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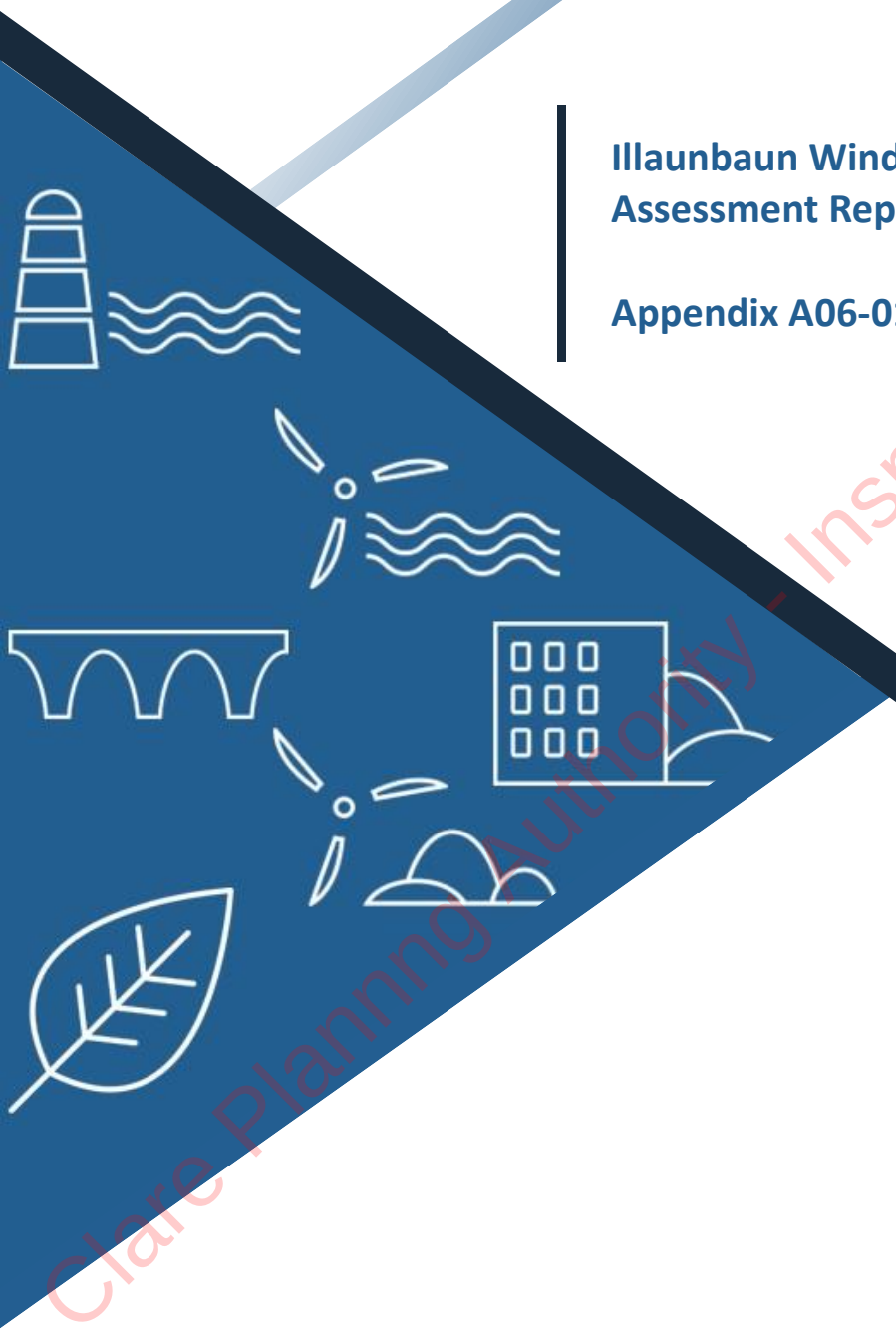
Illaunbaun Wind Farm - Environmental Impact Assessment Report

Appendix A06-01: Scoping Consultation Responses



APPENDIX A06-01: SCOPING CONSULTATION RESPONSES

As part of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) process, a formal scoping exercise was undertaken to identify the key issues and receptors requiring detailed assessment. A scoping letter, transcribed below, was issued to the prescribed bodies, statutory consultees and other relevant stakeholders, inviting comments on the proposed scope and methodology of the assessment. The consultation responses received are summarised in Table A06-01-1, together with details of how they have been addressed in the preparation of this EIAR.

1 SCOPING LETTER

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to inform you of the proposed Illaunbaun Onshore Windfarm development, on behalf of JC Mont-Fort.

Under the Climate Action Plan 2023 and subsequent Climate Action Plan 2024, the Irish Government has set an ambitious target to generate more than 80% of the country's electricity from renewable sources by 2030. To achieve this ambitious goal, the Government has targeted, among other measures, implementing 9 GW of onshore wind capacity.

This email is part of an ongoing engagement process to gather valuable input to inform baseline conditions, assess potential significant impacts, and identify mitigation measures, among other aspects.

Included in this email for your reference is the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping Report, prepared by Gavin and Doherty Geosolutions (GDG) on behalf of JC Mont Fort. The EIA Scoping Report outlines the proposed development, baseline conditions, and sensitivities of the receiving environment. It identifies potential impacts across the construction, operational, and decommissioning phases and provides a framework for the forthcoming EIA Report and planning application.

We would greatly appreciate your comments and feedback on the information outlined in the Scoping Report. Your input is invaluable in ensuring that all relevant environmental receptors and potential impacts are appropriately addressed, and that the assessment methodologies align with stakeholder expectations. Please do not hesitate to share any observations, suggestions, or additional considerations that you believe should be taken into account.

Please provide your feedback by the **28th of February 2025** via our dedicated project email address: illaunbaunwindfarm@gdgeo.com.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully,

Jeannine Dunne

Director

Gavin and Doherty Geosolutions

2 SUMMARY OF SCOPING CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Table A06-01-1: Summary of Scoping Consultation Responses

Consultee	Relevant Chapter (sorted A-Z)	Response
Department of Local Government, Housing	Archaeological, Architectural and Cultural Heritage	Outlined below are heritage-related observations/recommendations of the Department co-ordinated by the Development Applications Unit under the stated heading: **Archaeology** The information provided is not sufficiently detailed to allow for a full assessment of the archaeological implications of this proposal, however the Department notes that an Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) is scoped into the proposed EIA process as part of the overall Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment of the proposed development. The supplied methodology indicates that this will incorporate a detailed desktop study and field inspection. In this regard, the Department awaits the results of the Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment (CHIA) and full EIAR for the scheme before commenting further. Further to the above, and by way of general archaeological advice, please note that, whilst the proposed development site (PDS) may or may not contain within it known or subsurface Recorded Monuments and/or Archaeological sites that may require assessment as part of the overall CHIA, the PDS itself is located within a wider area of known archaeological settlement and activity (Departments initial review of the Record of Monuments and Places, www.archaeology.ie and cartographic sources). All of these Recorded Monuments, both within and outside the PDS, are subject to statutory protection in the Record of Monuments and Places, established under section 12 of the National Monuments Act 1930-2014. Therefore, the CHIA should include an assessment of the possible effects of the proposal on the wider archaeological landscape. It is of importance that

Consultee	Relevant Chapter (sorted A-Z)	Response
		the study area for the CHIA should be of sufficient size and extent to support this. The Department advises that in addition to a robust desk-study supported by a comprehensive field inspection, the CHIA should incorporate a visual impact assessment (to assist in identifying any possible impacts to the setting of sites or monuments). In this respect it should be noted that in addition to site-specific vulnerabilities to impact on setting, many monument types – for example prehistoric monuments such as Standing Stone Alignments, Standing Stone Rows, Single Standing Stones, as well as some megalithic tombs – are often considered to represent a wide area of associated archaeological settlement and activity. As a result, the bunding/stockpiling of materials and intrusion into view sheds, etc. may have a negative visual impact on such monuments and may diminish or interrupt alignment views and alter key aspects of their original function and layout. The Visual Impact Assessment should: • Set out the key characteristics of the monument(s) and its surroundings that contribute to its setting and the degree to which this setting is integral to the significance and appreciation of the monument. • Assess the effects of the development – both positive and negative – on these key characteristics. The development should be considered in terms of its location and siting relative to the monument as well as its form, appearance and permanence. • Be supported by appropriate illustrations of the monument/s, setting and the proposed development. It should be additionally noted that an absence or paucity of recorded archaeological sites/monuments within a geographical study area may reflect a deficit in archaeological survey, particularly in upland regions, and does not necessarily signify that archaeological sites/monuments (with above ground and/or sub-surface expressions) do not exist. The Department notes that the proposed 'Preliminary [Archaeological] Mitigation Measures' set out in Section 15.6 of the EIAR Scoping report appears to defer all archaeological works and mitigation to a post-consent construction stage of development and contradicts the principles and measures referenced in Section

Consultee	Relevant Chapter (sorted A-Z)	Response
		15.1 of the Scoping Report. In this regard, the Department advises that any proposal to defer archaeological mitigation to a post- consent construction stage is not considered best practice, does not align with national policy for the protection of the archaeological heritage1 and may have considerable implications for any future development in terms of scheduling, costs, etc. Further, as any future grant of planning permission that may issue for this proposed development would be based on and limited to a specific and detailed design, any proposals for archaeological mitigation in the form of 'Avoidance or redesign' or 'Preservation in-situ' (as detailed in the EIAR Scoping Report) may not be possible at a post-consent stage. 1 Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Government of Ireland, 1999) The Department therefore advises that, in order to adequately define the archaeological baseline environment and fully assess the potential for developmental impacts on same, the following should also be carried out as part of the overall CHIA process. The desk-study and field inspection regime should inform: • Targeted non-intrusive advance geophysical survey or prospection (such as Ground Penetrating Radar Surveys). • Targeted advance archaeological test excavation. • Any and all intrusive advance investigations (such as, but not limited to, ground investigations for soils/geology/hydrogeology) carried out as part of the EIA or design process should be subject to a programme of archaeological monitoring by a suitably qualified Archaeologist under licence from this Department. The results of these investigations should inform the EIA process and be incorporated within the EIA Report. This Department is happy to provide further advice and clarification, as and if required, in relation to the preparation

Consultee	Relevant Chapter (sorted A-Z)	Response
		of suitably comprehensive assessments as outlined above, with particular regard to the scope and locations for any advance non-intrusive prospection or advance test excavation that would be appropriate to inform the assessment of this proposed scheme. Notwithstanding the above, the Department awaits the submission of this assessment before commenting further. You are requested to send any further communications to this Department's Development Applications Unit (DAU) at referrals@npws.gov.ie, where used, or to the following address:
Bat Conservation Ireland	Ecology	Unfortunately, as Bat Conservation Ireland is a very small organisation, with limited resources, we do not have the capacity to get involved in planning issues. Please note that Bat Conservation Ireland is concerned that a request for our input/consultation/opinion/assistance on planning applications and reports, or objections/comments on same, can sometimes imply that we have been consulted for our opinion on planning matters when Bat Conservation Ireland does not, in fact, provide opinions or comments on developments. Therefore, please note that this response should not be construed as a consultation with Bat Conservation Ireland regarding any planning or development matter or proposal. In order to avoid misunderstandings, please do not use this terminology in your reports to describe this transaction.
Waterways Ireland	Hydrology	This area is outside the remit of Waterways Ireland and therefore we will not be commenting on the report.

Consultee	Relevant Chapter (sorted A-Z)	Response
Irish rail	Irish Rail	On behalf of Iarnród Éireann, we have reviewed the EIA Scoping report, to determine if the proposed development has potential to interface or interact with our railway network or operations. From our review: The proposed development is remote from the Iarnród Éireann network. The turbine delivery route from Galway Port to development site does not pass beneath any height restricted bridges. The turbine delivery route from Foynes to the development site (via Limerick) does not pass beneath any height restricted bridges. Therefore, Iarnród Éireann has no comment on the EIA Scoping at this time.

Geological Survey Ireland (GSI)	Land, Soils, Geology and Hydrogeology	With reference to your email received on the 29 January 2025, concerning the Illaunbaun Wind Farm EIA Scoping Report, we recommend using our various data sets when conducting the EIAR, SEA, planning and scoping processes for developments, plans and policies. For more detailed information on how to access this data please access 'Data and Maps' on our 'Geoscience for planning' webpage. Use of our data or maps should be attributed correctly (please refer to each individual dataset's metadata for correct attribution). For specific data available for Environmental Assessment and Planning topics please follow this link [https://www.gsi.ie/en-ie/programmes-and-projects/geoscience-for-planning/data-&-maps/Pages/Data-and-Maps.aspx] where you will find our data arranged by environmental assessment topic as illustrated below:

Land and soils	Water	Climate Change
Soil • Subsoils (Quaternary Geology) • Tellus Geochemistry • Geotechnical *Geology* • Bedrock • Geophysics • Bedrock & Quaternary 3D	*Groundwater* • Aquifers GW vulnerability, GWPSs (GWPPs) *Surface water* • Tellus Geochemistry *Estuarine & marine waters* • Marine and coastal *Flooding* • GWClimate • Karst	*Carbon accounting / Carbon balance* • Geothermal • Carbon capture and storage *Climate change trends* • National coastal change assessment

Cultural Heritage	Material Assets	The Landscape
Archaeology • Cherish *Underwater Archaeology* • Shipwrecks	*Built Services* • Natural resources (Minerals & Aggregates) • Active quarries	*Landscape Appearance & Character* • Physiographic units *Historical landscapes* • Historic mines

Other Relevant Data		
Natural (Geo) hazards • Landslide Susceptibility Mapping • Groundwater flooding • Coastal vulnerability • Subsidence • Radon	*Natural heritage* • Geoheritage (County Geological Sites) • Dimension Stone/Stone Built Ireland	

We are pleased to see use of our Bedrock, Geoheritage, Quaternary Sediments, Aggregate Potential, Groundwater Vulnerability, Aquifer, Recharge, Karst, Source Protection Areas and Groundwater Flooding maps and datasets within the EIA Scoping Report. Other Comments Should development go ahead, all other factors considered, Geological Survey Ireland would much appreciate a copy of reports detailing any site investigations carried out. The data would be redacted for confidentiality and added to Geological Survey Ireland's national

		database of site investigation boreholes, implemented to provide a better service to the civil engineering sector. Data can be sent to the Geological Mapping Unit, at mailto:GeologicalMappingInfo@gsi.ie. Should any significant bedrock cuttings be created, we would ask that they will be designed to remain visible as rock If we can be of any further help, please do not hesitate to contact me Clare Glanville, or my colleague Trish Smullen at GSIPlanning@gsi.ie

Consultee	Relevant Chapter (sorted A-Z)	Response
Department of Defence	Material Assets - Aviation	I wish to advise at the outset that any determination in relation to a planning consent is solely a matter for the planning authorities and/or ABP, as appropriate. Therefore, the following observations are made on a non-prejudicial basis and are not intended to be used to rely on for a prospective planning application, nor are these observations to be relied on in the event of any commercial transaction pertaining to such lands and they are not to be relied on in the event of any contract exchange pertaining to same. As a matter of practice, the Department of Defence does not provide observations or advice in the scoping process, except where the relevant parties have been directed by a planning authority to seek the Department's views. Having consulted with the Military authorities, the Department of Defence wishes to make the following observations: The Minister for Defence is responsible for the regulation of military aviation, whereas the Irish Aviation Authority (IAA) is responsible for the safety regulation of civil aviation including aerodromes. The IAA does not have remit for military aviation or installations. Safeguarding of military flight operations and installations is intended to protect both current and future aircraft operations and also to take account of the security requirements associated with some of those operations. All turbines should be illuminated by Type C, Medium intensity, Fixed Red obstacle lighting with a minimum output of 2,000 candela to be visible in all directions of azimuth and to be operational H24/7 days a week. Obstacle lighting should be incandescent or, if LED or other types are used, of a type visible to Night Vision equipment. Obstacle lighting used must emit light at the near Infra-Red (IR) range of the electromagnetic spectrum, specifically at or near 850 nanometres (nm) of wavelength. Light intensity to be of similar value to that emitted in the visible spectrum of light. Any Irish Air Corps (IAC) requirements for are separate to Irish Aviation Authority (IAA) requirements.

Consultee	Relevant Chapter (sorted A-Z)	Response
		Nothing in the above observations shall be taken as a binding response by the Minister for Defence in the event that a planning application is made. The Minister reserves the right to comment on an actual planning application as and when it is submitted in accordance with the provisions of the planning regulatory code. We would appreciate if you could keep us informed on any progress relating to this proposed development, in particular if this development was to progress to the planning stage.
Sligo Airport	Material Assets - Aviation	No effect on Sligo Airport operations
Irish Aviation Authority (IAA)	Material Assets - Aviation	As the proposed development is to be located approx. 30km NW of Shannon Airport the Irish Aviation Authority recommends that even at this pre-planning stage, it would be prudent to engage as early as possible with Shannon Airport Authority and the Air Navigation Service Provider, Air Nav Ireland to undertake a preliminary screening assessment to confirm that the proposed wind farm and the associated cranes that would be utilised during its construction would have no impact on instrument flight procedures, communication and navigation aids or other en route communication, navigation and surveillance equipment. It is likely that the following general observations would be proffered by the Authority during a formal planning process: In the event of planning consent being granted, the applicant should be conditioned to contact the Irish Aviation Authority to: (1) agree an aeronautical obstacle warning light scheme for the wind farm development, (2) provide as-constructed coordinates in WGS84 format together with ground and blade tip height elevations at each wind turbine location and

Consultee	Relevant Chapter (sorted A-Z)	Response
		(3) notify the Authority of intention to commence crane operations with at least 30 days prior notification of their erection.
Shannon Airport Authority	Material Assets - Aviation	The siting of wind turbines at this location may have implications for the operations of the communication, navigation and surveillance systems used by Air Traffic Control for the separation and safety of aircraft. The geographical siting of these turbines may also have implications for the flight paths of aircraft. Regard must be had by the applicant to the Irish Aviation Authority (IAA) Obstacles to Aircraft in Flight Order, 2005 (S.I. No. 215 of 2005), as amended, which specifies the criteria used to determine whether any object anywhere in the State is deemed to be an obstacle affecting aircraft operations. Also, in order to assure the safety and efficiency of aircraft operations in the vicinity of airports, the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) has defined a volume of air space above which new objects are not permitted to interfere. Shannon Airport Authority DAC has specific responsibility to define the airspace around its aerodrome which must be maintained free from obstacles to permit the intended aircraft operations at the aerodrome to be conducted safely and to prevent the aerodrome from becoming unusable by the growth of obstacles around it. This is achieved by establishing a series of obstacle limitation surfaces (OLS) that define the limits to which objects (temporary or permanent) may project into the airspace. These surfaces may extend many kilometres outwards from the active runway strip at the aerodrome. We will require a technical assessment to be carried out of the potential effects of whatever no. of wind turbines are to be located on the Illaunbaun site. If you could confirm (based on GPS data for individual turbine locations plus Above Mean Sea Level (AMSL) data and stated turbine design heights), then we can undertake our OLS assessment to see if this proposed development has any effects on Shannon Airports OLS.

Consultee	Relevant Chapter (sorted A-Z)	Response
		The applicant should engage with the Air Nav Ireland – ANSP (Cathal.MacCriostail@airnav.ie) to assess the possible impact of the development on flight procedures and communication, navigation and surveillance equipment as well as any potential impacts on en-route communications, navigation and surveillance equipment. The turbines fixed locations if/when construction starts, will need to be notified to the IAA Aerodromes Division (David.McCann@IAA.ie), as Area 1 obstacles and for inclusion on the 1:500000 and 1:250000 Aeronautical Charts. In the event that the proposed development was to be approved details around the use of cranes in the construction of the turbines (i.e. geographical location, max. working height, dates and duration of operation) would need to be provided to the airport authority at least 30 days in advance of works starting on the turbine construction. Finally, the developer would also have to apply the following standard: Chapter Q (Visual Aids for Denoting Obstacles) of the Certification Specifications contained within the EASA Easy Access Rules for Aerodromes (current version – Dec'24) CS ADR-DSN.Q.851 Marking and Lighting of wind turbines (Regulation (EU) No. 139/2014) for this proposed wind turbine project.
An Bord Pleanala	Planning	As a competent authority responsible for potentially making a decision on the application, the Board is not in a position to provide feedback.

Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII)	Traffic and Transport	Transport Infrastructure Ireland's (TII's) position in relation to your enquiry is as follows. TII will endeavour to consider and respond to planning applications referred to it, given its status and duties as a statutory consultee under the Planning Acts. The approach to be adopted by TII in making such submissions or comments will seek to uphold official policy and guidelines, as outlined in the Section 28 Ministerial Guidelines 'Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (DoECLG, 2012). Regard should also be had to other relevant guidance available at www.TII.ie. The issuing of this correspondence is provided as best practice guidance only and does not prejudice TII's statutory right to make any observations, requests for further information, objections or appeals, following the examination of any valid planning application referred. National Strategic Outcome 2 of the National Planning Framework includes the objective to maintain the strategic capacity and safety of the national road network. In addition, Chapter 7 'Enhanced Regional Accessibility' of the National Development Plan, 2021 – 2030, sets out the key sectoral priority of maintaining Ireland's existing national road network to a robust and safe standard for users. This requirement is further reflected in the publication of the National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland and also the existing Statutory Section 28 'Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities'. With respect to EIAR Scoping issues, the recommendations indicated below provide only general guidance for the preparation of an EIAR, which may affect the national road network. The developer should have regard, inter alia, to the following:

		Consultations should be had with the relevant Local Authority/National Roads Design Office, with regard to the locations of existing and future national road schemes in the area. TII would be specifically concerned as to potential significant impacts the development would have on the national road network (and junctions with national roads) in the proximity of the proposed development, including the potential haul route. The developer should assess visual impacts from existing national roads. The developer should have regard to any EIAR/EIS and all conditions and/or modifications imposed by An Bord Pleanála regarding road schemes in the area. The developer should, in particular, have regard to any potential cumulative impacts. The developer, in preparing EIAR, should have regard to TII Publications (formerly DMRB and the Manual of Contract Documents for Road Works). The EIAR should have regard to TII's Environmental Assessment and Construction Guidelines, including the Good Practice Guidance for the Treatment of Noise during the Planning of National Road Schemes (National Road Authority (NRA), 2014). The EIAR should consider the 'European Communities (Environmental Noise) Regulations, 2018, (S.I. no. 549 of 2018)', and, in particular, how the development will affect future action plans by the relevant competent authority. The developer may need to consider the incorporation of noise barriers to reduce noise impacts (see 'Good Practice Guidance for the Treatment of Noise during the Planning of National Road Schemes (NRA, 2014)'). In relation to national roads, TII's 'Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines' (2014) should be referred to in relation to proposed development with potential impacts on the national road network. The scheme promoter is also advised to have regard to Section 2.2 of TII's TTA Guidelines, which addresses requirements for sub-threshold TTA. Any improvements required to facilitate development should be identified. It will be the responsibility of the

		developer to pay for the costs of any improvements to national roads to facilitate the private development proposed, as TII will not be responsible for such costs. The designers are asked to consult TII Publications to determine whether a Road Safety Audit is required. In the interests of maintaining the safety and standard of the national road network, the EIAR should identify the methods/techniques proposed for any works traversing/in proximity to the national road network. TII recommends that the applicant/developer should clearly identify haul routes proposed and fully assess the network to be traversed. Where abnormal 'weight' loads are a feature of the development, e.g., turbine or substation components, separate structure approvals/permits and other licences may be required in connection with the proposed haul route. All national road structures on the haul route through all the relevant County Council administrative areas should be checked by the applicant/developer to confirm their capacity to accommodate any abnormal 'weight' load proposed. Any requirements for 'Exceptional Abnormal Loads' should also be addressed in accordance with TII Publications. TII acknowledges that Section 2.5.2 of the EIAR Scoping Report identifies that turbine components will be delivered from the port at Foynes or the port at Galway and then along the road network via the Ennis bypass (N85, national road). In addition, the haul route should be assessed to confirm capacity to accommodate abnormal 'length' loads and any temporary works required are identified. The national road network is managed by a combination of PPP Concessions, Motorway Maintenance and Renewal Contractors (MMaRC) and local road authorities, in association with TII.

		The applicant/developer should also consult with all PPP Companies, MMaRC Contractors and road authorities over which the haul route traverses, to ascertain any operational requirements, including delivery timetabling, etc., to ensure that the strategic function of the national road network is safeguarded. Where temporary works within any MMaRC Boundary are required to facilitate the transport of turbine components to site, the applicant/developer shall contact in advance, as a works specific Deed of Indemnity will be needed by TII before the works can take place. Additionally, any damage caused to the pavement on the existing national road arising from any temporary works due to the turning movement of abnormal loads (e.g., tearing of the surface course, etc.) shall be rectified in accordance with TII Pavement Standards and details in this regard shall be agreed with the road authority prior to the commencement of any development on site. Any Road Safety Audit requirements should be addressed. • Where connection and cable routing form part of any proposals, proposals should be developed to safeguard proposed road schemes, as TII will not be responsible for costs associated with future relocation of cable routing where proposals are catered for in an area of a proposed national road scheme. In that regard, consideration should be given to routing options, use of existing crossings, depth of cable laying, etc. Where grid connection proposals impact the existing national road network, please note, in accordance with the National Planning Framework National Strategic Outcome No. 2 'Enhanced Regional Accessibility', there is a requirement to maintain the strategic capacity and safety of the network. This requirement is further reflected in

		the NDP, the National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland and also the existing Statutory Section 28 'Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities'. There is around 99,000km of roads in Ireland. The national road network, which caters for strategic inter-urban travel, consists of only approx. 5.4% of this. There is a critical requirement to ensure the strategic capacity and safety of this national road network is maintained and significant Government investment already made in the national road network is safeguarded. The provision of cabling along the national road network represents a number of significant implications for TII and road authorities in the management and maintenance of the strategic national road network and TII is of the opinion that grid connection cable routing should reflect the foregoing provisions of official policy. Section 12.4.1.1 'Accelerate Renewable Electricity Generation' of the Climate Action Plan 2024 (CAP24) outlines the objective of reaching 80% of electricity demand from renewable sources by 2030 through a range of measures, including: "All relevant public bodies will carry out their functions in a manner which supports the achievement of the renewable electricity targets, including, but not limited to, the use of road and rail infrastructure to provide a route for grid infrastructure where this is the optimal solution". (Climate Action Plan 2024, p.163) Consistent with CAP24, for all renewable energy developments requiring grid connection to the national grid, TII recommends that a full assessment of all route alternatives for grid connection takes place, including alternatives to public road, where appropriate. In TII's experience, grid connection accommodated on national roads has the potential, inter alia, to result in technical road safety issues such as differential settlement due to backfilling

		trenches and can impact on ability and cost of general maintenance, upgrades and safety works to existing national roads. Figure 2-3 of the EIAR Scoping Report outlines a Grid Connection Route and it is noted that proposals currently include utilising a section of urban N67, national road, in Milltown Malbay. Having regard to the foregoing, in TII's opinion, the grid connection routing, where it is proposed to utilise the road network, must demonstrate that the route proposed represents the 'optimal solution' . In addition, there is a finite road space available to accommodate all utilities in the road network and TII recommends that a co-ordinated approach to grid connection routing in this area is achieved to avoid risk to the effective delivery of renewable energy projects in the area. Other consents or licences may be required from the road authority for any trenching or cabling proposals crossing the national road. TII requests referral of all proposals agreed and licensed between the road authority and the applicant, which affect the national road network . Cable routing should avoid all impacts to existing TII infrastructure such as traffic counters, weather stations, etc. and works required to such infrastructure shall only be undertaken in consultation with and subject to the agreement of TII. Any costs attributable shall be borne by the applicant/developer. The developer should also be aware that separate approvals may be required for works traversing the national road network. All crossings in the vicinity of the national road should be by HDD and avoid all national road structures, including bridges, culverts, etc

		. Notwithstanding any of the above, the developer should be aware that this list is non-exhaustive, thus site and development specific issues should be addressed in accordance with best practice.

Consultee	Relevant Chapter (sorted A-Z)	Response
Department of Transport	Traffic and Transport	The Department of Transport has the following comments in relation to the consultation request relating to the Scoping Report for the Proposed Illaunbaun Onshore Windfarm, County Clare. It should be noted that the Department considers the construction involved in providing this development and especially, the connection cables to the national grid, may have effects on both the environment and the Regional and Local Road network. Where the developer proposes the placement of any cables (or additional cables) in one or more trenches within the extents of the (regional and local) public road network, it is necessary to consider the following: • Their presence within the public road will likely significantly restrict the Road Authority in carrying out its function to construct and maintain the public road and will likely add to the costs of those works post construction. • Their installation within the lands associated with the public road may affect the stability of the road. In particular where the road is a "legacy road" (where there is no designed road structure and the subgrade may be poor or poorly drained) or bog rampart and the design needs to take account of all the variable ground conditions and not be based on a sample of the general soil conditions. This should include a constructability assessment to a 950mm minimum cover depth to the HV Cable on legacy roads, roads over peat/bog ramparts • The possible effect on the remaining available road space (noting that there may be need to accommodate other utilities within the road cross-section in the future or additional drainage for climate adaptation) on potential future development. • The necessity to have the power in the cables switched off (particularly where structural failures occur due to extreme weather events) where the Road Authority considers this necessary in order to carry out its function to construct and maintain the public road and a complete operation and maintenance

Consultee	Relevant Chapter (sorted A-Z)	Response
		manual should be agreed with the Local Authority. The Department consider it important that the examination of the proposal should include consideration of the following: • Examination of all available technologies including both Overhead Line (OHL) and Underground Cable (UGC) options (or combinations of both) and route options other than the routing of cables along the public road the ensure the best performing route and technology option is selected, (ensuring compliance with CAP24). The public road should only be considered following a robust MCA determining the optimal solution and examining the most linear solutions. Examination of options for connection to the national grid network at a point closer to the wind farm in order to reduce the adverse impact on public roads, • Details of where within the road cross section cables are to be placed so as to minimise the effect on the Roads Authority in its role of construction and maintenance, Examination of details of any chambers proposed within the public road cross section so as to minimise the effect on the Roads Authority in its role of construction and maintenance, • Elimination of permanent jointing bays from beneath the road pavement to protect the integrity of the road structure for the safety of those driving on the public road by eliminating hard spots and also preserve the road width for other utilities, temporary joint bays to be used in any public road installation with permanent joint bays to be located off carriageway, • No attachment of cables to all bridge structures and culverts by diverting them beneath or away from these structures and, • Rationalisation of the number of cables involved (including existing electric or possible future cables) and their diversion into one trench, in order to minimise the impacts on the road network and the environment along the road boundary (hedgerows).

Consultee	Relevant Chapter (sorted A-Z)	Response
		The Department considers the following should be considered when applying conditions to any approval: 1. A condition requiring the specific approval of the local authority to the detail of the final route of cables through the public road space. If during construction there is a need to deviate from the detailed design then the approval of the local authority would again be sought. This would assist in minimising the impact on the public road. 2. A condition requiring the developer to, at a minimum, comply with all appropriate standards and, inter alia the Guidelines for Managing Openings in Public Roads, 2017 in order to ensure orderly development. 3. A condition requiring that the location of the cables would be recorded as exactly as possible, using BIM type technology, so as to facilitate the further use of road space for utilities and the maintenance/construction of the public road by the Roads authority. This record should include as constructed surveys of all infrastructure altered, added, removed or relocated and exact detail of the road construction including any drains or other features encountered. The record should be lodged with the local authority and with the ESB Networks for retention on their records. 4. A condition to require the elimination of permanent jointing bays from under the road pavement to protect the integrity of the road structure, thereby improving safety for those driving on the public road by eliminating hard spots and preserving the road width for other utilities. 5. A condition requiring the developer to route cables away from bridge structures and specifically preventing the developer from attaching cables to road bridges. This would allow for the future maintenance of bridges without interruption of the electricity supply along the cables. 6. A condition requiring the replacement of culverts that have been excavated during the cable duct placement operation. The replacement culverts should be designed appropriately and include an allowance for the effects of climate change. 7. A condition requiring the developer to notify the Roads Authority of the owner of the cables (Owner) and the controller (Power Controller) of the power transmitted along the cables. In addition, the condition should require Owner and Power Controller to notify the Roads Authority of any change in ownership of

Consultee	Relevant Chapter (sorted A-Z)	Response
		the cables or change of Power Controller transmitting power along the cables. In all instances the Owner and Power Controller should be required to maintain an agreed contacts list with the Roads Authority.
Clare County Council - Transportation & Road Design Office	Transportation & Road	Following comments related to roads. These comments should assist with items we look for when assessing Windfarm applications: • Identified Haul route for abnormal loads with a traffic plan and autotracking carried out in any areas of concern. • Construction traffic management plan. • Sightline assessment for all entrances. We do not accept speed survey assessments to justify a reduced speed limit but with the new sped limit of 60kph on local roads this reduces the requirement significantly. • Identify the cable route and determine any road closers. Residents elected should be given a point of contact. TTMP to be agreed with Care County Council and reinstatement of road to be agreed with the Area Engineer. • The Municipal District Area Office should be made aware of the haul route and discussions should be had relating to repairs of the roadway immediate to any entrances to the site. A pre during and post inspection will be required with assessment carried out on any water crossings. • Maintenance of the public road from any debrie throughout the construction. • Identify the entrances that will be maintained for operations.
HSE National Environmental Health Service	General	**Visit by the National Environmental Health Service (NEHS) to the Proposed Development Area** A visit to the proposed development site was carried out by a SEHO on the 20th February 2025. As a result of this visit, it is important that the following are specifically considered in the EIA: a) Any likely significant effect on Rockmount National School during the construction phase, any likely significant impacts from construction traffic during the day and particularly at the start and end of the school day. b) The impact on the local roads during the construction phase. The roads are narrow country roads, and the EIA

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		should include a detailed traffic impact assessment that includes impacts on local road usage at different times of the day and different days of the week. c) Any likely significant effects on the freshwater lakes at the centre of the proposed site, which are availed of by local anglers. To include any impacts on access routes during construction and operation. d) Any likely significant effect on the public water supply reservoirs which are visible to see in the Rockmount area and any likely significant effect on drinking water supplies. This includes identification of private wells that might be impacted by the development. e) Cumulative effects from the existing wind farms in the area and any further proposed wind farm development. **Consideration of the EIA Scoping Document dated January 2025** The scoping document is comprehensive and detailed. The main issue now, in the opinion of the NEHS, is to ensure that the scoping is now informed by the consultation process and demonstrates that it has been. There should be direct connections between the consultation outcomes and the scope of the EIA. It is recognised that areas of the content of this submission have been included in the scoping document, but the following submission is to ensure the following areas are a matter of record from the NEHS. **General Introduction** • Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment https://www.housing.gov.ie/sites/default/files/publications/files/guidelines_for_planning_authorities_and_an_bord_pleanála_on_carrying_out_eia_-_august_2018.pdf • EU publication: Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects Guidance on the preparation of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report, EU, 2017 http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eia/pdf/EIA_guidance_EIA_report_final.pdf

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		• Adoption of the Directive (2014/52/EU) in April 2014 initiated a review of the National Guidance for EIA and the EIAR accompanying a planning application. New guidelines can be seen at: https://www.epa.ie/publications/monitoring--assessment/assessment/guidelines-on-the-information-to-be-contained-in-environmental-impact-assessment.php The applicant should also consider the findings of the High Court judgement issued in the judicial review of the Derryadd Wind Farm (2021 IEHC 390 [20202 No. 557 JR] P. Sweetman v An Bord Pleanála). Generally, the Environmental Impact Assessment should examine all likely significant impacts and provide the following information for each: a) Description of the receiving environment; b) The nature and scale of the impact; c) An assessment of the significance of the impact; d) Proposed mitigation measures; e) Residual impacts. The HSE will consider the final EIAR accompanying the Planning application and will make comments to the Local Planning Authority on the methodology used for assessing the likely significant impacts and the evaluation criteria used in assessing the significance of the impact. The NEHS recommends that the following matters are included and assessed in the EIA:

Consultee	Relevant Chapter (sorted A-Z)	Response
		Public Consultation Decommissioning phase of the proposed wind farm Siting and location of turbines Noise & Vibration Shadow Flicker Air Quality Surface and Groundwater Quality Geological Impacts Ancillary facilities Cumulative impacts **Public Consultation** It is recommended that early and meaningful public consultation with the local community is undertaken to ensure all potentially significant impacts of the proposed windfarm development have been adequately addressed. All parties affected by the proposed development, including those who may benefit financially from the project, must be fully informed of what the proposal entails, especially with regard to potential impacts on surrounding areas. Sensitive receptors and other stakeholders should be identified to ensure all necessary and appropriate mitigation measures are put in place to reduce the likelihood of any complaints about the proposed wind farm development in the future. The NEHS expects that meaningful public consultation, where the local community is fully informed of the

Consultee	Relevant Chapter (sorted A-Z)	Response
		proposed development, will be undertaken. Members of the public should be given sufficient opportunity to express their views on the proposed windfarm development. The Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) should clearly demonstrate the link between public consultations and how those consultations have influenced the decision-making process in the EIA. To assist with the consultation and planning process, it is recommended that the applicant develops a dedicated website for the proposed windfarm development. All correspondence, maps, project updates, and documentation, including the EIAR, should be uploaded to the website. The EIAR should state: The period of planning permission sought, The length of time construction is estimated to take, Whether it is anticipated that the windfarm development will be decommissioned and removed or will continue to operate (following any further planning consent) at the end of this period of planning permission (should permission be granted). The Non-Technical Summary of the EIA (NTS) is an important document that facilitates public access and understanding of the proposed development. It should accurately summarise: The likely significant impacts, Proposed mitigation, The residual impacts after mitigation has been implemented.

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		This should be done in non-technical language and relate accurately to the specific chapters of the EIAR. The NTS should identify all sensitive receptors that are likely to be significantly impacted and clearly state the significance of the effects on them. The NEHS considers that a summary should be no more than 10% of the original document size and should reference any appendix of the EIAR that contains relevant data on any significant effects. **Consideration of Population and Human Health in the EIA** The opinion of the NEHS is that the assessment of likely significant effects on Population and Human Health should be a proportionate assessment specific to the proposed development and to the Population and Human Health likely to be significantly affected by the proposed development. If assessment is made of likely significant effects on wider determinants of health or health inequalities, then this should be done in a proportionate manner with a demonstration of a likely significant effect as a direct result of the proposed development. The preferred methodology for assessing likely significant effects on Population and Human Health is a source, pathway, receptor model; based on emissions through environmental media and population exposure. This approach is supported by the EPA issued National Guidance (known as the EIAR Guidance): Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports, 2022 https://www.epa.ie/publications/monitoring-- assessment/assessment/EIAR_Guidelines_2022_Web.pdf

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		In assessing likely significant effects on Population and Human Health any proposed mitigation measures should be identified. The residual impact should evaluated against a recognised Health Protection Standard. Whilst current EIAR guidance recognises the requirement to identify sensitive receptors within the assessment process, it should be clear that this is within a Population Health approach and not an individual person approach. It is therefore the opinion of the NEHS that a Population Health approach would not consider the likely significant effects on the sensitivity of an individual human receptor, but the sensitivity of the established land use or service provision. For example, a school would be considered a sensitive receptor within a Population Health approach, but an individual student who was particularly sensitive to noise attending the school would not be specifically considered in the assessment criteria. A health care facility that provided services for people with recognised noise sensitivity would be considered in its entirety as a particular noise sensitive location. It is therefore the opinion of the NEHS that the EIA should consider the likely significant effects on established land use and service provision and activities within communities and not individual members of communities. **Opportunities for Health Gain in the Proposed Development** The Healthy Ireland Framework is a cross Governmental Strategy to improve the health of the population of Ireland. https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/e8f9b1-healthy-ireland-framework-2019-2025/

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		A key objective of the Healthy Ireland Strategy is to maximise the potential health benefits in the design of the built environment. It is therefore recommended that: Consideration is given to any opportunities in the design of the project that will enable land use to increase physical activity in the surrounding populations; for example incorporating footpaths or cycleways or other recreational use of land, Considering any opportunities for increasing the bio diversity of the existing habitats and water bodies It is recommended that if the above are being considered then it should be part of the community engagement and consultation process and final designs and projects should be informed by the community and relevant stakeholders. **Decommissioning** The EIAR should detail the eventual fate of the wind turbines and associated material i.e. will the material be recycled or how will it be disposed of. Information should also be provided regarding the proposed methodology to be used for the disposal of the materials forming the foundations of the wind turbines. The EIAR should indicate the proposed future use of the development site at the end of the planning permission period. **Siting, Location and Details of Turbines** The EIAR should include a map and a description of the proposed location of each of the proposed wind turbines. The National Environmental Health Service expects that details (height and model) of the turbines to be installed will be available at the time planning permission is sought and will be included in the EIAR. Details of the foundations for the wind turbine including depth, quantity and material to be used should be

Consultee	Relevant Chapter (sorted A-Z)	Response
		included in the EIAR. **Assessment of Consideration of Alternatives** The EIAR should consider an assessment of alternatives. The NEHS recommends that alternative renewable energy options to on-shore wind farms should be assessed as part of the EIAR. **Noise & Vibration** The potential impacts for noise and vibration from the proposed development on all noise sensitive locations must be clearly identified in the EIAR. The EIAR must also consider the appropriateness and effectiveness of all proposed mitigation measures to mitigate noise and vibration. A baseline noise monitoring survey should be undertaken to establish the existing background noise levels. Noise from any existing turbines in the area should not be included as part of the background levels. In addition, an assessment of the predicted noise impacts during the construction phase and the operational phase of the proposed windfarm development must be undertaken which details the change in the noise environment resulting from the proposed development. The Draft Revised Wind Energy Development Guidelines were published in December 2019. Whilst these have yet to be adopted, any proposed wind farm development should have consideration of the draft Guidelines. https://www.housing.gov.ie/sites/default/files/public-consultation/files/draft_revised_wind_energy_development_guidelines_december_2019.pdf **Shadow Flicker** It is recommended that a shadow flicker assessment is undertaken to identify any dwellings and sensitive receptors which may be impacted by shadow flicker. The assessment must include all proposed mitigation

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		measures. Dwellings should include all occupied properties and any existing or proposed properties for which planning consent has been granted for construction or refurbishment. It is recommended that turbine selection will be based on the most advanced available technology that permits shut down during times when residents are exposed to shadow flicker. As a result no dwelling should be exposed to shadow flicker. **Air Quality** Due to the nature of the proposed construction works generation of airborne dust has the potential to have significant impacts on sensitive receptors. A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) should be included in the EIAR which details dust control and mitigation measures. Measures should include: Sweeping of hard road surfaces Provision of a water bowser on site, regular spraying of haul roads Wheel washing facilities at site exit Restrict speed on site Provide covers to all delivery trucks to minimise dust generation Inspect and clean public roads in the vicinity if necessary Material stockpiling provided with adequate protection from the wind Dust monitoring at the site boundary Truck inspection and maintenance plan Details of a road maintenance agreement between the wind farm operator and the Local Roads Authority to clarify responsibility for the upkeep and repair of access roads during the construction phase of the project **Surface and Ground Water Quality**

Consultee	Relevant Chapter (sorted A-Z)	Response
		The proposed development has the potential to have a significant impact on the quality of both surface and ground water. All drinking water sources, both surface and ground water, must be identified. Public and Group Water Scheme sources and supplies should be identified in addition to any private wells supplying potable water to houses in the vicinity of the proposed development. Measures to ensure that all sources and supplies are protected should be described. The National Environmental Health Service recommends that a walk over survey of the site is undertaken in addition to a desktop analysis of Geological Survey of Ireland data in order to identify the location of private wells used for drinking water purposes. Any potential significant impacts to drinking water sources should be assessed. Details of bedrock, overburden, vulnerability, groundwater flows, aquifers and catchment areas should be considered when assessing potential impacts and any proposed mitigation measures. Any impacts on surface water as a result of the construction of the underground cables should be identified and addressed in the EIAR. **Geotechnical and Peat Stability Assessment** A detailed assessment of the current ground stability of the site for the proposed windfarm development and all proposed mitigation measures should be detailed in the EIAR. The assessment should include the impact construction work may have on the future stability of ground conditions, taking into consideration extreme weather events, site drainage and the potential for soil erosion. Information should be provided on the make and model of the turbines and on construction details for the turbine foundations, including the depth and volume of concrete required. An accurate assessment of the potential impacts of the foundations on water quality and peat stability cannot be undertaken without this information.

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		Reference is made to a peat slide which occurred near Ballybofey in Co. Donegal on 13th November 2020 which may have been linked to construction activity at Meenbog Wind Farm. Potential impacts on water supply associated with contamination following a peat slide include sedimentation and alteration of pH levels. The National Environmental Health Service recommends that a detailed Peat Stability/Geotechnical Assessment should be undertaken to assess the suitability of the soil for the proposed development. The EIAR should include provision for a peat stability monitoring programme to identify early signs of potential bog slides ('pre-failure indicators' see the Scottish Government's 'Peat Landslide Hazard and Risk Assessments: Best Practice Guide for Proposed Electricity Developments 2017) https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/advice-and-guidance/2017/04/peat-landslide-hazard-risk-assessments-best-practice-guide-proposed-electricity/documents/00517176-pdf/00517176-pdf/govscot%3Adocument/00517176.pdf **Ancillary Facilities** The EIAR should include details of the location of all site office, construction compound, fuel storage depot, sanitary accommodation and canteen, First Aid facilities, disposal of wastewater and the provision of a potable water supply to the site canteen. **Cumulative Impacts** All existing or proposed wind farm developments in the vicinity should be clearly identified in the EIAR. The impact on sensitive receptors of the proposed development combined with any other wind farm/renewable energy developments in the vicinity should be considered. The EIAR should include a detailed assessment of any likely significant cumulative impacts of the proposed windfarm development.

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		Climate and Sustainability Assessment and Mitigation **Climate Mitigation** The EIA should assess factors that contribute to climate change as a result of the development and should identify any mitigation or sustainability measures that can be incorporated into the development, particularly: An assessment of Green-House Gas emissions as a result of the proposed development to include the construction, operation and decommissioning phases. This assessment should identify how emissions can be reduced or mitigated at each stage. It should include the use of machinery on site and implementation of active travel for employees and contractors. An assessment of energy use during each stage of the development and identify where renewable energy sources can be incorporated into the design of the project. An assessment of water usage and opportunities for water conservation, including rainwater harvesting and recycling of both process and rain water, An assessment of any waste generated at each stage of the development and implementation of the Waste Hierarchy, **Climate Adaptation** The EIA should consider Climate Adaptation for the proposed development. This should be specific to the project and include:

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		The project resilience to severe weather events such as floods, windstorms, drought/heatwaves plus the risk of wildfires in all phases of the development. This should include a Vulnerability Assessment which focuses on direct weather related hazards to include: Extreme Rainfall, Flood, Flash Flood Storms and Winds Risks from extreme heat events, for example wildfire or employee exposure to UV or increased dust Security of water supplies during extended dry spells There should be a Risk Reduction Schedule that considers the specific risks from climate change, relevant to the development, and identifies proposed mitigation measures to be implemented to reduce the risks associated with climate change.
Inland Fisheries	General	IFI have no objection in principle to the proposal as indicated but reserve the right to make further submissions as detail emerges. Please find below our initial concerns and recommendations in relation to this development. These mainly relate be the protection of the aquatic resource and the associated riparian habitat. In particular, the protection of streams that are art of the Annagh and Inagh systems alongside the lentic habitats found on site.

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		Our general comments to apply to all wind farm developments are as follows: 1. All watercourses that will receive drainage from the construction sites of the turbines or the access roads must be assessed in terms of aquatic biodiversity with particular emphasis on fish, the food of fish, spawning grounds and fish habitat in general. Changes to river morphology should be avoided. 2. The aquatic habitat and physical nature of any watercourse affected by the development must be fully described in detail. This includes areas of open water, pool riffle glide sequences, density and types of aquatic vegetation, description of riparian zones to depth of at least 10 metres on either bank etc. The extent of the surveys should be sufficiently long so as to be representative of the habitat contained in that watercourse. There should be a particular focus on sections upstream and downstream of any point where an impact on the watercourse is likely to arise. 3. We are concerned about soils, their structure and types around all the turbines, turbine pads, associated access roads and site development. In particular we have general concerns about the stability of the soils and the impact that works on both the turbines and access roads may have either directly or by vibration on the stability of the soils. IFI are particularly concerned where it is proposed to construct wind turbines on peat soils of which is this case for this development. 4. IFI strongly recommends that specialist personnel are employed to assess soil strength and suitability of the ground at each site and along any proposed access road. This is particularly important in relation to peat soils. From our experience we will have serious difficulties with developments on peat soils where there is excessive slope and/or where the peat depth exceeds one metre The potential for soil movement and landslides should be assessed fully within the EIAR. 5. Particular attention should be paid to the hydrology of any site where excavations, including excavations for borrow pits and road construction are being undertaken. It is important that natural flow paths are

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		not interrupted or diverted in such a manner as to give rise to erosion or instability of soils caused by an alteration in water movement either above or below ground. 6. Attention should be paid to drainage during both the construction phase and the operational phase. This includes waters being pumped from foundations or other excavations. It is particularly important during the construction phase that sufficient retention time is available in any settlement pond to ensure no deleterious matter is discharged to waters. We strongly recommend that settlement ponds are maintained, where appropriate, during the operational phase to allow for the adequate settlement of suspended solids and sediments and prevent any deleterious matter from discharging. In constructing and designing silt traps particular attention should be paid to rainfall levels and intensity. The silt traps should be designed to minimise the movement of silt during intense precipitation events where the trap may become hydraulically overloaded. It is essential that they are located with good access to facilitate monitoring sampling and maintenance. A license to discharge to waters may be required from the local authority. 7. The use of sedimentary rocks, such as shale, in road construction should be avoided. This type of material has poor tensile strength and is liable to be crushed by heavy vehicles thereby releasing fine sediment materials into the drainage system which are difficult to precipitate and may give rise to water pollution. We recommend that specialist expertise should advise on the type of material required for road construction bearing in mind the pressures that will arise during the construction phase and the necessity to avoid pollution due to fines washing out into the roadside drainage. 8. In relation to watercourse crossings for the road or grid connection please be advised that IFI will require to be consulted well in advance in relation to all watercourse crossings or the use of any temporary diversions. We strongly recommend that these crossings should be kept to a minimum. We will also require that any instream structures or bridge crossings are approved by the IFI. In designing crossings, the length, slope and width of any instream structure will be important. Clear span bridges are the

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		preferred option for all crossings especially in upland areas 9. Please also note that any instream works or other works which may impact directly on a watercourse should only be carried out during the open season which is from 1st July to 30th of September in each year (so as to avoid impacting on the aquatic habitat during the spawning season.) It would be important that appropriate scheduling of works is allowed for. 10. The EIAR should indicate proposals to monitor the impact on watercourses within the site. In the event that environmental damage to the aquatic habitat and associated riparian zone is caused, the EIAR should indicate the steps that may be taken to rectify any damage to the aquatic habitat including liaison with the appropriate authorities. 11. In relation to wind farm structures and infrastructure it is important that a sufficient bank side riparian zone is maintained to absorb and attenuate overland flows. IFI also recommend that a carbon calculation is included to assess the impact of the windfarm development on peat soils, a significant carbon store. This should include scenarios where the site is re-powered after its current lifespan and whether the existing foundations will be reused or left in place. The discharge of polluting or deleterious matter to any watercourse except under and in accordance with a licence may be an offense under the Fisheries Acts and/or under the Water Pollution Acts. Should works be approved a finalised CEMP must be agreed with Inland Fisheries Ireland before works commence.

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Failte Ireland (link posted due to length of document)	General	Fáilte Ireland EIAR Guidelines 2023

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