewable energy. This is highlighted in the following comments and report extracts.

"Leaders must act now to save humanity from the worst impacts of climate chaos, and profit from the extraordinary benefits of renewable energy. That means ending our fossil fuel

² State of the Global Climate 2024 (World Meteorological Organisation, March 2025)

³ <https://wmo.int/news/media-centre/wmo-confirms-2025-was-one-of-warmest-years-record>

⁴ The European State of the Climate Report 2024 (World Meteorological Organization and European Union, April 2025)

⁵ Annual Climate Statement for 2025 (MET Eireann, January 2026) <https://www.met.ie/annual-climate-statement-for-2025>

addiction by shrinking supply, driving down demand, and accelerating the renewables revolution, as part of a just transition.”

António Guterres, United Nations Secretary-General – November 2023

“Never before have the alarm bells been ringing so loudly. We must rise to this challenge. I believe we can. We cannot prevent climate change, we’re well past that point, but by acting urgently now, we can limit its extent and mitigate its worst effects.”

Former Taoiseach Leo Varadkar, in his address to COP 28, 2nd December 2023

Ireland is not on track to meet the 51 per cent emissions reduction target (by 2030 compared to 2018) based on these projections which include most 2023 Climate Action Plan measures. Further measures still need to be identified and implemented to achieve this goal.

The first two carbon budgets (2021-2030), which aim to support achievement of the 51 per cent emissions reduction goal, are projected to be exceeded by a significant margin of between 24 and 34 per cent.

Sectoral emissions ceilings for 2025 and 2030 are projected to be exceeded in almost all cases, including Agriculture, Electricity, Industry, and Transport.

Ireland’s Greenhouse Gas Emissions Projections. Environmental Protection Agency – June 2023⁶

“We need faster progress on the actions set out in national climate action plans to decarbonise and transform all sectors of Ireland’s economy, to stay within National Carbon Budgets and reduce our Greenhouse Gas emissions by 51 per cent by 2030.”

Laura Burke, Director General, EPA, launching the Greenhouse Gas Emission Inventory 1990-2022 Report⁷

Ireland will not meet the targets set in the first and second carbon budget periods unless urgent action is taken immediately and emissions begin to fall much more rapidly.

Climate Change Advisory Council – Annual Review 2023⁸

The world is on a disastrous trajectory. Crossing one harmful tipping point could trigger others, causing a domino effect of accelerating and unmanageable change to our life-support systems.

The Global Tipping Points Report 2023. University of Exeter, Exeter, UK⁹.

2.4

RED III

In November 2023, a revision of the Renewable Energy Directive¹⁰ (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 42.5%, with an ambition to reach 45% by 2030. The increase was proposed under the publication of REPowerEU plan in May 2022. RED III 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

⁶ <https://www.epa.ie/publications/monitoring--assessment/climate-change/air-emissions/irelands-greenhouse-gas-emissions-projections-2022-2040.php>

⁷ <https://www.epa.ie/news-releases/news-releases-2023/irelands-2022-greenhouse-gas-emissions-show-a-welcome-decrease-but-much-work-remains-to-be-done.php>

⁸ <https://www.climatecouncil.ie/councilpublications/annualreviewandreport/CCAC-AR-2023-FINAL%20Compressed%20web.pdf>

⁹ <https://global-tipping-points.org/download/4608/>

¹⁰ 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)

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 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**.

In this regard, the planning application for the Proposed Project has been prepared in line with RED III and, specifically, the Schedule of Information to Inform the Completeness Check, provided by ACP as Appendix 2 of their Inspector’s Report regarding the SID determination under PCX21.320934. A full assessment of the Proposed Project in relation to this schedule has been included as an appendix to the cover letter included as part of the planning application.

3.

CLIMATE ACTION AND LOW CARBON DEVELOPMENT ACT 2015 (AS AMENDED)

A significant development in Irish planning law in relation to the obligations on public bodies in accordance with Section 15 of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015, as amended (the Climate Act) is directly relevant to the determination of the Proposed Project. The legal analysis of Section 15 of the Climate Act has arisen from a challenge to a decision of ACP to refuse planning permission for a wind farm in County Laois. The Supreme Court issued a judgment on this matter on 4th February 2026 in Coolglass Wind Farm Limited v An Coimisiún Pleanála [2026] IESC 5.

The Climate Act establishes a legislative precedent to reduce Ireland's carbon emissions. 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 also 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;
- Strengthens the role of the Climate Change Advisory Council;
- Establishes that the government must adopt carbon budgets that are consistent with the Paris agreement and other international obligations;
- Sets actions for each sector will be detailed in the Climate Action Plan which must be updated annually; and
- Establishes that Local Authorities must prepare individual Climate Action Plans which will include both mitigation and adaptation measures and will be updated every five years.

Section 15(1) below places an obligation on public bodies to perform their functions in a manner which favours climate action, unless it is objectively impracticable to do so.

"A relevant body shall, in so far as practicable, perform its functions in a manner consistent with:

- a) the most recent approved climate action plan,
- b) the most recent approved national long term climate action strategy,
- c) the most recent approved national adaptation framework and approved sectoral adaptation plans,
- d) the furtherance of the national climate objective, and
- e) the objective of mitigating greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to the effects of climate change in the State."

Significance of the Coolglass Judgement

The Supreme Court establishes that consenting authorities must make decisions '*in so far as practicable*' in a manner 'consistent with' the approved national long term climate action strategy and the approved national long term climate action strategy as set out in Section 15(1) of the Climate Act. This means that departure from climate objectives is permissible, but only where there are genuine practical difficulties that make full alignment impracticable.

Consenting Authorities, such as ACP, must therefore meaningfully engage with national climate objectives when exercising their functions, including decision-making and must also demonstrate how those functions have been carried out in a manner consistent with, in so far as practicable, national climate objectives.

Taking these legal duties into account, ACP is required to attribute significant weight to national climate policy and the delivery of renewable energy infrastructure, such as the Proposed Project, even where they materially contravene a statutory development plan, particularly when that plan is out of step with national policy.

The significance of the judgement is that Consenting Authorities, including ACP are now under clear, legal duty to give meaningful consideration of the contribution made to the achievement of national climate targets by renewable energy developments, such as the Proposed Project. This is of particular importance where a development would advance decarbonisation targets.

Relevance of the Proposed Project

The Proposed Project comprises of a renewable energy development, which will make a meaningful contribution to the fulfilment of national climate objectives, including those set out in the Climate Action Plan 2025 (CAP25), which sets out targets to achieve an 80% electricity share as well as 9GW of renewable energy by 2030.

Considering the Coolglass Supreme Court Judgement, ACP is required to attribute a significant weight to the following benefits in their assessment of the Proposed Project:

- The Proposed Project will contribute to compliance with Ireland's sectoral ceilings and Ireland's carbon budgets,
- It will generate renewable electricity and help to displace fossil-fuel based generation,
- It will further national climate objectives, including the CAP25 target of an 80% renewable electricity share as well as 9GW of renewable energy by 2030,
- It will support Ireland's legally binding commitments under national, European and International climate law.

Therefore, a decision to grant permission for the Proposed Project would represent the performance of ACP's functions in a manner that is consistent with Section 15(1) of the Climate Act.

Compliance with Section 15(1) of the Climate Act

Having regard to these functions, **Table 1** demonstrates how, in determining the applications for the Proposed Project, ACP would be performing its functions in a manner consistent with Section 15(1) of the Climate Act

Table 1: Compliance with Section 15(1) of the Climate Act

Section 15(1) Requirement	Proposed Project Compliance	Conclusion
a) Most recent approved climate action plan	The Proposed Project, which will contribute directly towards the CAP25 goals of 9GW of wind energy by 2030 and renewable electricity share of 80% by 2030. Onshore wind is identified as being critical in the decarbonisation of the electricity, and as such the Proposed Project should be considered in that regard. The Proposed Wind Farm will have a total power output of approximately 102 MW. On this assumption, the Proposed Project will result in the net displacement of approximately 55,760 tonnes of carbon dioxide (CO₂) per annum, from traditional carbon-based electricity generation.	A grant of permission would constitute the performance of ACP's functions in a manner consistent with CAP 25, insofar as is practicable.
b) Most recent approved national long term climate action strategy,	The Proposed Project will support the national long term climate action strategy as the development represents critical renewable energy infrastructure, that will make a meaningful contribution to achieving the State's reduced emissions targets and the transition towards a climate resilient society.	A grant of permission would constitute the performance of ACP's functions in a manner consistent with the most recent approved national long term climate action strategy, as far as is practicable.
c) Most recent approved national adaptation framework and approved sectoral adaptation plans	The Proposed Project will aid Ireland in adhering to, or limiting the exceedance of, the country's carbon budgets. The electricity sector failed to remain within the designated sectoral ceiling of 20 Mt CO₂ eq for the first carbon budget period from 2020 to 2025. The delivery of renewable energy infrastructure such as the Proposed Project, which will result in the net displacement of approximately 55,760 tonnes of carbon dioxide (CO₂) per annum, is integral to the reduction of emissions from electricity generation and the transition towards a low carbon, climate resilient society. The national renewable energy targets and the carbon budgets are integral to the government's response to the climate crisis.	A grant of permission would constitute the performance of ACP's functions in a manner consistent with the most recent approved national adaptation framework and approved sectoral adaptation plans, insofar as is practicable.

Section 15(1) Requirement	Proposed Project Compliance	Conclusion
d) the furtherance of the national climate objective	The Proposed Project, consisting of 17 no. wind turbines and associated infrastructure aligns with national climate policy objectives. The Proposed Project, with a total output of approximately 102MW, will make a significant contribution to achieving the CAP 25 target of 9GW of onshore wind energy by the year 2030.	A grant of permission would constitute the performance of ACP's functions in a manner consistent with the furtherance of the national climate objective insofar as is practicable.
e) the objective of mitigating greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to the effects of climate change in the State	The Proposed Project will support the objective of mitigating greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to the effects of climate change in the State through the generation of wind energy and displacing electricity that would otherwise be produced from fossil fuel sources.	A grant of permission would constitute the performance of ACP's functions in a manner consistent with the objective of mitigating greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to the effects of climate change in the State.

Conclusion

The decision of the Supreme Court in *Coolglass Wind Farm Limited v An Coimisiún Pleanála* [2026] IESC 5 confirms that Section 15 of the Climate Act imposes a binding obligation on consenting authorities, including ACP, to determine planning applications, insofar as practicable, in a manner that is consistent with the fulfilment of national climate objectives and to give adequate reasons demonstrating that consistency.

The Proposed Project is supported by local, regional and national policy and has been designed in accordance with the latest national guidance and best practice. It has also been demonstrated, in the EIAR and NIS, that the Proposed Project will not give rise to any significant adverse effect on the environment or on the integrity of European Sites.

Crucially, the Proposed Project will have a total power output of approximately 102 MW and will result in the net displacement of approximately 55,760 tonnes of carbon dioxide (CO₂) per annum, including accounting for back-up generation, making a significant contribution towards the CAP25 goals of 9GW of wind energy by 2030 and renewable electricity share of 80% by 2030.

Accordingly, ACP can lawfully exercise its planning judgement to grant permission for the Proposed Project in a manner consistent with its statutory duty under Section 15 of the Climate Act and the principles clarified in the *Coolglass Judgement*, whilst also aligning with EU and national policy objectives.

4. PROPOSED PROJECT BACKGROUND

4.1 The Applicant

SSE Renewables is a leading developer and operator of renewable energy generation, focusing on onshore and offshore wind farms, hydro-electric power and flexible battery storage technologies. It is part of electricity infrastructure company SSE plc, a FTSE100 company with operations across the UK and Ireland, and a presence in carefully selected international markets. SSE Renewables delivers clean power assets to increase SSE's operational renewable generation capacity as part of the company's five-year investment plan to 2030. This includes delivery of the world's largest offshore wind farm in construction, the 3.6GW Dogger Bank Wind Farm. SSE Renewables operates some of the leading onshore wind farms in Ireland including the 174MW Galway Wind Park in Connemara and the 73MW Slieve Kirk Wind Park outside Derry City.

4.2 Site Location and Context

The Proposed Wind Farm is located on the northwest slopes of the Ox Mountains, located approx. 4.5km south of the village of Dromore West, and approx. 3km southwest of the village of Templeboy in Co. Sligo, encompassing two separate existing wind farms, Dunneill and Kingsmountain Wind Farms. The Proposed Wind Farm is accessed via the L6309 and L2702 Local Roads off the N59 National Road, travelling in an east-west direction north of the site and the N17 National Road, which runs in a north-south direction to the southeast of the site. The current entrance to the Existing Wind Farm is proposed as the main site entrance, utilising the existing access roads and infrastructure. The planning application boundary, i.e. the red line boundary, is shown in **Figure 1** below. The townlands within the planning application red line boundary are listed below in **Table 2**.

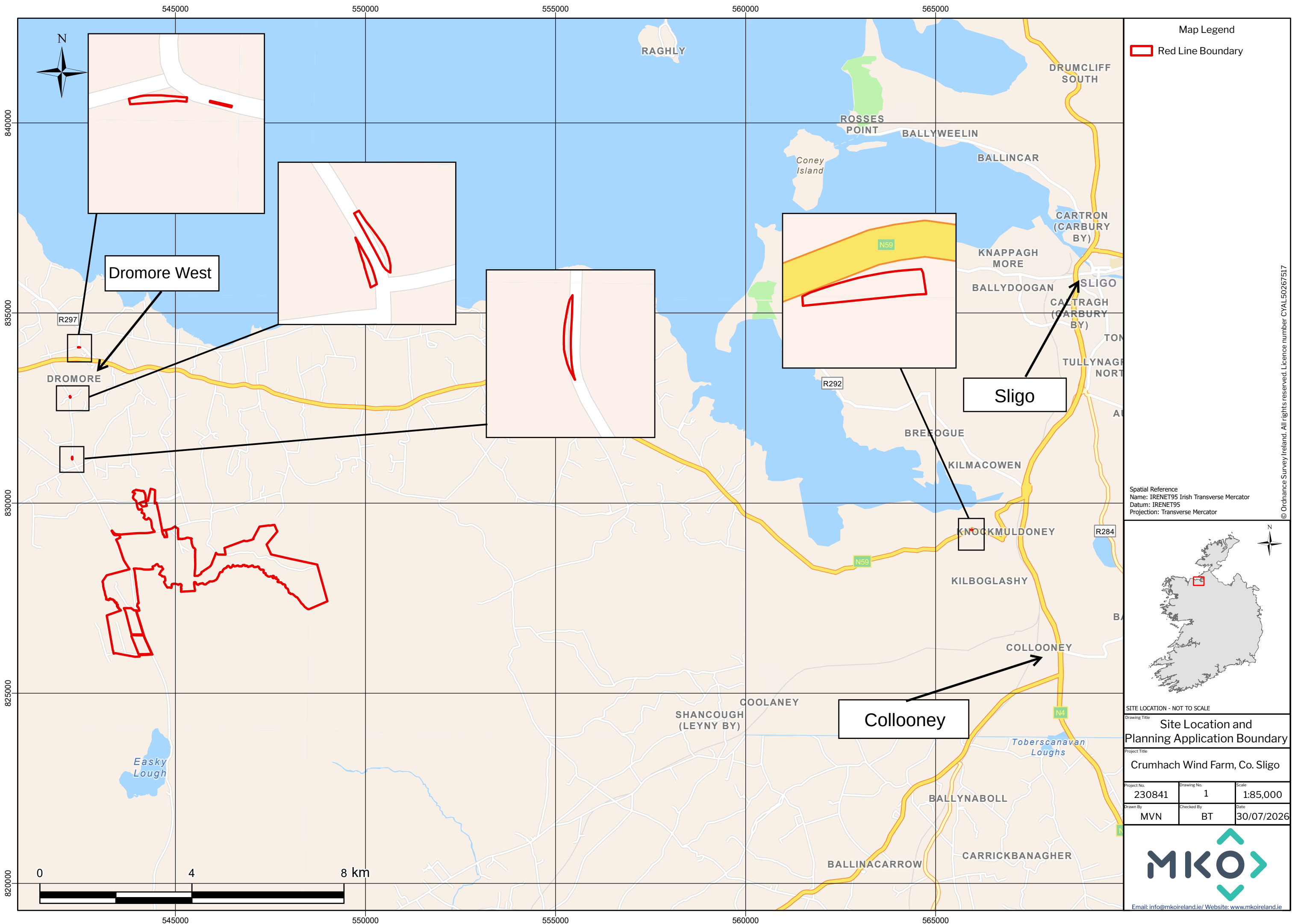
The Existing Wind Farm is connected to the national grid via the Existing Grid Connection, which comprises an approx. 19km underground cabling connection to the Cunghill 110kV substation in the townland of Cunghill, Co. Sligo. It is proposed to utilise the maximum export capacity from the Existing Grid Connection for the Proposed Project via connection of the onsite control buildings. No upgrade works are required or proposed along the Existing Grid Connection underground cable connection.

Wind energy is an established land-use in the area of the Site. The Proposed Wind Farm encompasses the Existing Wind Farm, which is owned and operated by SSE. In addition to the Existing Wind Farm, land-use on the Proposed Wind Farm primarily comprises peat bog, with coniferous forest to the north-west, east and south of the site. South of the Proposed Wind Farm comprises largely of transitional wood scrub, while land-use in the northern end of the site comprises largely of pastoral agriculture and low-density residential.

Table 2: Townlands in which the Proposed Project is located

Development Works	Townland
Proposed Project	
Turbine Removal, Proposed Turbines and associated Foundations and Hardstanding Areas, Public Road Upgrade Works, Upgrades to Existing Access Tracks, New Access Tracks, Turbine Component Delivery Accommodation Works, Proposed Onsite 110kV Substation, Upgrades to Existing Onsite Control Buildings, Internal Underground Cabling, Temporary Construction Compounds, Borrow Pits, Peat and	Crowagh or Dunneill Mountain, Ballyglass, Tawnadremira, Doonbeakin, Dunowla, Kingsmountain, Ballygreighan Barr, Corhawnagh, Abbeytown, Knockaculleen, Rathgoonaun, Lecarrow, Dromore.

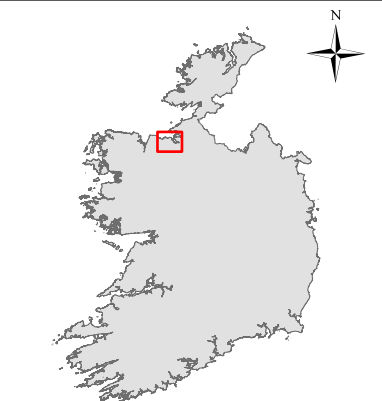
Spoil Management, Biodiversity Enhancement, Tree Felling Site Drainage, Operational Stage Site Signage and all ancillary works and apparatus.	
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Map Legend

Red Line Boundary

Spatial Reference
Name: IRENET95 Irish Transverse Mercator
Datum: IRENET95
Projection: Transverse Mercator



SITE LOCATION - NOT TO SCALE

Site Location and
Planning Application Boundary

Project Title
Crumhach Wind Farm, Co. Sligo

Project No.	Drawing No.	Scale
230841	1	1:85,000
Drawn By	Checked By	Date
MVN	BT	30/07/2026



Email: info@mkofireland.ie / Website: www.mkofireland.ie

4.3

Planning History

The Existing Wind Farm encompasses a total of 23 no. turbines that are currently in operation, which comprises 2 no. distinct wind farm projects, each with their own separate planning permissions.

Dunneill Wind Farm

As part of the existing Dunneill Wind Farm site, permission was granted for the construction of 13 no. turbines under the following planning references:

- 03/619 & ABP Pl. Ref. 21.204790 – permission to construct 13 no. turbines and associated structures.
- 10/371 - retention of a Control Building of 97sqm with adjacent fenced compound and associated services on a site area of 0.07ha. This application for retention of planning will operate for the duration of the original planning permission granted under PL 03/619.
- 10/388 - retention and operation of the existing temporary meteorological mast with associated site works.
- 22/291 - development consisting of a fifteen (15) year continuation of the operational life of the existing wind farm (SCC Reg. Ref. PL03/619 & ABP Pl. Ref. 21.204790, as amended by SCC Reg. Ref PL10/371 and PL10/388) from the date of expiration (March 2024) of the current permissions. No modifications are proposed to the existing windfarm.

The Dunneill Wind Farm was fully commissioned in 2010 and in 2023, Dunneill Wind Farm received planning permission to extend its operational life by a further 15 years to 2039.

Kingsmountain Wind Farm

As part of the Kingsmountain Wind Farm site, permission was granted for the construction of 10 no. turbines under the following planning references:

- 97/469 - The erection of a wind farm including 10 wind turbines (1.5mw/each) with 3.75m wide access road and electrical sub-station on revised site.
- 02/846 - Alterations to previously permitted development under PL 97/469 involving an amendment to Condition No. 1(c) of this permission to locate transformers external to the 10 no. permitted turbines.

The Kingsmountain Wind Farm was fully commissioned in 2003 and does not have a planning condition specifying an expiry date for its operational life.

A planning search was carried out through SCC's online planning portal along with ACP's online case search function in August 2026 for planning applications within the planning application red line boundary within the past 10 years. The planning applications are outlined in **Table 3** below.

Table 3: Planning Applications within the Planning Application Red Line Boundary

Planning Ref. No.	Description	Decision
SCC Ref. 97469	the erection of a wind farm including 10 wind turbines (1.5mw/each) with 3.75m wide access road and electrical sub-station on revised site.	Grant by SCC on 11/05/1999
SCC Ref. 03382	alterations to previously permitted development under ref. PL 97/469 involving an amendment to layout of control building, septic tank and percolation area (Bord Na Mona PuraFlo Peat Filter System) and revised location of control building (required to house indoor electrical switchgear).	Grant by SCC on 03/09/2003
SCC Ref. 03/619 ACP Pl. Ref. 21.204790	(a) development of a wind farm including 13 no. three bladed wind turbines, with hub height of up to 49 metres and blade height of up to 52 metres, overall tip height of up to 75 metres; two road entrances, turbine and crane hardstands, construction of internal access roads and widening of existing tracks, two refuelling/maintenance areas with concrete surfaces and oil interceptors, single storey control building and associated site works including drainage, electrical and communication cabling (underground), 1 no. lattice-type permanent wind measurement/anemometer mast of 50 metres height and all associated and ancillary works; (b) temporary planning permission of 3 years duration for 2 no. pole type temporary wind measurement/anemometer masts of 40 metres height.	Grant by ACP on 03/03/2004
SCC Ref. 07937	retention of a 30 metre lattice support structure carrying telecommunications equipment chain link perimeter fencing, equipment container and access track as previously granted by An Bord Pleanála under ref no: PL21.129406 (Sligo County Council reg ref: 01/972).	Grant by SCC on 04/12/2007
SCC Ref. 02846	alterations to previously permitted development under PL 97/469 involving an amendment to Condition No. 1(c) of this permission to locate transformers external to the 10 no. permitted turbines.	Grant by SCC on 14/02/2008
SCC Ref. 08961	erection of a temporary 64-metre-high meteorological mast and carrying out of associated site works.	Grant by SCC on 18/03/2009

SCC Ref. 10371	retention of a Control Building of 97sqm with adjacent fenced compound and associated services on a site area of 0.07ha. This application for retention of planning will operate for the duration of the original planning permission granted under PL 03/619.	Grant by SCC on 07/01/2011
SCC Ref. 10388	retention and operation of the existing temporary meteorological mast with associated site works. The temporary mast has a finished height above existing ground level of 49m approximately and consists of a lattice tubular frame fixed to a concrete base. This planning application for retention of the existing temporary meteorological mast as a permanent meteorological mast is to retain & operate the structure for the duration of the original planning permission as issued for the windfarm development Ref: PL03/619 at Dunneill Wind Farm.	Grant by SCC on 20/01/2011
SCC Ref. 12438	retention of an existing 30m high lattice support structure carrying antennas, transmission dishes, associated equipment containers, fencing and associated works (as previously granted under Local Authority Reference PL 07/937) which forms part of their cellular digital and broadband communications network on Coillte Land.	Grant by SCC on 18/03/2013
SCC Ref. 22291	development consisting of a fifteen (15) year continuation of the operational life of the existing wind farm (SCC Reg. Ref. PL03/619 & ABP Pl. Ref. 21.204790, as amended by SCC Reg. Ref PL10/371 and PL10/388) from the date of expiration (March 2024) of the current permissions. No modifications are proposed to the existing windfarm which comprises the following elements: (a) 13 no. existing Vestas V52 850 kilowatt (kW) wind turbines with a maximum overall blade tip height of 75 metres (m) (b) Existing 1 no. onsite 20 kilovolt (kv) electrical substation compound which includes a control building, welfare facilities, associated electrical plant and equipment, security fencing, associated underground cabling and a foul waste holding tank (c) Existing 1 no. permanent meteorological mast with a height of 50m and an associated concrete platform/base; (d) All associated existing underground electrical and communications cabling connecting the turbines to the on-site substation; (e) Existing site access tracks of circa 3.3 kilometres (km) total length, 3 no. car parking spaces and 13 no. turbine hardstands; (f) 2 No. existing gated site entrances from an unnamed third-class public road which dissects the windfarm site into north and south; (g) Existing site drainage; and (h) All existing ancillary infrastructure, associated site fencing and signage. An Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) have been prepared in respect of the proposed development and accompanies this application.	Grant by SCC on 02/06/2023

SCC Ref. 2360208	1) The erection of a temporary 100m high lattice type meteorological mast for a period of 5 years which will be fixed to ground anchors by stay wires and will include instruments for measuring local climate conditions and services, 2) The proposed works also include a hardstanding area and all ancillary works.	Grant by SCC on 07/11/2023
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The planning history search also identified wind energy development applications within 25km of the proposed turbines. 15 no. applications relating to wind energy development were found, further detail on the wind energy developments identified is outlined in Section 2.6.2 of Chapter 2 of the EIAR.

4.4 Pre-Application Consultation

This section of the Planning Report outlines the pre-application consultation undertaken by the Applicant for the Proposed Project. This includes scoping as part of the EIAR, pre-application meetings with ACP and extensive consultation with the local community.

4.4.1 EIAR Scoping

As part of the constraints mapping process, which is detailed in Chapter 2, of the EIAR, telecommunications operators, were contacted in May 2024 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 to prescribed statutory and non-statutory bodies in September 2024 and followed up in October 2024. 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.

Copies of all scoping responses received are included in Appendix 2-1 of the EIAR. If further responses are received, the comments of the consultees will be considered, where applicable, in the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Proposed Project in the event of a grant of planning permission. The recommendations of the consultees have informed the scope of the assessments undertaken and the contents of the EIAR.

4.4.2 Pre-Planning Meetings

4.4.2.1 An Coimisiún Pleanála

Members of the Project Team and the Applicant met with representatives from ACP in accordance with Section 37B of the Act via Microsoft (MS) Teams on the 25th November 2024. Attendees were as follows

On behalf of ACP:

- Ellen Moss – Scribe,
- Heidi Thorsdalen – Inspector,
- Una Crosse - Assistant Director of Planning.

On behalf of the Agent and Applicant:

- Caroline Donnelly – SSE Lead Consents Strategy Manager,
- Garry Brides – SSE Project Manager,
- Alan Clancy – MKO Planning,
- Ellen Costello – MKO Environment,
- Brandon Taylor – MKO Environment,
- Susan Doran – MKO Environment,
- Ciara Griffin – MKO Planning.

The project team gave an overview of the Proposed Project in form of a PowerPoint presentation which set out the following information:

- A high-level overview of the Proposed Project and the subject site,
- An introduction to the Applicant,
- Overview of relevant planning policy including compliance with local wind energy policy,
- Provided specific details of the scheme relating to LVIA and Ecology,
- Discussed scoping and pre-application/public consultation undertaken to date,
- Set out the scope of the EIAR to be undertaken,
- Set out the projected project timelines.

Following this presentation, there was further discussion held between the project team and the representatives of ACP. Matters discussed included:

- Existing wind farm developments at the Proposed Project site and their existing permitted timescales,
- Extent of repowering and its relation to the proposed layout of the development,
- Landownership for the site,
- Distance to residential receptors and noise baseline studies,
- Forestry felling at the Proposed Project Site.

Second Pre-Application Meetings (Section 37B)

A second pre-application meeting was conducted on 2nd December 2025 with representatives from ACP in accordance with Section 37B of the Act via Microsoft (MS) Teams. Attendees were as follows

On behalf of ACP:

- Ellen Moss – Scribe,
- Una Crosse – Assistant Director of Planning,
- Maeve Flynn – Senior Director of Planning,
- Finbarr Quigley – Senior Environmental Scientist,
- Heidi Thorsdalen – Inspector.

On behalf of Agent and Applicant:

- Gary Brides – SSE Project Manager,
- Caroline Donnelly – SSE Lead Consents Strategy Manager,
- Helen Burman-Roy – SSE Environmental Manager,
- Ellen Costello – MKO Environment,
- Brandon Taylor – MKO Environment,
- Edel Mulholland – MKO Environment,
- Alan Clancy – MKO Planning,
- Rachel Minogue – MKO Ecology,
- Juliane Kohlstruck – MKO Ecology,
- Susan Doyle – MKO Ornithology.

The main reason for this meeting was to discuss updates and refinements to the project design and scope since the first SID meeting, to address the implications of the European Union (Planning and Development) (Renewable Energy) Regulations 2025 (S.I. No. 274 of 2025). These Regulations, published on 12th August 2025, transpose several key aspects of the Renewable Energy Directive (RED III) into national law, including the immediate introduction of “Completeness Checks” following application lodgement.

Discussions also focused on whether the Proposed Project should be classified as a new development or repowering development. The Project Team noted that the proposal includes new elements beyond the Existing Wind Farm. Additional matters which were discussed between the Project Team and the representatives of ACP included:

- Grid Connection and Existing Substation,

- Turbine Delivery Route,
- Baseline Environment
- Ornithology,
- Ecology,
- Hydrology and Geotechnical Matters,
- Noise,
- Geology,
- Reiterations,
- Landscape and Cultural Heritage,
- Next steps in Application

SID Determination

On the 20th of February 2026, MKO, on behalf of the Applicant, sought to close the consultation process with ACP. On the 24th March 2026, ACP wrote to the applicant and confirmed that consultation was closed and that the Proposed Project was considered to be strategic infrastructure within the meaning of Section 37A and such any application for approval of the Proposed Project should be made directly to ACP.

A copy of the SID determination letter is included as an appendix to the planning application form submitted with this application.

Design Flexibility Meeting – Section 32CC

On the 2nd December 2025 a further meeting was held with ACP via MS Teams, under Section 32CC of the Planning Act. To discuss design flexibility for the Proposed Project.

This flexibility meeting request was made in accordance with the legislative provisions (S.I No. 645 of 2023) relating to design flexibility introduced by the Planning and Development, Maritime and Valuation (Amendment) Act 2022. The legislation provides for a process whereby prospective applicants may request a meeting with the Planning Authority for the purpose of receiving an opinion as to whether it is appropriate that an application for permission be made before certain details of the proposed development are confirmed. Attendees were as follows:

On behalf of ACP:

- Ellen Moss – Scribe,
- Una Crosse – Assistant Director of Planning,
- Heidi Thorsdalen – Inspector.

On behalf of the Agent and the Applicant:

- Caroline Donnelly – SSE Lead,
- Ellen Costello – MKO Environment,
- Brandon Taylor – MKO Environment,
- Edel Mulholland – MKO Environment,
- Alan Clancy – MKO Planning.

The project team outlined the details of the Proposed Project that would not be confirmed at the time of the application for permission and would need to avail of design flexibility provisions, which were as follows:

- Turbine total tip height,
- Turbine rotor diameter,
- Turbine hub height.

The parameters within which the turbine specifications will fall were set out as follows:

- Turbine total tip height of 176.6m – 180m,
- Turbine rotor diameter of 133.2m – 150m,
- Turbine hub height of 105m – 110m.

It was outlined in the meeting that the design flexibility requirement arises as the exact make and model of the turbine cannot be confirmed prior to making the application as this will be dictated by a competitive tender process of the various turbines on the market at the time of procurement and construction, which necessitates the requirement for associated unconfirmed details to be included in the application.

Opinion on Design Flexibility

An Opinion of ACP under section 37CD of the Act was issued to the Applicant on the 13th March 2026, confirming that an application for permission could be made before certain details of the Proposed Project are confirmed, which in the case of this planning application relates to the turbine dimensions.

A copy of the Opinion on Design Flexibility letter is included as an appendix to the planning application form submitted with this application.

4.4.2.2 Sligo County Council

Members of the project team and the Applicant met with representatives from SCC at SCC's offices in Co. Sligo in February 2026. The purpose of this meeting was to provide a high-level overview of the Proposed Project. Those in attendance were:

On behalf of SCC:

- Paul O'Rourke – Senior Engineer,
- Bernard Scott – Senior Engineer - Regional Design Office,
- Frank Moylan – Senior Planner,
- Emer Concannon – Director of Services - Placemaking & Ballymote-Tubbercurry Municipal District.

On behalf of Agent and Applicant:

- Conor Joy - SSE - External Relations Manager,
- Brian McMenamin - SSE – Project Manager,
- Seamus Herron - SSE – Land Manager,
- Zara Morgan - SSE – Civil Engineer,
- Caroline Donnelly – SSE Lead Consents Strategy Manager,
- Alan Clancy – MKO Planning.

The project team gave an overview of the Proposed Project in the form of a PowerPoint presentation which set out the following information:

- A high-level overview of the Proposed Project and the subject site,
- An introduction to the Applicant,
- Overview of relevant planning policy including compliance with local wind energy policy,
- Discussed scoping and pre-application/public consultation undertaken to date,
- Set out the scope of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report to be undertaken,
- Set out the projected project timelines.

Following on from the presentation discussions centred around the following matters:

- The Turbine Delivery Route and the Proposed Grid Connection Route,
- Works in relation to the 'Sligo Way' project,
- The use of existing infrastructure for the Proposed Project and whether or not the project would be considered a repowering project or a new development by ACP,
- Potential visual impact of the Proposed Project.

This meeting with SCC was also part of a series of wider engagements with the local authority dating back to early 2024, which included:

- A virtual meeting held on the 23rd of January 2024 with the SCC Management Team and the Applicant, which focused on SSE Renewable's footprint in County Sligo, matters pertaining to the Sligo County Development Plan 2024-2030 and during which the Proposed Project was noted at a high level,
- A virtual meeting held with the SCC Management Team on 10th of December 2024 and the Applicant during which an overview of the Proposed Project was provided,
- An in-person meeting with representatives from SCC, including their roads department and the Applicant, on 5th of March 2025, during which an overview of the Proposed Project was provided with a focus on matters pertaining to grid connection and turbine delivery routes,
- An in-person briefing regarding the Proposed Project with local councillors from the Ballymote-Tubbercurry Municipal District and the Applicant which took place on 24th March 2025.

4.4.2.3 Other Pre-Planning Meetings

Consultation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service

Members of the Project Team, including Environmental Scientists, Ecologists and Ornithologists met with the National Parks and Wildlife Services (NPWS) on the 10th February 2026 to discuss the Proposed Project. The main topics discussed in the meeting including the following:

- An overview of the Proposed Project,
- Ecological Surveys which have been undertaken to date and their findings,
- Ornithology surveys which have been undertaken to date and their findings,
- The Key Ecological Receptors identified at the Site,
- Proposed plans for habitat enhancement and management measures.

The discussion on the Proposed Project primarily related to the classification of peatland habitats and the use of Irish Vegetation Classification (IVC) to assess habitat loss directly and in surrounding areas. In addition to this, discussion centred around peatland enhancement areas, habitat management plans, impacts of the Proposed Project on designated sites and construction methodologies for the construction of floating roads in peatland/upland areas.

4.4.3 Community Consultation

The Applicant has a long-standing presence in West Sligo through the Kingsmountain and Dunneill Wind Farms. In addition, since 2004, the Applicant has also operated a voluntary community fund in the area, with the Kingsmountain and Dunneill Community Fund contributing over €650,000 to local groups during that time.

Against this background, SSE Renewables undertook a structured programme of pre-planning consultation and engagement for the Proposed Project, delivered across three phases:

- Phase 1: Introducing the Project,
- Phase 2: Pre-Application Public Consultation,
- Phase 3: Ongoing Availability and Presence.

The stakeholder engagement strategy focused on engaging with the local community in an open, honest and transparent manner. The aim was to provide clear and accessible information while also seeking feedback to better understand local views. This process was led by the Applicant.

Overall, feedback across the three phases of engagement has been largely positive, with consultation contributing constructively to the development of the project. The overall positive sentiment towards the project is considered to reflect the Applicant's established presence in West Sligo, its track record in developing and operating onshore wind projects, and the long-standing delivery of community benefit funding in the area.

Where concerns were raised in relation to the Proposed Project, these were addressed through responsive and transparent engagement, including the provision of information, follow-up correspondence and direct meetings with stakeholders where appropriate.

The consultation has also supported meaningful engagement with a broad range of stakeholders and strengthened the Applicant's existing relationships in the area.

Engagement with the local community began in early 2024, with the appointment of a Community Liaison Officer in March 2024, and included regular issuing of letters and newsletters, two public consultation events held on the 23rd and 24th of July 2025, a virtual consultation room and a series of meetings with local and regional stakeholders. Engagement for the Proposed Project remains ongoing and will continue throughout the full project lifecycle.

The development of the Proposed Project will also provide an economic benefit to the surrounding area, including through community benefit funding, employment during construction and operation, and annual commercial rates payable to the local authority.

Further details regarding community consultation are provided in the Community Engagement Report at Appendix 2-2 of the EIAR.

5.

PROPOSED PROJECT DESCRIPTION

5.1

Proposed Project Description

The Proposed Project as it appears in the public notices is as follows:

The proposed development will comprise:

- i. Removal of 23 no. existing turbines permitted under Sligo County Council Ref. No. 97/469, 02/846, 03/619 (the latter granted on appeal by An Coimisiún Pleanála PL21.204790) and 22/291;*
- ii. Erection of 17 no. wind turbines within the following parameters:*
 - a turbine tip height range of 176.6 metres to 180 metres;*
 - a rotor diameter range of 133.2 metres to 150 metres; and*
 - a hub height range of 105 metres to 110 metres.*
- iii. Permanent turbine foundations, hard-standing and assembly areas;*
- iv. A new permanent 110kV electrical substation compound including control buildings (with a combined floor area of 654sq.m) incorporating welfare facilities, all associated electrical plant and apparatus, security fencing, underground cabling, lightning protection poles, an underground wastewater holding tank, drainage and all ancillary works;*
- v. Upgrade of and permanent continued use of 2 no. existing onsite control buildings comprising: 1 no. control building located in the townland of Tawnadremira (with a floor area of c. 118.4sqm), permitted under Sligo County Council Planning References 03/619 (granted on appeal by An Coimisiún Pleanála PL21.204790), 10/371, and 22/291; and 1 no. control building located in the townland of Kingsmountain (with a floor area of c.71sqm), permitted under Sligo County Council Planning References 97/469 and 03/382.*
- vi. Underground electrical and communications cabling connecting the proposed wind turbines to the existing onsite control buildings and the proposed 110kV on-site electrical substation;*
- vii. 4 no. temporary construction compounds with site offices and welfare facilities (with a combined floor area of 324 sqm);*
- viii. Upgrade of 1 no. existing site entrance off the L6309 in the townlands of Ballyglass and Crowagh or Dunneill Mountain;*
- ix. 1 no. new site entrance off the L6309 in the townlands of Ballyglass and Crowagh or Dunneill Mountain;*
- x. Upgrade of 1 no. existing site entrance off the L2702 in the townland of Crowagh or Dunneill Mountain;*
- xi. 2 no. new site entrances off the L2702 in the townland of Crowagh or Dunneill Mountain;*
- xii. Upgrade of existing site tracks and provision of new site access tracks, clear span crossings, junctions and hard-standing areas;*
- xiii. Accommodation works along the N59 in the townlands of Corhawnagh and Abbeytown, along the R297 in the townland of Knockaculleen, along the L2702 in the townland of Lecarrow and Dromore, along the L2702 in the townland of Rathgoonaun and along the L2702 and L6309 in the townland of Crowagh or Dunneill Mountain, to facilitate the delivery of turbine components and other abnormal sized loads to site;*
- xiv. A new temporary access road off the L2702 to the L6309 in the townlands of Crowagh or Dunneill Mountain;*
- xv. 3 no. temporary borrow pits;*
- xvi. 2 permanent LiDAR compounds;*
- xvii. Peat and Spoil Management areas;*
- xviii. Tree felling and hedgerow removal;*
- xix. Biodiversity Management and Enhancement measures (inclusive of peatland restoration and management);*
- xx. Site Drainage;*
- xxi. Operational stage site signage; and*

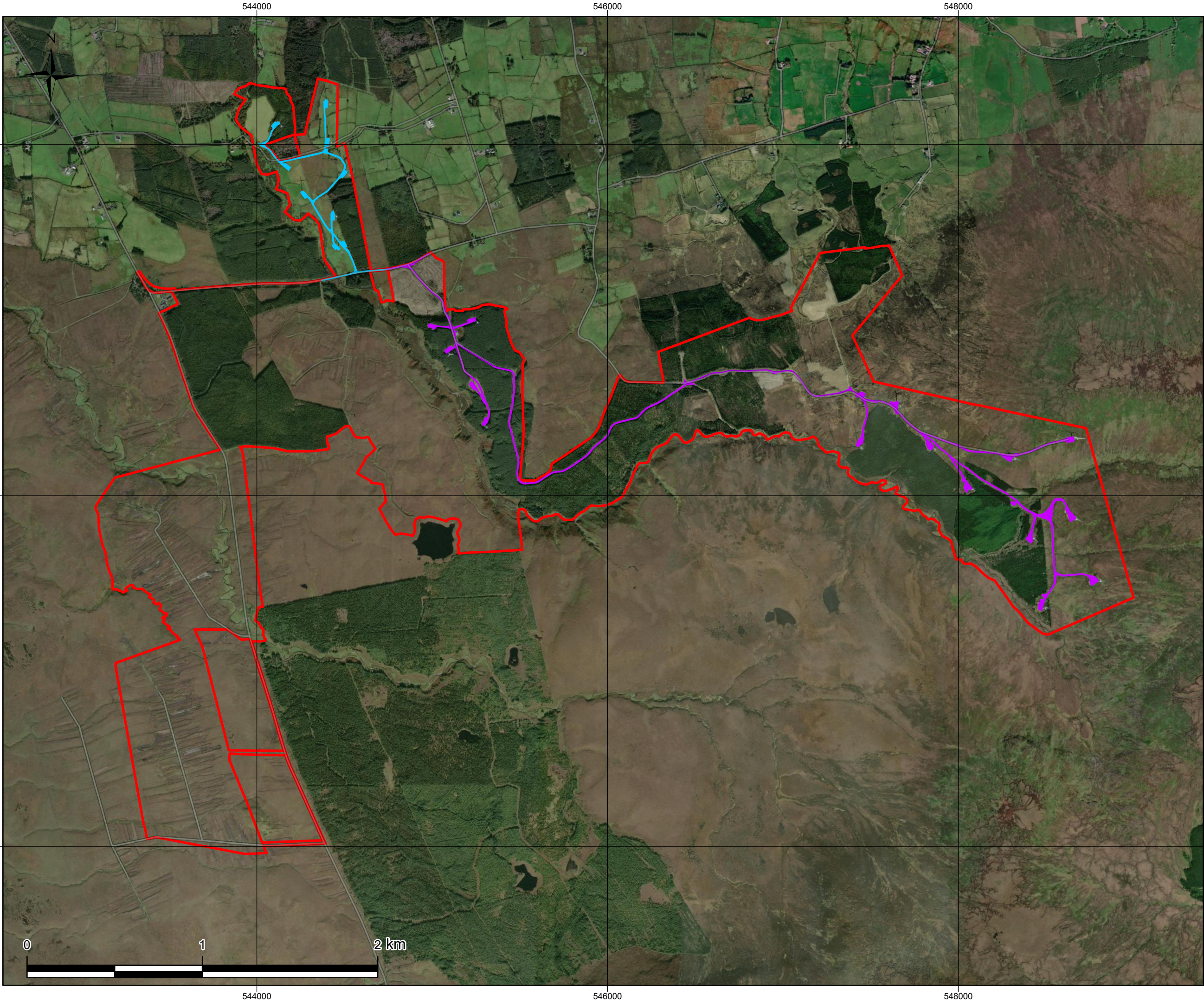
- xxii. *All ancillary apparatus and site development works above and below ground, including soft and hard landscaping and drainage infrastructure.*

The existing 23 no. turbines onsite will be removed from site and disposed of using best practice at time of decommissioning, prioritising reuse, refurbishment and recycling of the whole turbine or the components within it, avoiding landfill when feasible and practical to do so. The Proposed Project will include the erection of 17 no. new turbines which will have the following dimensions:

- Turbine Tip Height: Minimum height 176.6 metres, Maximum height 180 metres
- Hub Height: Minimum Height 105 metres, Maximum Height 110 metres
- Rotor Diameter: Minimum diameter 133.2 metres, Maximum diameter 150 metres

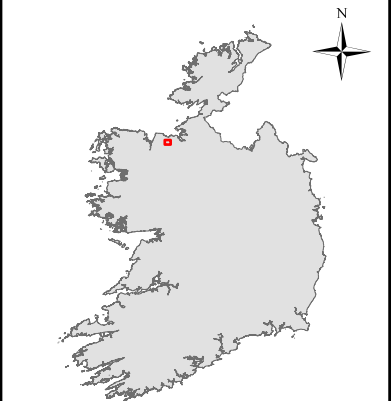
It is proposed that each turbine will be connected to the onsite electricity substation via underground 33kV electricity cabling. There are currently 2 no. control buildings within the Existing Wind Farm. During the construction and operation phase, the Proposed Wind Farm will be accessed via the existing site entrance from the L6309 Local Road, previously used for the Existing Wind Farm.

Figure 2 below shows the Existing Wind Farm layout, **Figure 3** shows the Proposed Wind Farm layout, and **Figure 4** shows the Proposed Project layout.



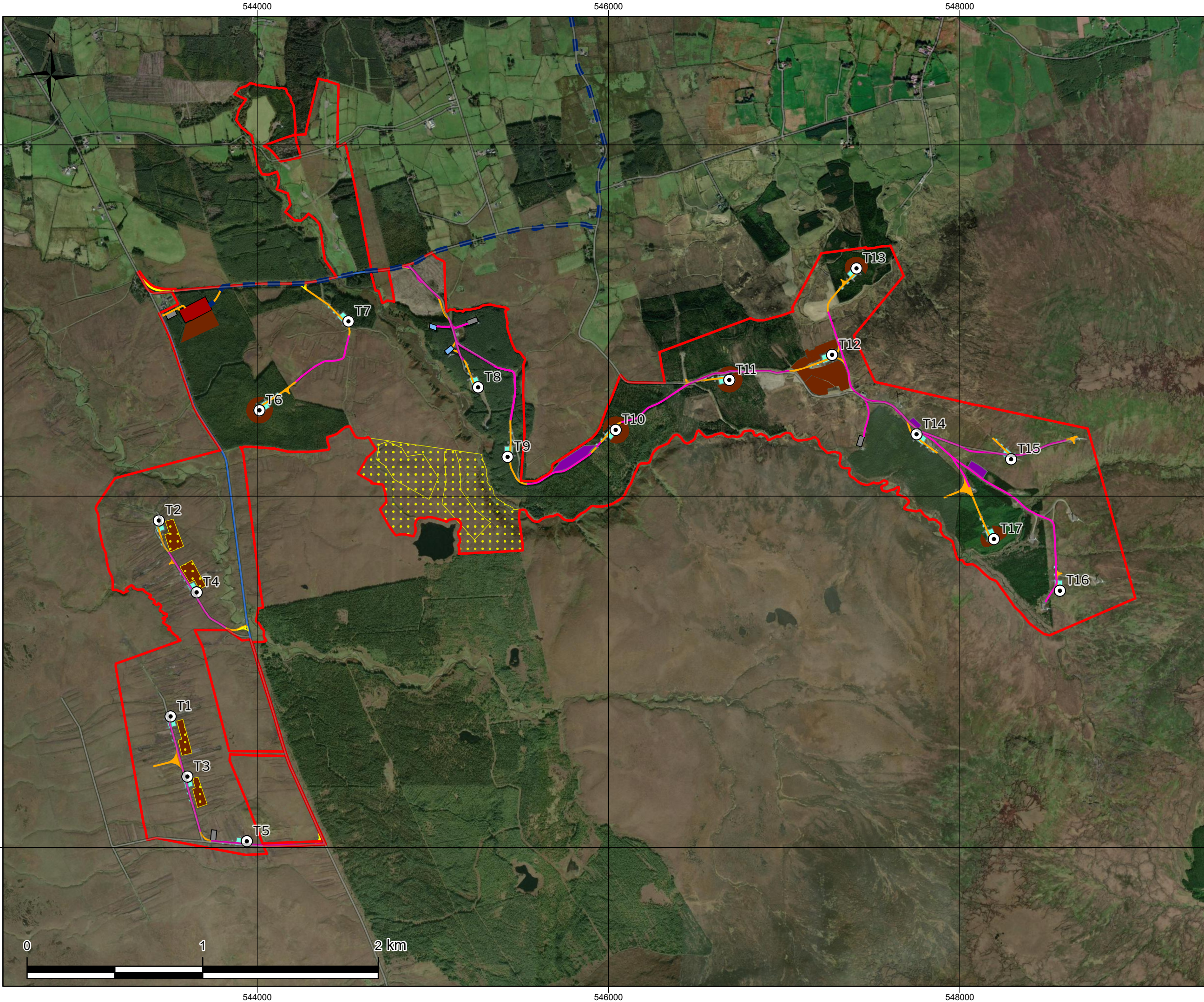
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- Red Line Boundary
- Kingsmountain Footprint
- Dunneill Footprint

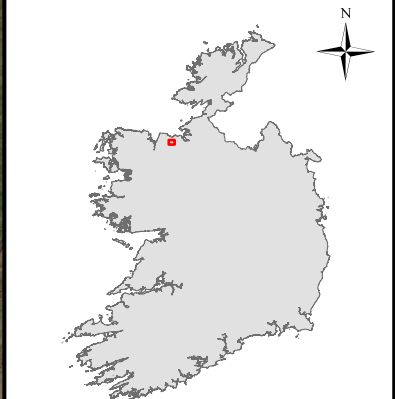


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Drawing Title		
Crumhach Wind Farm, Co. Sligo		
Project Title		
Existing Wind Farm Layout		
Project No.	Drawing No.	Scale
230841	2	1:20,000
Drawn By	Checked By	Date
MVN	BT	30/07/2026


Email: info@mkoireland.ie / Website: www.mkoireland.ie



- Map Legend
- Red Line Boundary
 - Proposed Turbines
 - Proposed Turbine Foundations
 - Proposed Turbine Hardstands
 - Proposed Blade Storage Set Down Area
 - Proposed Decommissioned Turbine Laydown Area
 - Proposed New Roads
 - Proposed Upgrades to Existing Roads
 - Proposed Upgrades to Public Road
 - Proposed Permanent LiDAR Locations
 - Proposed Peat and Spoil Management Areas
 - Proposed Borrow Pits
 - Proposed Temporary Construction Compound
 - Proposed Onsite 110kV Substation
 - Proposed Temporary Turbine Delivery Overrun Areas
 - Proposed Grid Connection Route Access Track
 - Proposed Enhancement Area
 - Proposed Grid Connection Route



SITE LOCATION - NOT TO SCALE

Drawing Title

Proposed Wind Farm

Project Title

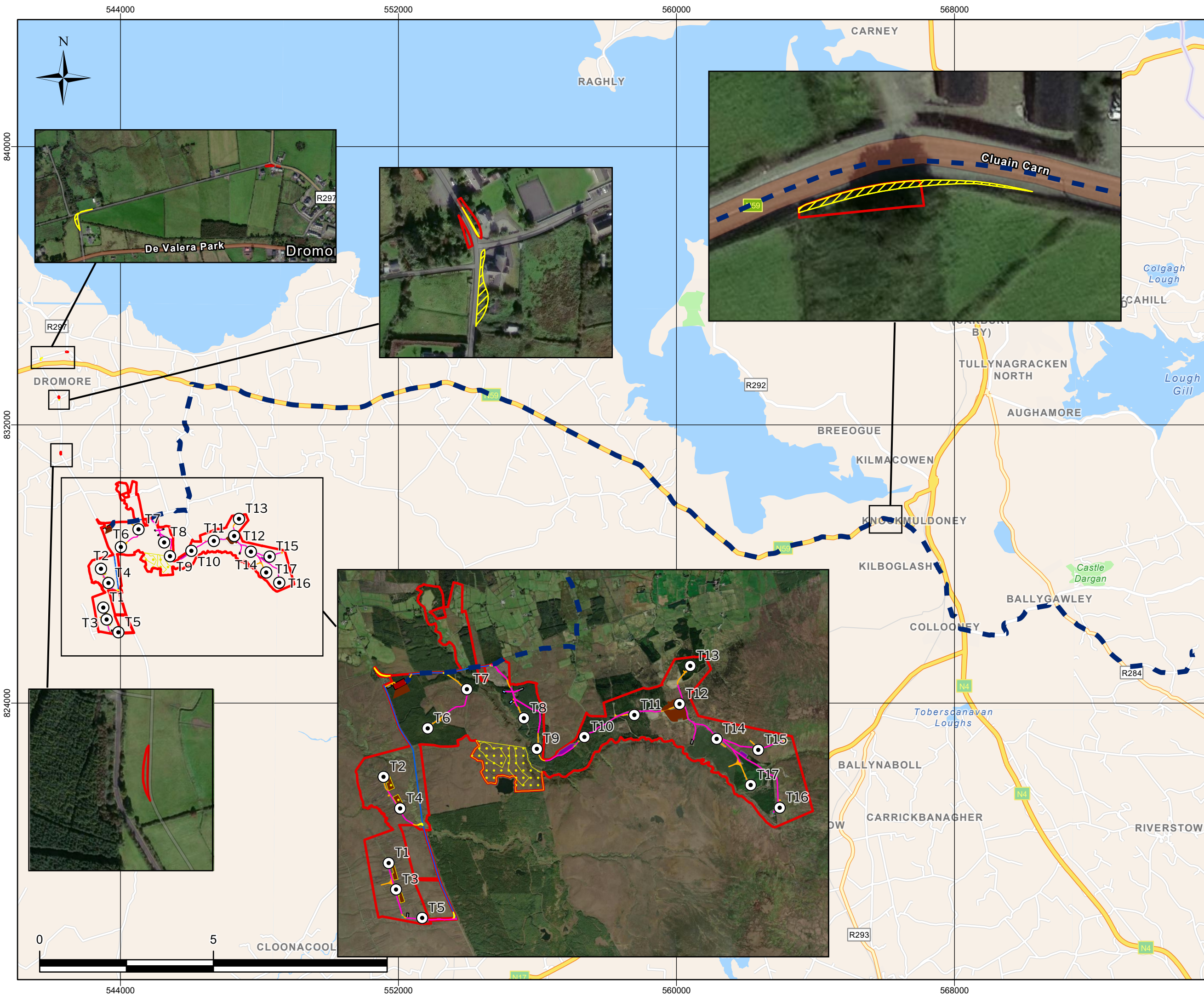
Crumhach Wind Farm, Co. Sligo

Project No.	Drawing No.	Scale
230841	3	1:20,000
Drawn By	Checked By	Date
MVN	BT	30/07/2026

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Map Legend

- Red Line Boundary
- Proposed Turbines
- Proposed Turbine Foundations
- Proposed Turbine Hardstands
- Proposed Blade Storage Set Down Area
- Proposed Decommissioned Turbine Laydown Area
- Proposed New Roads
- Proposed Upgrades to Existing Roads
- Proposed Upgrades to Public Road
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- Proposed Peat and Spoil Management Areas
- Proposed Borrow Pits
- Proposed Temporary Construction Compound
- Proposed Onsite 110kV Substation
- Proposed Temporary Turbine Delivery Overrun Areas
- Proposed Grid Connection Route Access Track
- Proposed Enhancement Area
- Proposed Grid Connection Route

SITE LOCATION - NOT TO SCALE

Drawing Title

Proposed Project Layout

Project Title

Crumhach Wind Farm, Co. Sligo

Project No.	Drawing No.	Scale
230841	4	1:100,000
Drawn By	Checked By	Date
MVN	BT	30/07/2026

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6. PROPOSED PROJECT DESIGN PROCESS

The design of the Proposed Project has been an informed and collaborative process from the outset, involving the project designers, engineers, environmental, ecological, ornithological, hydrological, geotechnical, traffic consultants and archaeological specialists. The design process has also factored in recommendations and comments of the relevant statutory and non-statutory organisations, the local community and the local authority where relevant.

The aim of the process is to reduce the potential for environmental effects while designing a commercially viable project, building on the foundations of the Dunneill and Kingsmountain Wind Farm sites, to construct the Crumhach Wind Farm.

Due to advancements in technology, the design of the Proposed Project has allowed for the development of a design which sees a reduction in the number of turbines at the Site while simultaneously supplying a greater energy output to the national electricity grid than that of the Existing Wind Farm. By removing all 23 turbines, the Proposed Project has been designed in a way that utilises the majority of the Existing Wind Farm infrastructure. The upgrade of the Existing Wind Farm into the Proposed Project poses the opportunity to maintain a supply of renewable energy to the national grid, while increasing the generating capacity at the Site and utilising existing infrastructure.

Throughout the design process, the layout of the Proposed Project has been revised and refined to take account of the findings of all desk-based assessments, site surveys/investigations and baseline assessments which have brought the design from its first initial layout to the current proposed layout.

6.1 Strategic Site Selection

Given the significant investment required to progress any wind energy project, it is critical that the most suitable site for the Proposed Project is chosen. As set out in **Section 4.1** of this Planning Report, the Applicant, SSE Renewables (Ireland) Ltd., is Ireland's largest generator of wind power, with their portfolio including 700MW of operational onshore wind farms. SSE Renewables (Ireland) Ltd. invests a significant amount of time and resources identifying and investigating sites for renewable energy proposals throughout the Country.

Site selection for the development of a wind farm must be suitable for consideration under a number of criteria, such as:

- **Environmental Sensitivities:** Located outside of EU Natura 2000 sites; locations outside of national designations; located outside of Article 17 Annex I Habitats;
- **Grid Connection:** Access to the national electricity grid possible within a viable distance;
- **Sensitive Receptors:** Capable of complying with required setbacks from sensitive receptors; and
- **Site Scale:** Sufficient area of unconstrained land that could potentially accommodate a wind farm development and turbine spacing requirements.
- **Local Policy:** alignment with local planning and renewable energy policy.

From the review of the criteria set out above, the Proposed Wind Farm site is considered a suitable location for the provision of a renewable energy development at the scale proposed. The Site is also considered suitable as it currently accommodates two wind farms which have been in operation for over 20 years, benefiting existing wind farm infrastructure, that will be utilised for the Proposed Project.

6.2 Detailed Constraints Mapping

The design and layout of the Proposed Wind Farm follows recommendations and guidelines set out in the Wind Energy Development Guidelines, 2006 (Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local

Government, 2006) (“DoEHLG 2006 Guidelines”) and the ‘Best Practice Guidelines for the Irish Wind Energy Industry’(Irish Wind Energy Association, 2012).

The constraints mapping process involves the placing of buffers around different types of constraints to clearly identify the areas within which no development works will take place. The size of the buffer zone for each constraint has been assigned using guidance presented in the DoEHLG 2006 Guidelines. Should the ‘Draft Revised Wind Energy Guidelines’ (Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government, 2019) (Draft DoHPLG 2019 Guidelines) be adopted in advance of a planning decision being made on this application, it is considered that the Proposed Project is capable of compliance with potential future guidelines as the noise emissions and shadow flicker assessment are controllable via inbuilt turbine technologies.

The constraints map for the Proposed Wind Farm, as shown in **Figure 5**, was produced following a desk study of all site constraints. **Figure 5** encompasses the following constraints and associated buffers (detailed further in Chapter 3 of the EIAR):

- Sensitive Receptors;
- Hydrology;
- Archaeology; and
- Habitats and Biodiversity.

Facilitators at the Site build on the existing advantages and include the following:

- Available lands for development;
- Acceptable wind resource;
- Proximity to national grid node;
- Existing access points and general accessibility of all areas of the site due to existing road infrastructure; and
- Limited extent of constraints
- Existing wind farm infrastructure including site access roads and tracks, and an existing substation

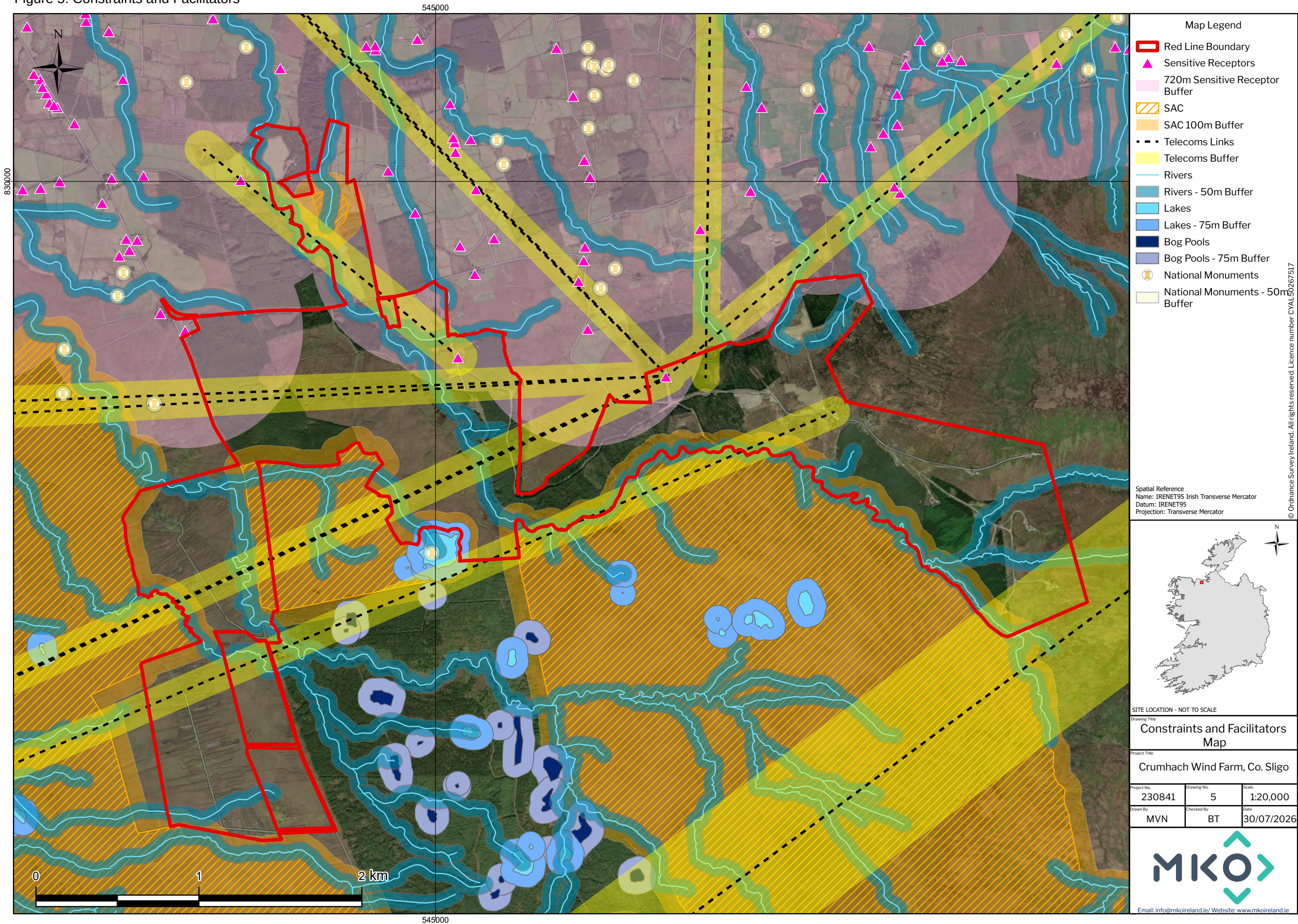
The inclusion of the constraints on a map of the study area allowed for the viable area to be re-identified and reassessed. Constraints mapping was initially informed by previous planning applications and subsequently updated for the Proposed Project to reflect any changes. These updated constraints mapping allowed for the verification of the viable development area. An initial turbine layout was then developed to take account of all reassessed constraints mentioned above, and their associated buffer zones and the separation distance required between the turbines. Following the mapping of all known constraints, detailed site investigations were carried out by the project team.

The ecological assessment of the Site encompassed habitat mapping and extensive surveying of birds and other fauna. This assessment, as described in Chapters 6 and 7 of the EIAR relating to Biodiversity and Ornithology, optimised the decision on the siting of turbines and the carrying out of any development works, such as the construction of roads.

The hydrological and geotechnical investigations of the Site examined the proposed locations for turbines, roads and other components of the Proposed Project, such as the construction compound. Where specific areas were deemed as being unsuitable for the siting of turbines or roads, etc., alternative locations were proposed and assessed, taking into account the areas that were already ruled out by constraints.

The turbine layout for the Proposed Project has also been informed by the results of noise assessments, landscape and visual and the separation distance to be maintained between turbines. Thus, the environmental assessment of the Site and wind farm design was an iterative process, where findings at each stage of the assessment were used to further refine the design, always with the intention of minimising the potential for environmental impacts

Figure 5: Constraints and Facilitators



6.3

Turbine Layout Design Process

The final proposed turbine layout takes account of all site constraints and the distances to be maintained between turbines and from houses, roads, etc. The layout is based on the results of all site investigations that have been carried out during the EIAR process and the EIA scoping process with statutory and non-statutory consultees. As information regarding the Proposed Wind Farm was compiled and assessed, the number of turbines and the proposed layout has been revised and amended to take account of the physical constraints of the Proposed Wind Farm and the requirement for buffer zones and other areas in which no turbines could be located. The EIAR and Proposed Wind Farm design process was an iterative process, where findings at each stage of the assessment were used to further refine the design, always with the intention minimising the potential for environmental impacts.

The development of the final Proposed Wind Farm layout has resulted following feedback from the various studies, investigations and assessments carried out as well as ongoing negotiations and discussions with landowners and the local community. This final design is regarded as optimal as identified constraints are avoided while also maximising the site's development potential.

The proposed number of turbines takes account of all site constraints and the distances to be maintained between turbines and features such as roads and houses, while maximising the wind energy potential of the Proposed Wind Farm. The 17 no. turbine layout selected for the Proposed Wind Farm has the smallest development footprint of the other alternatives considered and makes use of existing infrastructure from the Existing Wind Farm as much as possible. Further details of the design process and a selection of design iterations can be found in Chapter 3, Section 3.2 of the EIAR.

7.

PLANNING POLICY APPRAISAL

An extensive and complete planning policy context in respect of the Proposed Project is included in Chapter 2 of the EIAR. For the purpose of this Planning Report, and for conciseness, the compliance summary table (**Table 4** below) sets out an assessment of the Proposed Project in the context of relevant international, national, and regional policy. Local policy is discussed in **Section 6.1** of this Planning Report.

Table 4: EU, National & Regional Policy Objectives and Compliance Summary

Policy / Legislative Document	Targets / Objectives	Compliance
REPowerEU	➤ Accelerate the roll-out of renewables. ➤ Increase the 2030 target for renewables from 40%-45%. ➤ Tackle slow and complex permitting for major renewable projects	Considering the urgency required under the REPowerEU, it is imperative that all suitable sites, such as the site of the Proposed Project, are developed as soon as possible, in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development.
Renewable Energy Directive	42.5% renewable energy by 2030, aiming for 45%.	The Proposed Project will increase Ireland's renewable energy share, contributing towards Ireland's climate and energy obligations under EU law.
European Green Deal	Increases the binding target of renewable sources in the EU's energy mix from 32% to 40% by 2030. Recognises that 75% of the EU's greenhouse gas emissions stems from the production and use of energy, emphasising the need to decarbonise the EU's energy system.	By providing renewable wind energy the Proposed Project supports the European Green Deal's objective of decarbonising the EU's energy system and increasing renewable sources in the EU's energy mix.
Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amended) Act 2021	A 51% reduction in emissions by 2030. Net-zero emissions by 2050. Under Section 15, public bodies are required to, in so far as practical, perform its functions in a manner consistent with the Climate Action Plan 2024, the National Energy & Climate Plan 2021 – 2030 and other national climate mitigation and adaptation plans.	The Proposed Project will support the transition to a low-carbon and climate resilient society by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, through the generation of wind energy and displacing electricity that would otherwise be produced from fossil fuel sources. Having regard to the requirements of Section 15 of the Climate Act, the Proposed Wind Farm is fully aligned with CAP 25 the National Energy & Climate Plan 2021 – 2030 and other national climate mitigation and adaptation plans. The development represents critical renewable energy infrastructure that will make a meaningful contribution to achieving the State's reduced emissions targets and the transition towards a climate resilient society.

Policy / Legislative Document	Targets / Objectives	Compliance
Climate Action Plan 2025	9GW of onshore wind by 2030.	The Proposed Project will contribute directly towards the CAP25 goals of 9GW of wind energy by 2030 and renewable electricity share of 80% by 2030. Onshore wind is identified as being critical in the decarbonisation of the electricity sector and as such the Proposed Wind Farm should be considered in that regard.
The National Planning Framework First Revision 2025	National Strategic Outcome 8: Transition to a low carbon and climate resilient economy.	The Proposed Project is in line with the objectives of the Revised The National Planning Framework First Revision 2025 (Revised NPF) which seeks to transition to a low carbon and climate resilient economy. If permitted, the Proposed Project will contribute to the achievement of National Policy Objectives 8, 21, 54, and 55.
National Development Plan 2021 - 2030	National Strategic Outcomes 8: Transition to a Climate-Neutral and Climate Resilient Society	The National Development Plan (NDP) is clear in its priority to reach a low-carbon, climate resilient society over the lifetime of the plan. The Proposed Project, if permitted, will provide clean, renewable electricity to the national grid, furthering development objectives of the NDP.
National Development Plan Review 2025	Recognises wind energy as a key enabler of the State's legally binding commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 51% by 2030, including a 75% reduction in emissions from the electricity sector.	The Proposed Project, if permitted, will provide clean, renewable, electricity to the national grid, thus contributing to the decarbonisation of the electricity sector.
National Energy Security Framework	➤ Ensuring security of energy supply in the near-term. ➤ Reducing our dependency on imported fossil fuels in the context of the phasing out of Russian energy imports across the EU.	The Proposed Project will reduce the need for imported fossil fuels for electricity, improving national energy security.
The National Energy & Climate Plan 2021 – 2030	➤ Decarbonisation - Renewable energy ➤ Energy security	The Proposed Project will contribute to achieving key decarbonisation and energy security objectives by adding a new renewable electricity generator to the national grid.

Policy / Legislative Document	Targets / Objectives	Compliance
Energy Security in Ireland to 2030 – Energy Security Package	➤ Reduced and Responsive Demand. ➤ Renewables-Led System. ➤ More Resilient Systems. ➤ Robust Risk Governance.	The Proposed Project supports the objectives to ensure the State's energy security. This Proposed Project serves as a domestic renewable energy generator capable of providing clean electricity to the national electricity grid.
Wind Energy Guidelines	➤ Acceptable noise thresholds and monitoring frameworks ➤ Visual amenity setback and spacing ➤ Control of shadow flicker ➤ Compliance with Community consultation and dividend requirements ➤ Consideration of the siting, route and design of the proposed grid connection as part of the whole project.	The Proposed Project complies with the requirements set out by the DoEHLG 2006 Guidelines, including noise, set back, shadow flicker, and community consultation guidelines. It is anticipated that the Proposed Project will be capable of adhering to future wind energy guidelines.
Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy for the Northern and Western Regional Assembly	RPO 4.17: To position the region to avail of the emerging global market in renewable energy by stimulating the development and deployment of the most advantageous renewable energy systems, including: ➤ Stimulating the development and deployment of the most advantageous renewable energy systems; ➤ Raising awareness and public understanding of renewable energy and encourage market opportunities for the renewable energy industry to promote the development and growth of renewable energy businesses; and ➤ Encourage the development of the transmission and distribution grids to facilitate the development of renewable energy projects and the effective utilisation of the energy generated from renewable sources having regard to the future potential of the region over the lifetime of the Strategy and beyond.	The Proposed Project will generate clean and renewable wind energy, reducing reliance on greenhouse gas emitting fossil fuels for energy generation and supporting the region's transition to a low carbon, climate resilient and sustainable economy and society. The Proposed Project which is a renewable energy development will align with national climate and renewable energy policy and targets as set out in the RSES.

Policy / Legislative Document	Targets / Objectives	Compliance
	RPO 4.18: Support the development of secure, reliable and safe supplies of renewable energy, to maximise their value, maintain the inward investment, support indigenous industry and create jobs.	
European Union (Planning and Development) (Renewable Energy) Regulations 2025	Transposes the provisions of the Renewable Energy Directive into planning legislation. Introduces new streamlined decision timelines for new wind farms and repowering projects and IROPI projects. Importantly, renewable energy developments, including related grid and storage infrastructure, are now presumed to be in the overriding public interest.	The Proposed Project is subject to the provisions of the Renewable Energy Directive III (Directive 2023/2413) and is therefore subject to the European Union (Planning and Development) (Renewable Energy) Regulations 2025. By delivering additional renewable generation capacity, the Proposed Project will enhance Ireland's renewable energy share and directly support the State in meeting its binding climate and energy obligations under EU law.

7.1 Local Policy Context

7.1.1 Sligo County Development Plan 2024 - 2030

The SCDP was adopted by the Elected Members of SCC at the conclusion of the Special Meeting on the 30th September 2024 and came into effect on 11th November 2024, in accordance with the provisions of Section 12(10) of the Planning Act.

Climate change mitigation and adaptation objectives have been incorporated into the policies of the SCDP. This is to ensure that climate change has been consistently integrated into the policy themes addressed by the SCDP. Chapter 2 of the SCDP outlines the County's climate change policy and aligns itself with wider policies with the recognition that *'Climate Action is a significant priority for the Irish government,'* through the promotion of renewable energy use, with a relationship between renewable energy production and a reduction in GHG emissions recognised.

With regard to renewable energy, Chapter 31 sets out the policy context for the County's energy and telecommunications strategy. County Sligo's role in the delivery of renewable energy resources is acknowledged within the SCDP, with the statement that *'Sligo is well-placed to lay solid foundations for a sustainable energy future while boosting investment, business development, job creation and contributing to greater energy security,'*.

The SCDP includes a number of policies and objectives relating to Climate Action, Natural Heritage, Biodiversity, Landscape Character, and Energy and Telecommunications. A statement of consistency is provided in the **Table 5** below.

Renewable Energy Policy Designation

At the time of adoption of the SCDP, no county specific Wind Energy or Renewable Energy Strategy for County Sligo has been prepared. The SCDP states that SCC will prepare a Renewable Energy Strategy following the publication of the forthcoming Regional Renewable Electricity Strategy and the revised Methodology for Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategies.

Pending the adoption of a strategy, SCC will continue to assess renewable energy proposals, such as the Proposed Project, on a case-by-case basis having regard to the relevant policies and objectives of the SCDP and the DoEHLG 2006 Guidelines. Accordingly, the Proposed Project has been assessed against the relevant policies and objectives of the SCDP, together with the applicable international, national and regional policy context that applies.

Table 5: Compliance with SCDP Policies & Objectives

Topic	Policy/Objectives	Compliance
Climate Action	SP-CA-1: Support the implementation of the government’s climate action policy in accordance with the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021, the national Climate Action Plan 2023, the National Adaptation Framework 2018 and all subsequent relevant updates.	The Proposed Project is in compliance with this objective as it will deliver approximately 102 MW of onshore renewable energy, directly contributes to the wind energy target of 9GW of onshore wind introduced by CAP 23. The Proposed Project will generate clean, renewable electricity, which will be integrated into the grid, helping to electrify and decarbonise other sectors. This will also aid in achieving the climate change and renewable energy objectives to reach national targets and transition to a low carbon economy, in line with the Climate Act.
	SP-CA-2: Ensure that Sligo County Council’s Climate Adaptation Strategy, Climate Action Plan and County Development Plan are fully aligned.	The Proposed Project is in alignment with Sligo County Council’s Climate Adaption Strategy and Climate Action Plan as it will provide the national grid with clean, renewable energy, thus contributing to the decarbonisation of the electricity sector.
	SP-CA-3: Integrate appropriate climate mitigation and adaptation considerations and measures into all relevant development management.	The Proposed Project presents sufficient climate mitigation measures, through the provision of renewable energy, to reduce overall carbon emissions.
Landscape Character	P-LCP-1: Protect the physical landscape, visual and scenic character of County Sligo and seek to preserve the County’s landscape character. Planning applications for developments that have the potential to impact significantly and adversely upon landscape character, especially in Sensitive Rural Landscapes, Visually Vulnerable Areas and along Scenic Routes,	The Proposed Project has been designed to minimise visual intrusion on the surrounding area which has been fully assessed in Chapter 13 - Landscape and Visual of the EIAR and supported by the comprehensive suite of photomontages

Topic	Policy/Objectives	Compliance
	may be required to be accompanied by a visual impact assessment using agreed and appropriate viewing points and methods for the assessment.	included in the Photowire Visualisation Booklet provided at Appendix 13-5 of the EIAR.
	P-LCP-2: Discourage any developments that would be detrimental to the unique visual character of designated Visually Vulnerable Areas.	A detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) accompanies the application and specifically evaluates the potential visual effects on the landscape and key viewpoints within the Visually Vulnerable Areas.
	O-LCP-3: Prepared an updated Landscape Character Assessment for County Sligo in conjunction with the forthcoming Renewable Energy Strategy	The Proposed Project has been informed by the existing Landscape Character Assessment and by emerging policy context for renewable energy development in County Sligo.
Natural Heritage	P-BD-1: Protect, conserve, enhance and sustainably manage the natural heritage, biodiversity, geological heritage, landscape and environment of County Sligo.	As detailed in Chapter 6 of the EIAR, the Proposed Project has been designed to avoid or mitigate impacts on biodiversity.
	P-BD-2: Protect and, where possible, enhance the plant and animal species and their habitats that have been identified under EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), the EU Birds Directive (2009/147/EC), European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (SI 477/2011) as amended, Flora (Protection) Order 2015, the Wildlife Act 1976 (as amended), and the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000 as amended, including all statutory instruments made under each act.	The Proposed Project's application considers the impact on protected sites, habitats and species. The EIAR concludes that there will be no significant negative impacts on the protected species and habitats of designated sites.
	P-BD-3: Ensure that the ecological impact of all development proposals on habitats and species are appropriately assessed by suitably qualified professionals, in accordance with best practice guidelines, taking full account of the precautionary principle where uncertainty exists.	The Proposed Project application considers the impact on protected sites, habitats and species. The EIAR concludes that there will be no significant negative impacts on the protected species and habitats of designated sites. Section

Topic	Policy/Objectives	Compliance
		6.4 of Chapter 6 of the EIAR provides an ecological impact assessment for the Proposed Project. Chapter 6 of the EIAR concludes that, providing that the Proposed Project is constructed and operated in accordance with the design, best practice and mitigation that is described within this application, significant individual or cumulative effects on ecology are not anticipated at any geographical scale.
	P-BD-4: Minimise adverse impacts of proposed developments on existing habitats (whether designated or not) by including mitigation and/or compensation measures as appropriate.	Chapter 6 of the EIAR as well as the NIS sets out migration measures in relation to the protection of habitats. Provided that the Proposed Project is constructed and operated in accordance with the design, best practice and mitigation that is described within this application, significant individual or cumulative effects on ecological habitats are not anticipated at any geographical scale.
	P-DSNC-1: Protect and maintain the conservation status of all natural heritage sites designated or proposed for designation in accordance with European and national legislation and agreements. These include Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Areas (SPA), Natural Heritage Areas (NHA), proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHA), Ramsar Sites, Statutory Nature Reserves, as identified by the Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, and any other sites that may be proposed for designation during the lifetime of this Plan. In addition, the Council will identify, maintain and develop non-designated areas of high nature conservation value which serve as linkages or 'stepping stones' between protected sites in accordance with Article 10 of the Habitats Directive.	The potential for effects on NHAs and pNHAs is fully considered in Chapter 6 of the EIAR. With the implementation of the mitigations and best practice procedures for both the construction and operational phases of the Proposed Project, as described in Chapter 6 of the EIAR, as well as those in Chapter 9 and in the Appendix 4-3, no potential for significant effects on these NHAs or pNHAs is anticipated.

Topic	Policy/Objectives	Compliance
		The potential for effects on the European Sites is fully described in the NIS that accompanies this application. The NIS concludes that in view of best scientific knowledge and on the basis of objective information, the Proposed Project either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, is not likely to have adverse effects on the European Sites that were assessed as part of the Appropriate Assessment process.
	P-DSNC-4: Ensure that all development proposals are subject to the process of Screening for Appropriate Assessment and subsequent stages of Appropriate Assessment, as relevant, carried out to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority, in consultation with National Parks and Wildlife Service, as appropriate.	The Proposed Project application includes an Appropriate Assessment prepared in line with the Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations 2011. The Project Team undertook consultation with the NPWS, which involved discussions surrounding ecology baseline habitats of the Proposed Project, habitat characterisation and enhancement measures, ornithological surveys and bat monitoring. The outcome of this consultation has been duly considered and integrated into the design of the Proposed Project and the preparation of this EIAR.

Topic	Policy/Objectives	Compliance
	P-WHT-1: Protect woodlands, hedgerows and trees from development that would impact adversely upon them. Promote new tree and woodland planting and the enhancement of existing hedgerows by seeking increased coverage, in conjunction with new development using native species of local provenance, where possible.	The Proposed Project will require felling and will include forestry replanting, replacing trees on a hectare for hectare basis.
Built Heritage	P-AH-1: Protect, manage, and enhance archaeological sites, monuments and landscapes, underwater archaeology (including protected wrecks), historic burial grounds (including their setting, appreciation and visual amenity) listed in the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP), Sites and Monuments Record (SMR), the Register of Historic Monuments, and any additional newly discovered archaeological sites and/or sub-surface archaeological remains. This shall be done in accordance with conservation principles and best practice guidelines	As detailed in Chapter 14 of the EIAR no significant direct or indirect effects to the recorded cultural heritage resource as a result of the Proposed Project have been identified. Where potential direct effects to sub-surface archaeology have been identified appropriate mitigation measures are proposed in order to ameliorate this potential effect.
Energy and Telecommunications	P-EN-1: Support the sustainable development, upgrading and maintenance of energy generation, transmission, storage and distribution infrastructure, to ensure the security of energy supply and provide for future needs, as well as protection of the landscape, natural, archaeological and built heritage, and residential amenity.	The Proposed Project supports this objective through the development of energy generation and distribution infrastructure, which will ensure a secure and reliable supply of renewable electricity for Co. Sligo. The Proposed Wind Farm, through strategic site selection exercise, including a detailed constraints analysis has been designed to limit the impact on the residential properties in the vicinity of the proposed turbines. This will ensure that an appropriate balance is met between facilitating energy development and protecting residential amenity. The Proposed Wind Farm complies with the requirements set out by the DoEHLG 2006

Topic	Policy/Objectives	Compliance
		Guidelines, including noise, set back, shadow flicker. Should the Draft DoHPLG 2019 Guidelines be adopted in advance of a planning decision being made on this application, it is considered that the Proposed Project will be capable adhering to the relevant noise and shadow flicker standards, thus ensuring the protection of residential amenity.
	P-EN-2: Facilitate the production of energy from renewable sources and secure the maximum potential from wind energy resources within County Sligo, including the augmentation, upgrading and improvements to existing wind farms, subject to strict location, siting and design criteria.	The Proposed Project seeks to maximise the potential of the Site while increasing efficiency. Through the decommissioning of 23 no. turbines and the proposal for 17 no. new turbines, the design of the Proposed Project reduces the overall turbines on the site while simultaneously supplying a greater energy output to the national electricity grid.

7.1.2

Sligo County Council Climate Action Plan 2024 – 2029

The Sligo County Council Climate Action Plan, 2024 – 2029 (Sligo 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 Sligo County Council of 51% by 2030, placing the country on a trajectory to achieving climate neutrality by the end of 2050. "

The Sligo CAP clearly sets out the Council's intention to reduce GHG emissions within the electricity sector through the development of renewable energy infrastructure projects. Strategic goals, objectives and policies have been listed, with a corresponding list of actions that support adaptation and mitigation measures. The main strategic goals of Sligo's CAP are:

- Achieving carbon emission reduction targets of 51% for 2030; progressing to the 2050 target for carbon neutrality and reducing climate impacts
- Enabling a 'just transition' ensuring no household, community or business is disadvantaged by decarbonisation measures, paving the way for sustainable economic growth
- Cultivating decarbonisation co-benefits across key sectors in the county/city ensuring alignment with the sustainable development agenda
- Providing supports to communities and organisations and foster collaboration; leading the transition to an inclusive net zero economy

These objectives outlined above would be significantly aided by the Proposed Project and it's potential to deliver 102 MW of renewable electricity to the grid, and as such. Therefore, the Proposed Project is fully aligned with the objectives of the Sligo CAP to reduce GHG emissions within the electricity sector through the development of renewable energy infrastructure projects.

7.2

Summary of Compliance with Planning Policy

The provision of renewable energy developments such as the Proposed Project is strongly supported by European, national, regional, and local policies and guidelines aimed at achieving the transition to a low carbon and climate-resilient economy, increasing renewable energy generation, and enhancing energy security. Specifically, the Proposed Project will contribute to achieving the target of generating 9GW of electricity from onshore wind and reducing GHG emissions by 80% by 2030 as set out in the CAP25.

At a European level, the Proposed Project will support Ireland in reaching its legally binding obligations as an EU Member State of achieving at least 42.5% renewable energy by 2030, as set out in REDIII.

The Proposed Project aligns with National Strategic Outcomes and Objectives outlined in the Revised NPF, particularly Objective 55, which seeks 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.

Regionally, the Proposed Project will support the future growth of renewable energy technology in the Northern and Western region as called for in the NWRA RSES which sets a clear precedent to identify and capitalise on those opportunities associated with the transition to renewable energy generation.

Furthermore, REDIII and REPowerEU have emphasised the European recognition of transitioning away from fossil fuels and increasing the penetration of renewable energy sources into the electricity market.

These will play a crucial role in raising awareness and encouraging countries to prioritize the development and adoption of renewable energy technologies.

Locally, the SCDP is supportive of the Proposed Project as it sets out the need for Sligo to transition to a carbon neutral and climate resilient County with a focus on renewable energy to increase the County's energy sustainability and security.

If the Proposed Project were not to proceed, the opportunity to capture this additional part of County Sligo's valuable renewable energy resource would be lost, as would the prospect of contributing to European and national targets for the production and consumption of electricity from renewable resources and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. The opportunity to generate local employment and investment associated with the Proposed Project would also be lost.

8.

PLANNING ASSESSMENT

The Proposed Project has been subject to a rigorous design process informed by a comprehensive planning and environmental assessments and surveys, which have collectively concluded that the Proposal is in line with proper planning and sustainable development of the area. The Proposed Project has been designed in compliance with the DoEHLG 2006 Guidelines. It is anticipated that the Proposed Project will be capable of adhering to the relevant noise and shadow flicker standards, albeit without sight of the final, the Draft DoHPLG 2019 Guidelines, the processes by which the Proposed Project will comply with the same cannot be confirmed at this stage. While the Draft DoHPLG 2019 Guidelines not yet been published it should be noted that the Proposed Project maintains a four times tip height set back between turbines and identified sensitive receptors, furthermore detailed community consultations have been carried out.

Specifically, there are no significant environmental impacts associated with the Proposed Project during the construction, operational or decommissioning phases of the development nor will it have any significant effects on any European Sites. Any potential environmental impacts can be addressed through standard mitigation measures and residual impacts will not be significant.

Accordingly, the following section provides a planning assessment of the Proposed Project under a number of key material considerations. This includes an assessment of the principle of development, followed by an assessment of the key environmental topics covered in the EIAR, which together inform the overall planning assessment of the Proposed Project. These considerations including the following headings:

- > Residential Amenity
- > Biodiversity
- > Ornithology
- > Land, Soils and Geology
- > Hydrology and Hydrogeology
- > Air Quality
- > Climate
- > Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
- > Archaeology and Cultural Heritage
- > Material Assets

8.1

Principle of Development

The principle of development is considered to be acceptable at this location, having regard not only to its alignment with all levels of Planning Policy, including International, National, Regional and Local Planning Policy Frameworks, but also in the context of binding climate change obligations, the Proposed Project Design Process and relevant environmental requirements.

Policy Context

At an International and National Level, the Proposed Project will make a meaningful contribution towards achieving the transition to a low-carbon economy and climate resiliency, increasing renewable energy generation, and enhancing energy security. It will contribute directly towards the CAP25 goals of 9GW of wind energy by 2030 and renewable electricity share of 80% by 2030.

At a Regional Level, the Proposed Project will strengthen the role of the Northern and Western region as a leader in the renewable energy generation and in doing so, will support the transition to a climate resilient society.

Locally, the SCDP supports the Proposed Project as SCC 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.

Obligations of Consenting Authorities under the Climate Act

In relation to the Climate Act, as set out in **Section 3** of this Planning Report, Consenting Authorities, such as ACP, must meaningfully engage with national climate objectives when exercising their functions, including decision-making and must also demonstrate how those functions have been carried out in a manner consistent with, in so far as practicable, national climate objectives.

Taking these legal duties into account, ACP is required to attribute significant weight to national climate policy and the delivery of renewable energy infrastructure, such as the Proposed Project, even where they materially contravene a statutory development plan, particularly when that plan is out of step with national policy.

The significance of the judgement is that Consenting Authorities, including ACP are now under clear, legal duty to give meaningful consideration of the contribution made to the achievement of national climate targets by renewable energy developments, such as the Proposed Project. This is of particular importance where a development would advance decarbonisation targets.

Having regard to these matters, it is considered that ACP can exercise its evaluative judgement in a manner that delivers an outcome favouring the Proposed Project, which directly contributes to the achievement of national and EU policy goals, in accordance with its statutory duty under Section 15 of the Climate Act.

Detailed Constraints Exercise

A detailed analysis of site-specific constraints was carried out in order to inform the placement of the proposed infrastructure. The ecological assessment of the Proposed Wind Farm site encompassed comprehensive desk studies, NPWS consultation, and suite of field surveys. This assessment, as described in Chapters 6 and 7 of the EIAR relating to Biodiversity and Ornithology, optimised the decision on the siting of proposed turbines and the carrying out of any development works.

The turbine layout for the Proposed Wind Farm has also been informed by the results of noise, landscape and visual considerations and the separation distance to be maintained between turbines. Thus, the baseline environmental assessment of the site and wind farm design was an iterative process, where findings at each stage of the assessment were used to further refine the design, always with the intention of minimising the potential for environmental impacts.

The development of the final Proposed Wind Farm layout has resulted following feedback from the various studies, investigations and assessments carried out as well as ongoing negotiations and discussions with landowners and the local community. This final design is regarded as optimal as identified constraints are avoided while also maximising the site's development potential.

Appropriate Assessment

To support ACP in carrying out their Appropriate Assessment, an Appropriate Assessment Screening Report and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) have been prepared for the Proposed Project. This report has been prepared to provide the competent authorities with the information necessary to complete an Appropriate Assessment screening and an Appropriate Assessment for the Proposed Project in compliance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive.

The NIS concludes that the Proposed Project, individually or in-combination with other plans or projects, will not adversely affect the integrity of any European Site.

It is therefore judged that, provided the Proposed Project is constructed and operated in accordance with the design, best practice and mitigation that is described within this application, significant residual impacts on biodiversity, flora and fauna will not occur. The biodiversity enhancement measures outlined for the Proposed Project will result in an improvement of the existing ecological conditions of the Site.

8.1.2 Conclusion

In summary, the Proposed Project is a type of development which is specifically required to aid the State to meet our binding climate targets and obligations at a National and International level. It is demonstrably supported at all levels of planning policy across local, regional, national and international policy.

The Proposed Project provides the opportunity to realise the valuable renewable energy resource. If the Proposed Project were not to proceed the opportunity to capture this additional part of Co. Sligo's valuable renewable energy resource would be lost, as would the opportunity to contribute to meeting Government and EU targets for the production and consumption of electricity from renewable resources and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

The Proposed Project will ensure that the valuable wind resources available at this Site is harnessed, using the most up-to-date wind turbine technology. The Site has accommodated wind energy development for over two decades, and the Proposed Project will build upon this established renewable energy infrastructure by making use of the existing onsite 38kV substation and access road network. In the context of the current energy and climate crisis, it is deemed environmentally prudent and a sustainable form of development to utilise existing wind farm infrastructure, avoiding the unnecessary redundancy of established renewable energy infrastructure in existing locations. Additionally, the Proposed Project will reduce the number of wind turbines at the Site from 23 to 17, while increasing the overall installed generating capacity from 36.1MW to 102MW, and in doing so delivering substantially more renewable energy to the national grid.

In this regard, and subject to compliance with all relevant environmental and ecological considerations as set out in the EIAR and NIS, the principle of development of the Proposed Project is considered to be wholly acceptable and appropriate at this location.

8.2 Key Environmental Considerations

Table 6 below provides a summary of the Proposed Project under these key material environmental considerations and identifies the relevant chapters of the EIAR where they are specifically addressed.

Table 6: Relevant chapters of the EIAR referring to key material considerations

Consideration	Summary	Relevant EIAR Chapter
Residential Amenity	• Noise Impact: The Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) confirms that operational noise from the Proposed Project will comply with the noise limit criteria at all Noise Sensitive Locations as per the DoEHLG 2006 Guidelines and can be adjusted to align with the Draft DoHPLG 2019 Guidelines if required. • Shadow Flicker: The EIAR confirms shadow flicker levels will meet the DoEHLG 2006 Guidelines limits at all Sensitive Receptors and can be adjusted to align with the Draft DoHPLG 2019 Guidelines if they are adopted during the planning process. • Visual Amenity: The visual and landscape assessment finds no significant effects on sensitive receptors, with overall visibility of the Proposed Project considered not significant.	Chapter 5 – Human Beings Chapter 12 – Noise Chapter 13 – Landscape
Biodiversity	No significant individual or cumulative residual effects as a result of the Proposed Project in relation to disturbance, displacement, mortality of faunal species, loss of faunal habitat or deterioration in water quality has been identified at any geographic scale. The potential for effects on European Sites is fully described in the NIS that accompanies this application. The NIS concludes that in view of best scientific knowledge and on the basis of objective information, the Proposed Project either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, is not likely to have adverse effects on the European Sites that were assessed as part of the Appropriate Assessment process. Similarly, with the prescribed mitigations in place, there is no potential for impact on any NHAs and pNHAs. Provided that the Proposed Project is constructed and operated in accordance with the design, best practice and mitigation that is described within this application, significant individual or cumulative effects on ecology are not anticipated at any geographical scale.	Chapter 6 – Biodiversity
Ornithology	Following consideration of the residual effects (post-mitigation), it is concluded that the Proposed Project will not result in any significant effects on any of the identified Key Ornithological Receptors (KOR). No significant effects on receptors of European, national, or county importance were identified.	Ch.6 – Biodiversity Ch.7 – Ornithology

	Provided that the Proposed Project is constructed, operated, and decommissioned in accordance with the design and best practice mitigation measures that are described within this application, significant individual or cumulative effects on the identified KORs are not anticipated.	
Land, Soils, & Geology	No significant impacts on the land, soil, and geology of the Site will occur during construction, operation, or during decommissioning phases. The assessment also concludes that there will be no cumulative effects on land, soil and geology environment as a result of the Proposed Project.	Ch.8 – Geology & Soils
Hydrology & Hydrogeology	No significant effects to surface water (quality and flows) and groundwater (quality and quantity, and any local groundwater wells) will occur as a result of the Proposed Project provided the proposed mitigation measures are implemented. An assessment of potential cumulative effects associated with the Proposed Project and other developments on the hydrological and hydrogeological environment has been completed. With the implementation of the mitigation measures detailed in the EIAR, the cumulative assessment found that there will be no significant effects on the hydrological and hydrogeological environments. No significant effects on the water environment will occur during the construction, operation or decommissioning of the Proposed Project.	Ch.9- Water
Air Quality	The cumulative air quality assessment for the Proposed Project indicates that, when considered alongside other existing or planned developments in the area, there will be no significant negative cumulative impacts on air quality across all project phases. Once the Proposed Project is operational, there will be a long-term, moderate, positive impact on the air quality.	Ch.10 – Air Quality
Climate	Residual effects of greenhouse gas emissions arising from the construction phase of the Proposed Project will have a short-term imperceptible negative effect. However, once emitted to the atmosphere, the greenhouse gas emissions that will arise from construction phase activities will have a permanent imperceptible negative effect on Climate.	Ch.11 - Climate

	The Proposed Project will displace carbon dioxide from fossil fuel-based electricity generation, over the proposed 35-year lifespan of the Proposed Wind Farm. Therefore, while there will be greenhouse gas emissions associated with the construction of the Proposed Project, this will take place under the Electricity sector emissions ceiling and will be offset by the operation of the Proposed Wind Farm within its operational life. The nature of the Proposed Project is such that, once operational, it will have a long-term, moderate, positive impact on the climate. There will be no measurable negative cumulative effect with other developments on climate.	
Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment	There are no significant landscape effects have been identified and, overall, the visibility of the Proposed Project throughout the LVIA Study Area is deemed to have no significant effects. For cumulative turbines located within the wider LVIA Study Area, there are limited locations where the proposed turbines will be visible in combination or succession views. However, due to the distance involved, no significant cumulative visual effects are expected to arise.	Ch.13 Landscape
Archaeology & Cultural Heritage	An assessment of potential cumulative effects was also undertaken taking into consideration other planning applications and identified cumulative wind farm projects within 25km. While some potential cumulative visual effects to the wider setting of cultural heritage assets are possible when considered with the cumulative wind farm projects, no significant cumulative effects have been identified and no cumulative effects to the immediate setting of cultural heritage assets will occur. No significant direct or indirect effects to the recorded cultural heritage resource as a result of the Proposed Project have been identified. Where potential direct effects to sub-surface archaeology have been identified appropriate mitigation measures are proposed in order to ameliorate this potential effect.	Ch.14 Cultural Heritage
Material Assets	Based on assessments carried out, as described in Ch.15, the Proposed Project will have no impact on built services and waste management. It can be concluded that during the construction, operational and decommissioning phases, there would be a short-term imperceptible cumulative effect on built services and waste management from the Proposed Project and permitted or proposed projects and plans in the area.	Ch. 15 Material Assets

CONCLUSION

The provision of wind energy developments such as the Proposed Project is strongly supported by European, National, Regional and Local policies and guidelines aimed at achieving the transition to a low carbon and climate resilient economy, increasing renewable energy generation, and enhancing energy security. Specifically, the Proposed Project will contribute to achieving the target of generating 9GW of electricity from onshore wind and reducing GHG emissions by 51% by 2030 as set out in the CAP25. The Proposed Project aligns with National Strategic Outcomes and Objectives outlined in the National Planning Framework First Revision 2025, particularly Objective 55, which seeks 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 Proposed Project will ensure that the valuable wind resources available at this Site will be utilised using the most up-to-date wind turbine technology. The Proposed Project Site has hosted wind energy development for over two decades and seeks to leverage existing wind farm infrastructure i.e. the existing onsite 38kV substation and existing access roads. In the context of the current energy and climate crisis, it is deemed environmentally prudent and a sustainable form of development to utilise existing wind farm infrastructure at the Site rather than allowing this infrastructure to become redundant. Additionally, the Proposed Project will see an increased generating capacity at the Site, resulting in 102 MW of clean, renewable energy being connected to the national grid.

CAP24 estimates that an 8-times increase in renewable energy deployment to 2.3GW annually is required between 2024 and 2030 to reach climate and energy targets. CAP25 reaffirms the ambitious targets for renewable electricity share of 80% by 2030, which is to be achieved, in part, by the deployment of a targeted 9GW of onshore wind by 2030. To achieve this, greater alignment between local plans and national and regional renewable energy targets is urgently required. If permitted, the Proposed Wind Farm will add approximately 102 MW of renewable, clean energy to our national wind energy capacity. This will not only contribute to the decarbonisation of the electricity sector but will play a role in the decarbonisation of other sectors and the transition to a low carbon, climate resilient economy.

In relation to the Climate Act, Consenting Authorities must meaningfully engage with national climate objectives when exercising their functions, including decision-making and must also demonstrate how those functions have been carried out in a manner consistent with, in so far as practicable, national climate objectives. Taking these legal duties into account, ACP is required to attribute significant weight to national climate policy and the delivery of renewable energy infrastructure, such as the Proposed Project. Having regard to these matters, it is considered that ACP can exercise its planning judgement to determine the application in a manner which is consistent with the achievement of national and EU policy goals, in accordance with its statutory duty under Section 15 of the Climate Act.

To combat the effects of climate change, Ireland must decarbonise its economy by 2050. There is no “silver bullet” to do so. It will take hundreds, if not thousands, of individual renewable energy projects to decarbonise the Irish economy. The scale of the challenge we face to decarbonise the Irish economy is enormous, but the climate change implications of not doing so are even greater. There is no other way to decarbonise a modern society except through renewable energy projects such as the Proposed Project.

In addition, the Proposed Project will deliver a range of significant benefits, supporting the transition to a low carbon, climate resilient society through continued and enhanced generation of renewable energy at the Site. It will provide clean, renewable electricity to the national grid, contributing to long term energy security and helping to moderate energy costs, through the displacement of fossil fuelled energy generation. In addition, it will provide lasting socio-economic benefits through the creation of sustainable local employment as well as the establishment of a Community Benefit Fund, which will ensure that the Site continues to make a positive contribution to the local community and national renewable energy objectives.

The Proposed Project will ensure that the valuable wind resources available at this Site is harnessed, using the most up-to-date wind turbine technology. The Site has accommodated wind energy development for over two decades, and the Proposed Project will build upon this established renewable energy infrastructure through the continued use of the existing onsite 38kV substation and access road network. In the context of the current energy and climate crisis, it is deemed environmentally prudent and a sustainable form of development, avoiding the unnecessary redundancy of established renewable energy infrastructure at the site. Additionally, the Proposed Project will reduce the number of wind turbines at the Site from 23 to 17, while increasing the overall installed generating capacity from 36.1 MW to 102MW, thereby delivering substantially more renewable energy to the national grid.

Having regard to the key points set out in this Planning Report, it is respectfully requested that ACP considers the relevant planning context that applies, and grants permission for the Proposed Project which is the subject of this application.

