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Preface

Bracklyn Wind Farm Limited is applying for planning permission for the construction of a nine turbine wind farm, associated 110kV electricity substation and all associated site development works in the townlands of Ballagh (Mullingar Rural E.D.), Billistown, Ballynacor, and Bracklin, County Westmeath; and Coolronan, Co. Meath.

Following consultations pursuant to the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended), An Bord Pleanála determined that the proposed development is Strategic Infrastructure Development within the meaning of Section 37A of the Act which necessitates a planning application being made directly to the Board.

Planning legislation requires that planning applications for such projects be accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR). This is a statement of the likely effects, if any, which the proposed development, if carried out, would have on the environment. The EIAR provides information which An Bord Pleanála can use in undertaking its formal Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process and in informing their decision-making. The EIAR can also be used by third parties as part of the public participation process to evaluate the proposed development and its likely effects.

The content of this EIAR has been prepared by Galetech Energy Services on behalf of Bracklyn Wind Farm Limited and is arranged into fourteen separate chapters which describe the proposed development and address each component of the environment likely to be affected and their likely interactions. Individual specialist and technical consultants were also appointed in order to undertake particular assessments and prepare specific chapters, where necessary. The scope of the project also assesses the likely effects of relevant 'off-site' developments which will occur as an indirect result of the proposed development including, for example, the importation and use of construction materials, and likely cumulative effects.

The EIAR should be read in conjunction with all plans and particulars submitted with the planning application, including technical drawings. A separate Non-Technical Summary and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) have also been prepared.

Overall, it is concluded that the effects of the proposed development on the receiving environment are not likely to be significant. Negative effects from the proposed development vary in significance but are generally in the minor to negligible range. A number of positive effects have also been identified such as a significant contribution towards satisfying national targets for energy production from renewable sources. On balance, the combined impacts which have been identified within this EIAR demonstrate that the proposed development will not result in any likely significant effect on the environment.

