
FW: ACP Appeal Reference ACP-324561-26

From Communications <communications@pleanala.ie>

Date Tue 10/13/2026 11:29 AM

To Marine <marine@pleanala.ie>

 2 attachments (4 MB)

06. Rpt 5 Oct - Dunneill Mountain WF.pdf; 04. Draft Rpt 5 Oct - Dunneill Mountain WF SIGNED.docx;

From: Planning Emails <planning@sligococo.ie>

Sent: Tuesday 13 October 2026 11:08

To: Communications <communications@pleanala.ie>

Cc: Planning Emails <planning@sligococo.ie>

Subject: ACP Appeal Reference ACP-324561-26

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Your Ref: **ACP-324561-26**

Re: **Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) application on lands located at Crowagh or Dunneill Mountain and adjacent townlands, Co. Sligo.**

FAO/ Ellen Moss

Further to your correspondence of 18th August, 2026 please note this Planning Authorities Submission in this regard.

Regards,

Fidelma Loughlin

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Sligo County Council
Comhairle Chontae Shligigh

Sligo.



Sligo County Council
Comhairle Chontae Shligigh



Chief Executive's Report to the members of Sligo County Council on 5 October 2026 in relation to a Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) application on lands located at Crowagh or Dunneill Mountain and adjacent townlands, Co. Sligo. submitted to An Coimisiún Pleanála on the 18th of August 2026.

The proposed development consists of the decommissioning of 23 no. turbines and the erection of 17 no. wind turbines, underground electrical (33kV) and communications cabling connecting the wind turbines to a new on-site 110kV electrical substation and all associated infrastructure and works

located in the townlands of Crowagh or Dunneill Mountain, Ballyglass, Tawnadremira, Doonbeakin, Dunowla, Kingsmountain, Ballygreighan Barr, Corhawnagh, Abbeytown, Knockaculleen, Rathgoonaun, Lecarrow, Dromore, Co. Sligo

30 September 2026

1.0 Introduction and Background

An Coimisiún Pleanála has received an application on the 18th of August 2026 for permission under section 37E of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended (Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID)). The application is also the subject of the Renewable Energy Directive III.

A SID is a specific class of development as defined in the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), and generally includes large-scale projects in energy, transport, environment, and health sectors where the decision-making procedure requires an application to be submitted directly to the An Coimisiún Pleanála (as opposed to the local planning authority).

This SID proposal (The Crumhach Wind Farm) proposes the removal of the existing 23 no. turbines on the Dunneill (13 no. turbines) and Kingsmountain (10 no. turbines) Wind Farm sites and to 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.

A Site Location Plan and full Description of Development (as per the public notices) is provided at Appendix 1 of the report. Otherwise, all details submitted with the SID application are available to view at <https://www.crumhachwfpplanning.com/>

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.

In accordance with Section 37E (4) of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended) the planning authority is required to:

- Prepare and submit to the Board a report setting out the views of the authority on the effects of the proposed development on the environment and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, before 5.30pm on the 16th of October 2026.
- Submit the report to the members of the authority and seek the views of the members of the proposed development.

The members of the planning authority may then, by resolution, decide to attach recommendations (specified in resolution) to the report of the authority. The member's recommendations will then be attached to the report to be submitted to ABP.

An Coimisiún Pleanála may then decide to:

- (i) grant permission, or
- (ii) make such modifications to the proposed development as it specifies in its decisions and grant permission in respect of the proposed development as so modified, or
- (iii) grant permission in respect of part of the proposed development (with or without specified modifications of the foregoing kind), and any of the above decisions may be subject to or without conditions, or
- (iv) refuse the application.

ACP may decide to hold an oral hearing as part of the SID process.

It is noted that there has been an opportunity for submission (from members of the public, interested parties, prescribed bodies etc) to be made directly to ACP (not the local planning authority). If ACP decide to hold a hearing, there may be a further opportunity for members of the public and prescribed bodies to make submissions.

Further background information on SIDs and the procedures involved in applying for and deciding SID applications is available in the Office of Planning Regulator leaflet: - [Planning Leaflet 14 – Strategic Infrastructure Development](#).

2.0 Nature of the Proposed Development

The proposed development comprises the removal of 23 no. wind turbines and the provision of 17 no. wind turbines and all associated works in Co. Sligo. The proposed development is 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 development 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 development.

The proposed development 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. The construction phase of the Proposed Project will last between 18-24 months.

The focus of this report highlights the potential effects associated with the development of the wind farm. It is noted that there is a history of planning permissions relating to wind energy development to this site.

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 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.

3.0 Planning Authority's Assessment of the Proposed Development

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. The Proposed Project, which will contribute

directly towards the CAP25 goals of 9GW of wind energy by 2030 and renewable electricity share of 0% by 2030. Onshore wind is identified as being critical in the decarbonisation of the electricity,

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. 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 development has been prepared in line with RED III and, specifically, the Schedule of Information to Inform the Completeness Check, provided by ACP, regarding the SID determination under PCX21.320934.

The provision of renewable energy to meet national energy needs, replace fossil fuel use and to contribute towards climate change mitigation is fully recognised and supported at all levels of national, regional, and local planning policy including within the National Planning Framework (NPF), the Northern & Western Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy 2020-2032 (RSES) and the objectives of the County Development Plan 2024 - 2030.

Section 31.3.1 of the CDP, Wind Energy states that Sligo's mountainous landscape and exposed location on the western seaboard combine to create good conditions for the generation of wind power. It is policy **P-EN-2** to,

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.

All such development proposals will be assessed for their potential impact on urban and rural communities, Natura 2000 sites, designated Sensitive Rural Landscapes, Visually Vulnerable Areas, Scenic Routes and scenic views, and all other normal planning consideration.

The Sligo County Council Climate Action Plan, 2024 – 2029 (LACAP) 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.

Objective 1: Support the key areas identified in the National Climate Action Plan in relation to energy efficiency & emissions reductions (retrofitting & renewable energy)'.

It is noted however that there will be a range of local level effects on the environment that may be impactful. At a general point it is considered that the proposal includes sufficient mitigation measures, as detailed within the EIAR & NIS, to minimise these impacts to an acceptable level. The following section of the report outlines these potential impacts and considerations. It should also be noted that there would be associated benefits of the development including of an economic nature (e.g. job creation and economic spend in the area). These are also detailed within the EIAR (within the section on material assets and other issues) and weight should be given to these matters when forming a view on the application.

3.1 Population and Human Health

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. **Section 33.11** of the CDP, Energy and telecommunications infrastructure development standards, states that renewable energy developments will be considered subject to the impact on settlements and individual rural dwellings being assessed.

The EIAR states that;

- The proposed development would require approximately 100 employees in total, with the majority of these roles focused on the construction phase.
- Construction workers and materials will be sourced locally, thereby helping to sustain employment in the construction trade. This will have a short-term moderate positive impact.

Shadow flicker is an effect that occurs when rotating wind turbine blades cast shadows over a window in a nearby property. The Wind Energy Guidelines (DoEHLG, 2006) recommend that shadow flicker at neighbouring dwellings within 500 metres of a proposed turbine location should not exceed a total of 30 hours per year or 30 minutes per day.

The EIAR comments that:

- There are no properties less than 720 metres from the Proposed Turbines (four times tip height).
- There are 40 no. properties located within 1.5km of the Proposed Turbines.
 - 3 no. properties are theoretically predicted to experience zero shadow flicker.
 - 7 no. properties are theoretically predicted to experience some shadow flicker.
- The annual threshold of over 30 hours for shadow flicker (Guidelines (DoEHLG, 2006) is predicted to be exceeded at 2 no. properties. Of these 2 no. properties, 1 no. is in derelict condition, therefore 1 no. property requires mitigation. Please see Table 5-11 in Chapter 5 for mitigation details, which is set out in Table 5-11 in Chapter 5 of the EIAR.

The EIAR concludes that overall, the construction, operation and decommissioning of the proposed development will not have any significant adverse effects on population and human health, following the implementation of the appropriate mitigation measures.

3.2 Biodiversity

It is policy of the CDP to,

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.

P-BD-3 Ensure that the ecological impact of all development proposals on habitats and species is appropriately assessed by suitably qualified professionals, in accordance with best practice guidelines, taking full account of the precautionary principle where uncertainty exists.

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. This shall

comprise the retention and enhancement of all possible existing habitats, vegetation and breeding sites in the early design stages of the development

A Biodiversity Management and Enhancement Plan (BMEP) is proposed as part of the proposed Development. The plan is proposed to enhance an area of degraded peatland in the centre of the Proposed Wind Farm.

The EIAR details that:

- Bat species composition and abundance was found during detailed bat surveys undertaken at the proposed Wind Farm.
- Mitigation measures are proposed to ensure that no potential for residual significant effects with regard to loss of commuting and foraging habitat, loss or damage to roosts, displacement or other construction phase impacts have been identified. In relation to potential collision risk and injury with operational turbines, a bespoke adaptive monitoring and mitigation strategy has been devised in line with NatureScot (2021) Guidance, which will ensure that there is no potential for significant residual effects on local bat populations during the operational phase of the Proposed Project.
- No otter holts or couches were identified within the proposed site or along the grid connection.
- In relation to European designated sites, Ox Mountains Bogs SAC, Unshin River SAC, Ballysadare Bay SAC and Ballysadare SPA have been fully assessed within the Appropriate Assessment Screening and Natura Impact Statement (NIS).

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

3.3 Ornithology

Refer to above policies **P-BD-2 P-BD-3 & P-BD-4**

The EIAR states that the potential for effects on designated sites is fully described in the Natura Impact Statement and it is considered that the potential effects of the proposed development upon birds will not be significant.

3.4 Land, Soils and Geology

Section 33.11 of the CDP, Energy and telecommunications infrastructure development standards, states that renewable energy developments will be considered subject to the impact on soils.

The topography of the Proposed Wind Farm is mountainous with a ground elevation of between 110m and 390m OD. Land-cover 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. The EIAR comments that:

- Site investigations and geotechnical assessments at the site were extensive and consisted of 850 no. peat depth probes, historical trial pit logs (11 no.) and shell and auger borehole logs (11 no.) for the Existing Wind Farm and 19 no. trial pits with associated laboratory testing. A Geotechnical and Peat Stability assessment undertaken for the proposed development shows that the site has an acceptable margin of safety, is suitable for the proposed development and is considered to be of negligible to low risk for peat failure

provided appropriate control measures, such as implementing and maintaining an appropriate drainage system, are implemented.

The EIAR concludes that there is no potential for direct physical affects to designated sites or geological heritage sites have been identified.

3.5 Hydrology and Hydrogeology

Section 33.11 of the CDP, Energy and telecommunications infrastructure development standards, states that renewable energy developments will be considered subject to the impacts on water bodies and groundwater.

Regionally, the site is located in the WFD Sligo Bay surface water catchment within Hydrometric Area No. 35 of the Northwestern River Basin District. The EIAR states that;

- Public water supply surface water abstractions in this area include Easky Lough which is located 1.9km to the south of the Site. Neither the proposed Wind Farm nor proposed Grid Connection Route are located within the Easky Lough surface water catchment.
- No recurring flood incidents within the Proposed Wind Farm were identified from OPW's Past Flood Event Mapping.
- Two methods will be employed to control drainage water within the site during construction, thereby protecting downstream surface water quality and aquatic habitats.
 1. 'keeping clean water clean' by avoiding disturbance to natural drainage features, minimising any works in or around artificial drainage features, and diverting clean surface water flow around excavations and construction areas.
 2. collecting any drainage waters from works areas within the site that might carry silt, to allow settlement and cleaning prior to its release. A self-imposed 50m stream buffer was used during the design of the proposed Wind Farm layout, thereby avoiding sensitive hydrological features.
- The EIAR concludes that the proposed development has been found to be fully compliant with the WFD and will not prevent any waterbody from achieving its WFD objectives.

3.6 Air Quality

Section 33.11 of the CDP, Energy and telecommunications infrastructure development standards, states that renewable energy developments will be considered subject to the impact on air.

The production of energy from wind turbines has no direct air emissions as is expected from fossil fuel-based power stations. The EIAR states that a Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) will be in place throughout the construction phase and that the CEMP includes dust suppression measures.

The EIAR concludes that the production of renewable energy from the Proposed Project will have a Long-Term Moderate Positive effect on air quality due to the offsetting of approximately 55,760 tonnes of Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) per annum, or 1,951,600 tonnes of carbon dioxide over the proposed 35-year lifecycle of the Proposed Wind Farm.

3.7 Climate

The Sligo County Council Climate Action Plan, 2024 – 2029 (LACAP) 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.

Objective 1: Support the key areas identified in the National Climate Action Plan in relation to energy efficiency & emissions reductions (retrofitting & renewable energy)'.

The proposed development has an export capacity of approximately 102MW and therefore will help contribute towards the achievement of national and international emission reduction targets. The EIAR details that the proposed development will provide much needed grid infrastructure, and the capacity to offset 55,760 tCO₂e per annum, or 1,951,600 tCO₂e over the proposed 35-year operational life.

The EIAR concludes that the operation of the proposed development will have a Long-Term Moderate Positive Effect on climate as a result of reduced greenhouse gas emissions.

3.8 Noise and Vibration

Section 33.11 of the CDP, Energy and telecommunications infrastructure development standards, states that renewable energy developments will be considered subject to the impact on settlements and individual rural dwellings being assessed. A comprehensive background noise survey was undertaken at eight noise monitoring locations. The data was analysed in conjunction with onsite measured wind speed data. The EIAR outlines that:

- Predicted construction noise levels at the nearest noise sensitive receptors during all phases of construction are below the threshold values within BS 5228 and predicted levels would be short term. Construction vibration would also likely be at low levels and would be short term.
- Predicted cumulative operational noise levels indicate that for noise sensitive receptors neighbouring the proposed Wind Farm, cumulative wind turbine noise (which considers noise predictions from all nearby operational and permitted wind farms and the Proposed Wind Farm) would meet the Total DoEHLG 2006 Guidelines Noise Limits at all Noise Assessment Locations.

The EIAR concludes that the final choice of wind turbine will be required to meet the noise limits determined and contained within any condition imposed.

3.9 Landscape and Visual

Section 33.11 of the CDP, Energy and telecommunications infrastructure development standards, states that renewable energy developments will be considered subject to an assessment of the visual impacts on surrounding landscape, and in particular on sensitive landscapes (refer to Chapter 23 Landscape Character). The proposed development provides for the removal of 23 no. existing wind turbines, each with an overall tip height of approximately 75m, and their replacement with 17 no. turbines having substantially greater overall tip heights ranging between 176.60m and 180m. While the proposal represents a reduction in the overall number of turbines, this reduction is offset by a significant increase in turbine height of approximately 100m.

From a landscape and visual impact perspective, the substantial increase in turbine height is a material consideration. The increased vertical scale and prominence of the proposed turbines would alter the existing visual relationship between the wind farm and the surrounding landscape,

resulting in greater visibility from a range of visual receptors, including surrounding public roads, settlements and elevated vantage points. The increased scale of the turbines is therefore likely to give rise to a greater degree of visual prominence and influence on landscape character and visual amenity than the existing development.

The EIAR details that:

- The Proposed Turbines are viewed within a landscape where wind energy is well established and has been acceptably accommodated in the landscape of the site. 15 no. viewpoints covering a good geographical spread of the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) Study Area, showing that residual visual effects range from “Not Significant” to “Moderate” with most visual effects being “Slight” or “Not Significant.”
- Landscape and visual effects on the ridgeline designated in the Sligo County Development Plan 2024-2030 as a “Visually Vulnerable Area” will be “Not Significant” given the context of wind turbines becoming a more familiar and accepted component of the Irish landscape over time, and the good aesthetics of siting turbines on ridges in the mountain landscape.
- Visual effects on designated scenic route SR-58 and the Sligo Way waymarked walking trail which passes through the site will be “Slight” and “Moderate” respectively.
- There will be no significant cumulative effects between the Proposed Project and other wind energy developments within 25km of the Proposed Wind Farm, owing to the lack of visual connection and sparse nature of developments.
- There will be no significant visual effects on the Sligo Passage Tomb Landscape which falls within the northeast edge of the LVIA Study Area.

The EIAR concludes that overall, there will be no significant landscape or visual effects as a result of the Proposed Project.

3.10 Cultural Heritage

It is policy of the CDP, **P-AH-3** to require the preservation of the context, amenity, visual integrity and connection of archaeological monuments to their setting. Views to and from archaeological monuments shall not be obscured by inappropriate development. Where appropriate, Archaeological Visual Impact Assessments will be required to demonstrate the continued preservation of an archaeological monument’s siting and context.

An assessment of the potential effects of the proposed development on the Cultural Heritage resource was carried out by Tobar Archaeological Services. The EIAR states that:

- No potential direct effects to National Monuments, recorded monuments, Protected Structures or NIAH structures are identified.
- Potential indirect effects on the setting of any UNESCO World Heritage Sites and those on a Tentative List within 25km, National Monuments within 15km, recorded monuments within 5km and RPS/NIAH structures within 5km were included in order to assess potential effects on setting in the wider landscape.
- The zone of theoretical visibility ZTV demonstrates theoretical visibility of the proposed Turbines from some cultural heritage assets within 5km. Both the distance to the nearest turbine and the number of turbines visible from each cultural heritage asset were used to arrive a level of potential effect on setting.

The EIAR concludes that while some potential cumulative visual effects to the wider setting of cultural heritage assets is possible when considered with the existing, permitted and proposed wind farms, no significant cumulative impacts have been identified and no cumulative effects to the immediate setting of cultural heritage assets will occur.

3.11 Traffic and Transport

An assessment of the geometry of the delivery route was also undertaken in order to ensure that the abnormally sized vehicles required to deliver the turbine plant to the site are accommodated. The EIAR states that:

- The turbine delivery route exits Killybegs Port and travel east on the N56 towards Donegal, further south along the N15 towards Sligo before continuing south on N4 through Ballysadare and subsequently merging onto the N59 heading west towards Dromore West.
- Figures are provided for the increase in traffic on local roads during the construction stage.

The EIAR concludes that during the construction and operational phases the nature of the effects of the additional trips and diversions on the network will be transient, will be temporary and will be slight.

There is currently an application before Sligo County Council (Ref. PL26/60278) submitted by Bord na Móna Powergen Ltd. seeking planning permission for a development which includes the provision of a permanent slip road connecting the N4 and R290 at Carricknagat, Collooney. The proposed slip road is intended to facilitate the delivery of turbine components associated with the permitted Oweninny Wind Farm Phase 3 (Ref. PA16.316178).

A Further Information (FI) request has been issued by Sligo County Council in respect of the application. Of particular relevance is the matter raised by Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII), which considers that the permanent retention of the N4–R290 slip road, should it be approved, would have the potential to adversely impact upon the operation and safety of the national road network, particularly given the 100 km/h speed limit applicable to the N4. This raises a material road safety and traffic management consideration in relation to the proposed retention and use of the slip road.

The permitted Oweninny Wind Farm Phase 3 comprises 18 no. turbines with a hub height of 121m and a rotor diameter of 158m. By comparison, the subject development proposes turbines with hub heights ranging from 105m to 110m and rotor diameters ranging from 133.2m to 150m. The turbine components associated with both developments are therefore of a broadly comparable scale and would require the movement of substantial turbine components along the road network.

Both developments identify Killybegs Port as the point of origin for turbine component deliveries. However, the proposed turbine delivery route identified within the subject application does not identify or provide for the use of the N4–R290 slip road at Collooney. Given the comparable dimensions of the turbine components associated with the two developments, there is a reasonable basis to question whether the delivery of the proposed turbine components could be accommodated along the stated delivery route without the use of the Collooney slip road.

In this regard, the requirement for the permanent slip road to facilitate turbine deliveries associated with the permitted Oweninny Wind Farm Phase 3 is directly relevant to the assessment

of the subject proposal. This is particularly pertinent given TII's stated concerns regarding the potential road safety implications of the permanent retention of the slip road.

3.12 Telecommunications and Aviation

A Telecommunications Impact Assessment was carried out and concluded that the proposed development will have no impacts on telecommunications.

An Aviation Review was carried out, which concluded that the proposed development would have no impact on aviation operations.

3.13 Other Material Assets

The EIAR details that the proposed development:

- has been designed to avoid identified services and utilities where insofar as possible.
- there are no 110kV or 38kV overhead lines (OHL) within or adjacent to the proposed development.
- There is an existing 20kV underground cable within the subject site and proposed Grid Connection Route, however this is a component of the existing Wind Farm.
- There is no GNI infrastructure is located within or adjacent to the Site
- The Proposed Grid Connection Route will cross under the Irish Rail Sligo-Dublin rail line at 1 no. location approx. 900 metres north of Collooney Train Station, Co. Sligo. The Proposed Grid Connection Route will be entirely in the public road corridor so therefore there will be no interaction with the Irish Rail network.
- The proposed development has been designed to avoid any underground water mains and impacts on water or sewage networks.
- There are no EPA-licensed or local authority-authorised waste facilities or activities located within the subject site.

3.2 Development Contributions

If the determination by ABP is to grant permission, consideration should be given to applying a condition requiring a development contribution in line with Sligo County Council's Development Contribution Scheme 2018-2024. Based on 10,000 per MW of capacity, proposed 102MW = €1,020,000.

4.0 Conclusion

The subject report, having considered the application submission and accompanying assessments, identifies the relevant provisions and policies of the Sligo County Development Plan 2024–2030, together with the potential localised impacts arising from the proposed development and the mitigation measures proposed by the applicant.

As set out in Sections 3.9 (Landscape and Visual) and 3.11 (Traffic and Transport) of the subject report, notwithstanding the mitigation measures proposed, further consideration is warranted in respect of the potential landscape and visual effects of the proposed wind farm and the suitability and deliverability of the proposed turbine component delivery route.

In determining the application, ACP should therefore give due and appropriate weight to these aforementioned considerations, having regard to the scale and nature of the proposed development, its potential effects on the receiving environment, and the relevant provisions and objectives of the Sligo County Development Plan 2024–2030. In particular, ACP should satisfy itself that the proposed development, including its associated landscape, visual and transportation impacts, would be acceptable having regard to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area and the protection of the environment of County Sligo.

5.0 Chief Executive’s recommendation to the members of the Council:

Section 1.0 of this report outlines background to the Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) process including the role of the ACP as the determining authority and the role of the planning authority to submit a report to ACP on the planning merits or otherwise of the proposal.

Section 2.0 provides a more detailed description of the proposed development.

Section 3.0 provide the planning authority’s assessment of the proposed development and outlines matters that ACP may wish to give further consideration.

It is recommended that this report, which reflects the views of the planning authority, is submitted to ACP. Furthermore, and as noted within Section 1.0 of this report (and as per the proposed resolution for this item) members will be able to include, by resolution, additional recommendations to this report.



Emer Concannon

Director of Services

Planning, Community & Economic Development

Documents Attached with this report:

Appendix 1 – Site Location plan and Description of Development

END

Appendix 1 – Description of Development and Site Location Plan

SITE NOTICE

Planning and Development Acts 2000 (As Amended)

Notice of Direct Planning Application to An Coimisiún Pleanála in respect of a Strategic Infrastructure Development - County Sligo

In accordance with Section 37E of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), SSE Renewables (Ireland) Ltd. gives notice of its intention to make an application to An Coimisiún Pleanála for permission for a renewable energy development located in the townlands of Crowagh or Dunneill Mountain, Ballyglass, Tawnadremira, Doonbeakin, Dunowla, Kingsmountain, Ballygreighan Barr, Corhawnagh, Abbeytown, Knockaculleen, Rathgoonaun, Lecarrow, Dromore Co. Sligo.

This development is covered by the provisions of the Renewable Energy Directive III (Directive 2023/2413) and the planning application is subject to a completeness check under section 37JA of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended by the European Union (Planning and Development) (Renewable Energy) Regulations 2025.

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.

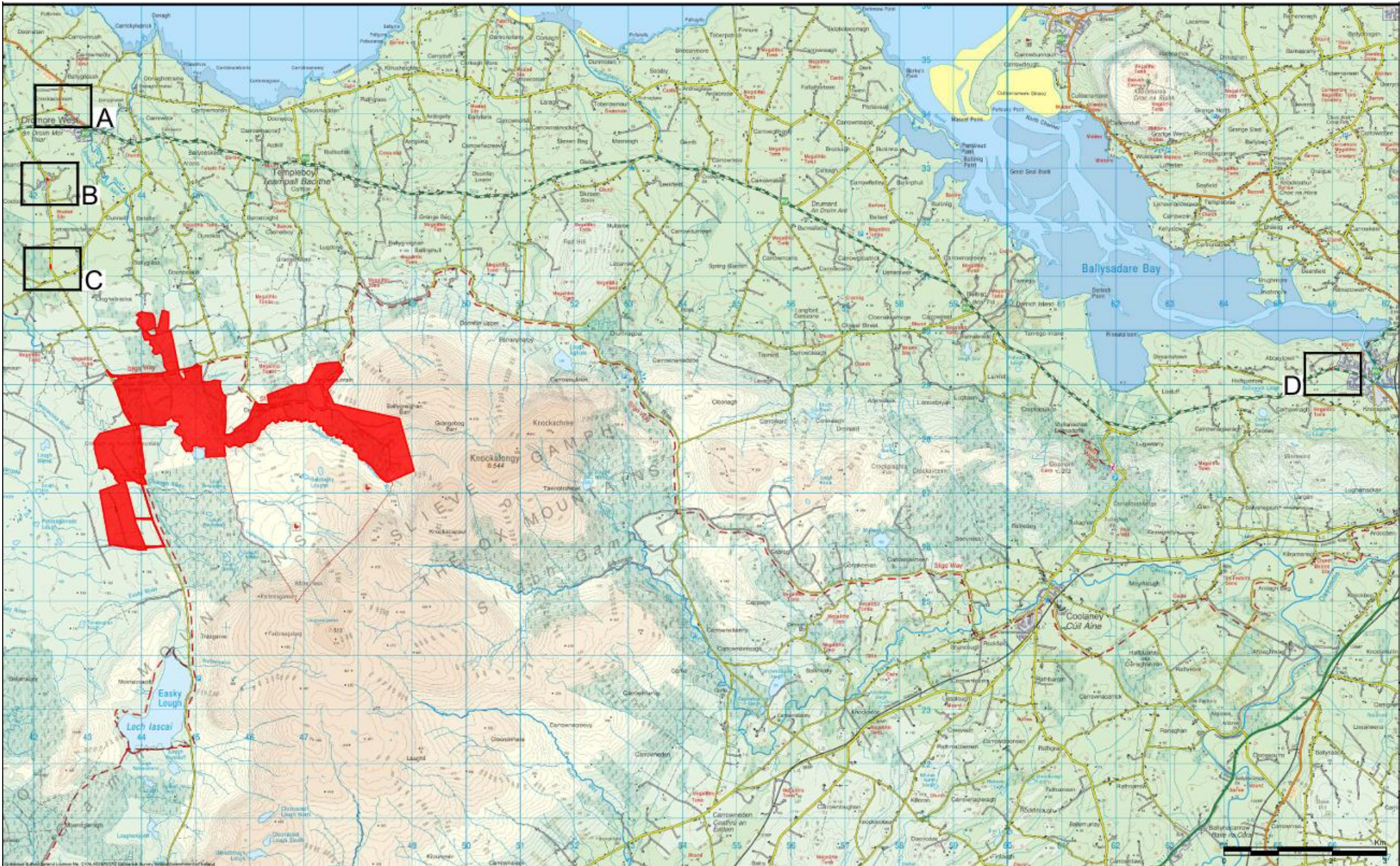
A ten-year permission and a thirty five-year operational life of the wind farm from the date of full commissioning is sought.

An Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) have been prepared in relation to the project and accompany this planning application.

The EIAR and NIS assess the construction, operation and, decommissioning of the proposed development described at items i-xxii above. The EIAR and NIS also assess integral elements of the wider project, including but not limited to, the turbine delivery route from the port of entry of Killybegs to the site entrances via the National Road network (N56, N15, N4, N59) and the Local Road network (L2702, L6309). Temporary accommodation works associated with the turbine delivery route are contained within the public road corridor and will be reinstated following the construction stage.

The EIAR and NIS also assess a proposed grid connection route from the proposed on-site 110kV substation to the existing Srananagh 220kV substation, located in the townland of Ballysumaghan, Co. Sligo. The proposed grid connection route does not form part of this planning application but is assessed in the EIAR and NIS as an integral element of the wider project. The proposed grid connection route will comprise underground 110kV cabling within the National Road (N59), Regional Road (R284, R290) and Local Road (L6309, L6234, L5204) network.

A Design Flexibility Opinion issued by An Coimisiún Pleanála (Opinion Ref. No. ACP-323811-25) on 13th March 2026 accompanies this application. The details unconfirmed in this application are the turbine tip height, rotor diameter and hub height. The range of parameters under which the turbine dimensions will fall are specified on this notice in item (ii.) above and further detailed in the Design Flexibility Form that accompanies this application.



SITE LOCATION - N.T.S.
 PROJECT TITLE
Crumhach Wind Farm, Co. Sligo

Location Context Map			
PROJECT NO.	230841 - 01	SCALE	1:50,000 @ A2
ISSUED BY	GO	DATE	29.07.2026
ISSUED FOR	NIA	PROJECT	PD1
ISSUED BY	1432, 1632		





Sligo County Council
Comhairle Chontae Shligigh

Sligo.

Chief Executive's Report to the members of Sligo County Council on 5 October 2026 in relation to a Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) application on lands located at Crowagh or Dunneill Mountain and adjacent townlands, Co. Sligo. submitted to An Coimisiún Pleanála on the 18th of August 2026.

The proposed development consists of the decommissioning of 23 no. turbines and the erection of 17 no. wind turbines, underground electrical (33kV) and communications cabling connecting the wind turbines to a new on-site 110kV electrical substation and all associated infrastructure and works

located in the townlands of Crowagh or Dunneill Mountain, Ballyglass, Tawnadremira, Doonbeakin, Dunowla, Kingsmountain, Ballygreighan Barr, Corhawnagh, Abbeytown, Knockaculleen, Rathgoonaun, Lecarrow, Dromore, Co. Sligo

30 September 2026

1.0 Introduction and Background

An Coimisiún Pleanála has received an application on the 18th of August 2026 for permission under section 37E of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended (Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID)). The application is also the subject of the Renewable Energy Directive III.

A SID is a specific class of development as defined in the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), and generally includes large-scale projects in energy, transport, environment, and health sectors where the decision-making procedure requires an application to be submitted directly to the An Coimisiún Pleanála (as opposed to the local planning authority).

This SID proposal (The Crumhach Wind Farm) proposes the removal of the existing 23 no. turbines on the Dunneill (13 no. turbines) and Kingsmountain (10 no. turbines) Wind Farm sites and to 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.

A Site Location Plan and full Description of Development (as per the public notices) is provided at Appendix 1 of the report. Otherwise, all details submitted with the SID application are available to view at <https://www.crumhachwfplanning.com/>

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.

In accordance with Section 37E (4) of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended) the planning authority is required to:

- Prepare and submit to the Board a report setting out the views of the authority on the effects of the proposed development on the environment and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, before 5.30pm on the 16th of October 2026.
- Submit the report to the members of the authority and seek the views of the members of the proposed development.

The members of the planning authority may then, by resolution, decide to attach recommendations (specified in resolution) to the report of the authority. The member's recommendations will then be attached to the report to be submitted to ABP.

An Coimisiún Pleanála may then decide to:

- (i) grant permission, or
- (ii) make such modifications to the proposed development as it specifies in its decisions and grant permission in respect of the proposed development as so modified, or
- (iii) grant permission in respect of part of the proposed development (with or without specified modifications of the foregoing kind), and any of the above decisions may be subject to or without conditions, or
- (iv) refuse the application.

ACP may decide to hold an oral hearing as part of the SID process.

It is noted that there has been an opportunity for submission (from members of the public, interested parties, prescribed bodies etc) to be made directly to ACP (not the local planning authority). If ACP decide to hold a hearing, there may be a further opportunity for members of the public and prescribed bodies to make submissions.

Further background information on SIDs and the procedures involved in applying for and deciding SID applications is available in the Office of Planning Regulator leaflet: - [Planning Leaflet 14 – Strategic Infrastructure Development](#).

2.0 Nature of the Proposed Development

The proposed development comprises the removal of 23 no. wind turbines and the provision of 17 no. wind turbines and all associated works in Co. Sligo. The proposed development is 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 development 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 development.

The proposed development 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. The construction phase of the Proposed Project will last between 18-24 months.

The focus of this report highlights the potential effects associated with the development of the wind farm. It is noted that there is a history of planning permissions relating to wind energy development to this site.

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 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.

3.0 Planning Authority's Assessment of the Proposed Development

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. 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,

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. 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 development has been prepared in line with RED III and, specifically, the Schedule of Information to Inform the Completeness Check, provided by ACP, regarding the SID determination under PCX21.320934.

The provision of renewable energy to meet national energy needs, replace fossil fuel use and to contribute towards climate change mitigation is fully recognised and supported at all levels of national, regional, and local planning policy including within the National Planning Framework (NPF), the Northern & Western Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy 2020-2032 (RSES) and the objectives of the County Development Plan 2024 - 2030.

Section 31.3.1 of the CDP, Wind Energy states that Sligo's mountainous landscape and exposed location on the western seaboard combine to create good conditions for the generation of wind power. It is policy **P-EN-2** to,

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.

All such development proposals will be assessed for their potential impact on urban and rural communities, Natura 2000 sites, designated Sensitive Rural Landscapes, Visually Vulnerable Areas, Scenic Routes and scenic views, and all other normal planning consideration.

The Sligo County Council Climate Action Plan, 2024 – 2029 (LACAP) 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.

Objective 1: Support the key areas identified in the National Climate Action Plan in relation to energy efficiency & emissions reductions (retrofitting & renewable energy)'.

It is noted however that there will be a range of local level effects on the environment that may be impactful. At a general point it is considered that the proposal includes sufficient mitigation measures, as detailed within the EIAR & NIS, to minimise these impacts to an acceptable level. The following section of the report outlines these potential impacts and considerations. It should also be noted that there would be associated benefits of the development including of an economic nature (e.g. job creation and economic spend in the area). These are also detailed within the EIAR (within the section on material assets and other issues) and weight should be given to these matters when forming a view on the application.

3.1 Population and Human Health

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. **Section 33.11** of the CDP, Energy and telecommunications infrastructure development standards, states that renewable energy developments will be considered subject to the impact on settlements and individual rural dwellings being assessed.

The EIAR states that;

- The proposed development would require approximately 100 employees in total, with the majority of these roles focused on the construction phase.

- Construction workers and materials will be sourced locally, thereby helping to sustain employment in the construction trade. This will have a short-term moderate positive impact.

Shadow flicker is an effect that occurs when rotating wind turbine blades cast shadows over a window in a nearby property. The Wind Energy Guidelines (DoEHLG, 2006) recommend that shadow flicker at neighbouring dwellings within 500 metres of a proposed turbine location should not exceed a total of 30 hours per year or 30 minutes per day.

The EIAR comments that:

- There are no properties less than 720 metres from the Proposed Turbines (four times tip height).
- There are 40 no. properties located within 1.5km of the Proposed Turbines.
 - 3 no. properties are theoretically predicted to experience zero shadow flicker.
 - 7 no. properties are theoretically predicted to experience some shadow flicker.
- The annual threshold of over 30 hours for shadow flicker (Guidelines (DoEHLG, 2006) is predicted to be exceeded at 2 no. properties. Of these 2 no. properties, 1 no. is in derelict condition, therefore 1 no. property requires mitigation. Please see Table 5-11 in Chapter 5 for mitigation details, which is set out in Table 5-11 in Chapter 5 of the EIAR.

The EIAR concludes that overall, the construction, operation and decommissioning of the proposed development will not have any significant adverse effects on population and human health, following the implementation of the appropriate mitigation measures.

3.2 Biodiversity

It is policy of the CDP to,

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.

P-BD-3 Ensure that the ecological impact of all development proposals on habitats and species is appropriately assessed by suitably qualified professionals, in accordance with best practice guidelines, taking full account of the precautionary principle where uncertainty exists.

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. This shall comprise the retention and enhancement of all possible existing habitats, vegetation and breeding sites in the early design stages of the development

A Biodiversity Management and Enhancement Plan (BMEP) is proposed as part of the proposed Development. The plan is proposed to enhance an area of degraded peatland in the centre of the Proposed Wind Farm.

The EIAR details that:

- Bat species composition and abundance was found during detailed bat surveys undertaken at the proposed Wind Farm.
- Mitigation measures are proposed to ensure that no potential for residual significant effects with regard to loss of commuting and foraging habitat, loss or damage to roosts, displacement or other construction phase impacts have been identified. In relation to potential collision risk and injury with operational turbines, a bespoke adaptive monitoring and mitigation strategy has been devised in line with NatureScot (2021) Guidance, which will

ensure that there is no potential for significant residual effects on local bat populations during the operational phase of the Proposed Project.

- No otter holts or couches were identified within the proposed site or along the grid connection.
- In relation to European designated sites, Ox Mountains Bogs SAC, Unshin River SAC, Ballysadare Bay SAC and Ballysadare SPA have been fully assessed within the Appropriate Assessment Screening and Natura Impact Statement (NIS).

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

3.3 Ornithology

Refer to above policies **P-BD-2 P-BD-3 & P-BD-4**

The EIAR states that the potential for effects on designated sites is fully described in the Natura Impact Statement and it is considered that the potential effects of the proposed development upon birds will not be significant.

3.4 Land, Soils and Geology

Section 33.11 of the CDP, Energy and telecommunications infrastructure development standards, states that renewable energy developments will be considered subject to the impact on soils.

The topography of the Proposed Wind Farm is mountainous with a ground elevation of between 110m and 390m OD. Land-cover 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. The EIAR comments that:

- Site investigations and geotechnical assessments at the site were extensive and consisted of 850 no. peat depth probes, historical trial pit logs (11 no.) and shell and auger borehole logs (11 no.) for the Existing Wind Farm and 19 no. trial pits with associated laboratory testing. A Geotechnical and Peat Stability assessment undertaken for the proposed development shows that the site has an acceptable margin of safety, is suitable for the proposed development and is considered to be of negligible to low risk for peat failure provided appropriate control measures, such as implementing and maintaining an appropriate drainage system, are implemented.

The EIAR concludes that there is no potential for direct physical affects to designated sites or geological heritage sites have been identified.

3.5 Hydrology and Hydrogeology

Section 33.11 of the CDP, Energy and telecommunications infrastructure development standards, states that renewable energy developments will be considered subject to the impacts on water bodies and groundwater.

Regionally, the site is located in the WFD Sligo Bay surface water catchment within Hydrometric Area No. 35 of the Northwestern River Basin District. The EIAR states that;

- Public water supply surface water abstractions in this area include Easky Lough which is located 1.9km to the south of the Site. Neither the proposed Wind Farm nor proposed Grid Connection Route are located within the Easky Lough surface water catchment.
- No recurring flood incidents within the Proposed Wind Farm were identified from OPW's Past Flood Event Mapping.

- Two methods will be employed to control drainage water within the site during construction, thereby protecting downstream surface water quality and aquatic habitats.
 1. 'keeping clean water clean' by avoiding disturbance to natural drainage features, minimising any works in or around artificial drainage features, and diverting clean surface water flow around excavations and construction areas.
 2. collecting any drainage waters from works areas within the site that might carry silt, to allow settlement and cleaning prior to its release. A self-imposed 50m stream buffer was used during the design of the proposed Wind Farm layout, thereby avoiding sensitive hydrological features.
- The EIAR concludes that the proposed development has been found to be fully compliant with the WFD and will not prevent any waterbody from achieving its WFD objectives.

3.6 Air Quality

Section 33.11 of the CDP, Energy and telecommunications infrastructure development standards, states that renewable energy developments will be considered subject to the impact on air.

The production of energy from wind turbines has no direct air emissions as is expected from fossil fuel-based power stations. The EIAR states that a Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) will be in place throughout the construction phase and that the CEMP includes dust suppression measures.

The EIAR concludes that the production of renewable energy from the Proposed Project will have a Long-Term Moderate Positive effect on air quality due to the offsetting of approximately 55,760 tonnes of Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) per annum, or 1,951,600 tonnes of carbon dioxide over the proposed 35-year lifecycle of the Proposed Wind Farm.

3.7 Climate

The Sligo County Council Climate Action Plan, 2024 – 2029 (LACAP) 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.

Objective 1: Support the key areas identified in the National Climate Action Plan in relation to energy efficiency & emissions reductions (retrofitting & renewable energy)'.

The proposed development has an export capacity of approximately 102MW and therefore will help contribute towards the achievement of national and international emission reduction targets. The EIAR details that the proposed development will provide much needed grid infrastructure, and the capacity to offset 55,760 tCO₂e per annum, or 1,951,600 tCO₂e over the proposed 35-year operational life.

The EIAR concludes that the operation of the proposed development will have a Long-Term Moderate Positive Effect on climate as a result of reduced greenhouse gas emissions.

3.8 Noise and Vibration

Section 33.11 of the CDP, Energy and telecommunications infrastructure development standards, states that renewable energy developments will be considered subject to the impact on settlements and individual rural dwellings being assessed. A comprehensive background noise survey was undertaken at eight noise monitoring locations. The data was analysed in conjunction with onsite measured wind speed data. The EIAR outlines that:

- Predicted construction noise levels at the nearest noise sensitive receptors during all phases of construction are below the threshold values within BS 5228 and predicted levels would be short term. Construction vibration would also likely be at low levels and would be short term.

- Predicted cumulative operational noise levels indicate that for noise sensitive receptors neighbouring the proposed Wind Farm, cumulative wind turbine noise (which considers noise predictions from all nearby operational and permitted wind farms and the Proposed Wind Farm) would meet the Total DoEHLG 2006 Guidelines Noise Limits at all Noise Assessment Locations.

The EIAR concludes that the final choice of wind turbine will be required to meet the noise limits determined and contained within any condition imposed.

3.9 Landscape and Visual

Section 33.11 of the CDP, Energy and telecommunications infrastructure development standards, states that renewable energy developments will be considered subject to an assessment of the visual impacts on surrounding landscape, and in particular on sensitive landscapes (refer to Chapter 23 Landscape Character). The proposed development provides for the removal of 23 no. existing wind turbines, each with an overall tip height of approximately 75m, and their replacement with 17 no. turbines having substantially greater overall tip heights ranging between 176.60m and 180m. While the proposal represents a reduction in the overall number of turbines, this reduction is offset by a significant increase in turbine height of approximately 100m.

From a landscape and visual impact perspective, the substantial increase in turbine height is a material consideration. The increased vertical scale and prominence of the proposed turbines would alter the existing visual relationship between the wind farm and the surrounding landscape, resulting in greater visibility from a range of visual receptors, including surrounding public roads, settlements and elevated vantage points. The increased scale of the turbines is therefore likely to give rise to a greater degree of visual prominence and influence on landscape character and visual amenity than the existing development.

The EIAR details that:

- The Proposed Turbines are viewed within a landscape where wind energy is well established and has been acceptably accommodated in the landscape of the site. 15 no. viewpoints covering a good geographical spread of the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) Study Area, showing that residual visual effects range from “Not Significant” to “Moderate” with most visual effects being “Slight” or “Not Significant.”
- Landscape and visual effects on the ridgeline designated in the Sligo County Development Plan 2024-2030 as a “Visually Vulnerable Area” will be “Not Significant” given the context of wind turbines becoming a more familiar and accepted component of the Irish landscape over time, and the good aesthetics of siting turbines on ridges in the mountain landscape.
- Visual effects on designated scenic route SR-58 and the Sligo Way waymarked walking trail which passes through the site will be “Slight” and “Moderate” respectively.
- There will be no significant cumulative effects between the Proposed Project and other wind energy developments within 25km of the Proposed Wind Farm, owing to the lack of visual connection and sparse nature of developments.
- There will be no significant visual effects on the Sligo Passage Tomb Landscape which falls within the northeast edge of the LVIA Study Area.

The EIAR concludes that overall, there will be no significant landscape or visual effects as a result of the Proposed Project.

3.10 Cultural Heritage

It is policy of the CDP, **P-AH-3** to require the preservation of the context, amenity, visual integrity and connection of archaeological monuments to their setting. Views to and from archaeological monuments shall not be obscured by inappropriate development. Where appropriate, Archaeological Visual Impact Assessments will be required to demonstrate the continued preservation of an archaeological monument's siting and context.

An assessment of the potential effects of the proposed development on the Cultural Heritage resource was carried out by Tobar Archaeological Services. The EIAR states that:

- No potential direct effects to National Monuments, recorded monuments, Protected Structures or NIAH structures are identified.
- Potential indirect effects on the setting of any UNESCO World Heritage Sites and those on a Tentative List within 25km, National Monuments within 15km, recorded monuments within 5km and RPS/NIAH structures within 5km were included in order to assess potential effects on setting in the wider landscape.
- The zone of theoretical visibility ZTV demonstrates theoretical visibility of the proposed Turbines from some cultural heritage assets within 5km. Both the distance to the nearest turbine and the number of turbines visible from each cultural heritage asset were used to arrive a level of potential effect on setting.

The EIAR concludes that while some potential cumulative visual effects to the wider setting of cultural heritage assets is possible when considered with the existing, permitted and proposed wind farms, no significant cumulative impacts have been identified and no cumulative effects to the immediate setting of cultural heritage assets will occur.

3.11 Traffic and Transport

An assessment of the geometry of the delivery route was also undertaken in order to ensure that the abnormally sized vehicles required to deliver the turbine plant to the site are accommodated. The EIAR states that:

- The turbine delivery route exits Killybegs Port and travel east on the N56 towards Donegal, further south along the N15 towards Sligo before continuing south on N4 through Ballysadare and subsequently merging onto the N59 heading west towards Dromore West.
- Figures are provided for the increase in traffic on local roads during the construction stage.

The EIAR concludes that during the construction and operational phases the nature of the effects of the additional trips and diversions on the network will be transient, will be temporary and will be slight.

There is currently an application before Sligo County Council (Ref. PL26/60278) submitted by Bord na Móna Powergen Ltd. seeking planning permission for a development which includes the provision of a permanent slip road connecting the N4 and R290 at Carricknagat, Collooney. The proposed slip road is intended to facilitate the delivery of turbine components associated with the permitted Oweninny Wind Farm Phase 3 (Ref. PA16.316178).

A Further Information (FI) request has been issued by Sligo County Council in respect of the application. Of particular relevance is the matter raised by Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII), which considers that the permanent retention of the N4–R290 slip road, should it be approved, would have the potential to adversely impact upon the operation and safety of the national road network, particularly given the 100 km/h speed limit applicable to the N4. This raises a material road safety and traffic management consideration in relation to the proposed retention and use of the slip road.

The permitted Oweninny Wind Farm Phase 3 comprises 18 no. turbines with a hub height of 121m and a rotor diameter of 158m. By comparison, the subject development proposes turbines with hub

heights ranging from 105m to 110m and rotor diameters ranging from 133.2m to 150m. The turbine components associated with both developments are therefore of a broadly comparable scale and would require the movement of substantial turbine components along the road network.

Both developments identify Killybegs Port as the point of origin for turbine component deliveries. However, the proposed turbine delivery route identified within the subject application does not identify or provide for the use of the N4–R290 slip road at Collooney. Given the comparable dimensions of the turbine components associated with the two developments, there is a reasonable basis to question whether the delivery of the proposed turbine components could be accommodated along the stated delivery route without the use of the Collooney slip road.

In this regard, the requirement for the permanent slip road to facilitate turbine deliveries associated with the permitted Oweninny Wind Farm Phase 3 is directly relevant to the assessment of the subject proposal. This is particularly pertinent given TII's stated concerns regarding the potential road safety implications of the permanent retention of the slip road.

3.12 Telecommunications and Aviation

A Telecommunications Impact Assessment was carried out and concluded that the proposed development will have no impacts on telecommunications.

An Aviation Review was carried out, which concluded that the proposed development would have no impact on aviation operations.

3.13 Other Material Assets

The EIAR details that the proposed development:

- has been designed to avoid identified services and utilities where insofar as possible.
- there are no 110kV or 38kV overhead lines (OHL) within or adjacent to the proposed development.
- There is an existing 20kV underground cable within the subject site and proposed Grid Connection Route, however this is a component of the existing Wind Farm.
- There is no GNI infrastructure located within or adjacent to the Site
- The Proposed Grid Connection Route will cross under the Irish Rail Sligo-Dublin rail line at 1 no. location approx. 900 metres north of Collooney Train Station, Co. Sligo. The Proposed Grid Connection Route will be entirely in the public road corridor so therefore there will be no interaction with the Irish Rail network.
- The proposed development has been designed to avoid any underground water mains and impacts on water or sewage networks.
- There are no EPA-licensed or local authority-authorised waste facilities or activities located within the subject site.

3.2 Development Contributions

If the determination by ABP is to grant permission, consideration should be given to applying a condition requiring a development contribution in line with Sligo County Council's Development Contribution Scheme 2018-2024. Based on 10,000 per MW of capacity, proposed 102MW = €1,020,000.

4.0 Conclusion

The subject report, having considered the application submission and accompanying assessments, identifies the relevant provisions and policies of the Sligo County Development Plan 2024–2030, together with the potential localised impacts arising from the proposed development and the mitigation measures proposed by the applicant.

As set out in Sections 3.9 (Landscape and Visual) and 3.11 (Traffic and Transport) of the subject report, notwithstanding the mitigation measures proposed, further consideration is warranted in respect of the potential landscape and visual effects of the proposed wind farm and the suitability and deliverability of the proposed turbine component delivery route.

In determining the application, ACP should therefore give due and appropriate weight to these aforementioned considerations, having regard to the scale and nature of the proposed development, its potential effects on the receiving environment, and the relevant provisions and objectives of the Sligo County Development Plan 2024–2030. In particular, ACP should satisfy itself that the proposed development, including its associated landscape, visual and transportation impacts, would be acceptable having regard to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area and the protection of the environment of County Sligo.

5.0 Chief Executive's recommendation to the members of the Council:

Section 1.0 of this report outlines background to the Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) process including the role of the ACP as the determining authority and the role of the planning authority to submit a report to ACP on the planning merits or otherwise of the proposal.

Section 2.0 provides a more detailed description of the proposed development.

Section 3.0 provide the planning authority's assessment of the proposed development and outlines matters that ACP may wish to give further consideration.

It is recommended that this report, which reflects the views of the planning authority, is submitted to ACP. Furthermore, and as noted within Section 1.0 of this report (and as per the proposed resolution for this item) members will be able to include, by resolution, additional recommendations to this report.



Emer Concannon

Director of Services

Planning, Community & Economic Development

Documents Attached with this report:

Appendix 1 – Site Location plan and Description of Development

END

Appendix 1 – Description of Development and Site Location Plan

SITE NOTICE

Planning and Development Acts 2000 (As Amended)

Notice of Direct Planning Application to An Coimisiún Pleanála in respect of a Strategic Infrastructure Development - County Sligo

In accordance with Section 37E of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), SSE Renewables (Ireland) Ltd. gives notice of its intention to make an application to An Coimisiún Pleanála for permission for a renewable energy development located in the townlands of Crowagh or Dunneill Mountain, Ballyglass, Tawnadremira, Doonbeakin, Dunowla, Kingsmountain, Ballygreighan Barr, Corhawnagh, Abbeytown, Knockaculleen, Rathgoonaun, Lecarrow, Dromore Co. Sligo.

This development is covered by the provisions of the Renewable Energy Directive III (Directive 2023/2413) and the planning application is subject to a completeness check under section 37JA of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended by the European Union (Planning and Development) (Renewable Energy) Regulations 2025.

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.

A ten-year permission and a thirty-five-year operational life of the wind farm from the date of full commissioning is sought.

An Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) have been prepared in relation to the project and accompany this planning application.

The EIAR and NIS assess the construction, operation and, decommissioning of the proposed development described at items i-xxii above. The EIAR and NIS also assess integral elements of the wider project, including but not limited to, the turbine delivery route from the port of entry of Killybegs to the site entrances via the National Road network (N56, N15, N4, N59) and the Local Road network (L2702, L6309). Temporary accommodation works associated with the turbine delivery route are contained within the public road corridor and will be reinstated following the construction stage.

