



ENVIRONMENTAL BALANCE IN DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR THE PROPOSED MAIGHNE WIND FARM IN COUNTY KILDARE AND COUNTY MEATH

VOLUME 2 – MAIN EIS

CHAPTER 4 – EIA SCOPING, CONSULTATION AND KEY ISSUES

MARCH 2015



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4 EIA SCOPING, CONSULTATION AND KEY ISSUES

4.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the consultation process and EIS scoping that was undertaken in order to identify key impacts from the proposed development to be included in the EIS.

It presents the issues that arose through the consultation process and how these issues were addressed in the EIS. Records of consultation responses are contained in Appendix B of Volume 3.

The consultation process included the EIS scoping discussions and the Strategic Infrastructure Development Pre-Application procedure. The consultation process, including public consultation, began in 2012 and has continued steadily since with the identification of the stakeholders who may have an interest in the project. Preliminary environmental studies of the viability of a wind farm in this location were originally undertaken as part of the Greenwire Wind Energy Export Project. The Maighne Wind Farm project is now being progressed as a domestic project to be developed and connected to the Irish grid for domestic purposes and not to generate energy for export. Subsequently, Element Power Ireland Ltd. initiated formal consultation with An Bord Pleanála and the relevant planning authorities (Kildare County Council and Meath County Council) in October 2014.

4.2 Scoping

Article 5(2) of the Environmental Impact Directive, as implemented by section 37D of the Planning and Development Act 2010, as amended, provides for a “formal” scoping process, whereby a developer may request the competent authority (i.e. An Bord Pleanála) for an opinion to be supplied by the developer in the EIS.

In addition, it is good practice for a developer to “informally” scope the contents of an EIS by engaging in consultations with prescribed and other statutory bodies and stakeholders and through public consultation. Informal scoping was undertaken for this EIS.

The purpose of the EIS scoping process is to identify the issues which are likely to be important during the environmental impact assessment (EIA) and to eliminate those that are not. The scoping process identifies the sources or causes of potential environmental effects, the pathways by which the effects can happen, and the sensitive receptors, which are likely to be affected. It defines the appropriate level of detail for the information to be provided in the EIS. In essence, the primary focus of scoping is to define the most appropriate assessment of significant effects related to the proposed development.

A detailed scoping report in respect of the proposed development project was sent out to 55 consultees on 30th October 2014. The recipients included relevant prescribed bodies (as defined in Article 213 of the Planning and Development Regulations, as amended), non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and key stakeholders.

The precise connection point to the national electricity transmission grid will be determined by EirGrid plc, which is the statutory Transmission System Operator. For the purposes of this planning application, 2 no. HV grid connection routes (which will operate at a voltage up to 220kV) have been identified and evaluated. The 2 no. HV grid connection cable routes included in this application propose to connect the proposed Maighne Wind Farm substation at Drehid to either one of two existing substations located at Woodlands, Co. Meath or Maynooth, Co. Kildare. However, only one of these routes will be constructed following the identification of the preferred connection point by the Transmission System Operator.

A supplementary scoping letter, together with drawings, outlining the addition of two proposed cable routes was sent out to the same 55 consultees on the 09th December 2014. Meetings were held with a number of the consultees in advance of issuing the scoping report to ensure that the correct level of assessment was being carried out and to ensure that our interpretation of their requirements was correct.

4.2.1 Prescribed Bodies

The applicant has consulted with most of these stakeholders already as part of our consultation strategy for Greenwire and Maighne Wind Farm. This involved engaging with most stakeholders in advance of issuing the scoping report. These consultees include the Local Authorities, Commission for Energy Regulation (CER), Department of Communication Energy and Natural Resources (DCENR), Department of Environment, Community and Local Government (DoECLG), Iarnród Éireann -Irish Rail, Irish Aviation Authority, National Roads Authority (NRA), Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly, An Taisce, Waterways Ireland and BirdWatch Ireland.

Accordingly, a copy of the scoping document was issued to the following prescribed bodies, in addition to being furnished to An Bord Pleanála as part of the statutory pre-application process:

- An Chomhairle Ealaíon (The Arts Council)
- An Taisce
- Commission for Energy Regulation
- Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht – National Monuments Service
- Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht – Development Applications Unit
- Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht – Built Heritage and Architectural Policy Unit
- Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht – National Parks and Wildlife Service
- Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine
- Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources – Petroleum Affairs Division
- Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources – Sustainable & Renewable Energy Division
- Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government
- Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport
- Department of Defence
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Fáilte Ireland
- Geological Survey of Ireland
- Health Service Executive
- Health and Safety Authority
- Iarnród Éireann
- Inland Fisheries Ireland – Eastern River Basin District
- Inland Fisheries Ireland – South Eastern River Basin District
- Irish Sports Council
- Irish Aviation Authority
- Irish Water
- National Roads Authority
- National Transport Authority (Bus Éireann)
- Office of Public Works
- The Border, Midland & Western Regional Assembly
- Waterways Ireland
- Udarás na Gaeltachta
- Railway Safety Commission
- Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly¹
- Teagasc
- The Heritage Council (An Chomhairle Oidhreachta)

4.2.2 Local & Regional Authorities

A copy of the scoping document was issued to the following local and regional authorities:

- Kildare County Council, Planning Department
- Kildare County Council, Architectural Conservation Officer
- Kildare County Council, Heritage Officer

¹ Following on from the enactment of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 a number of changes were made to the regional structures in Ireland where the eight regional authorities were dissolved. Three new Regional Assemblies came into effect on 1st January 2015, namely, the Southern, the Eastern & Midland and the Northern & Western Regional Assemblies. www.emra.ie County Kildare and County Meath are now within the Eastern & Midland Regional Assembly.

- Kildare National Roads Office
- Kildare Local Enterprise Office
- Meath County Council, Planning Department
- Meath County Council, Architectural Conservation Officer
- Meath County Council, Heritage Officer
- Meath Local Enterprise Office
- Offaly County Council, Planning Department
- Offaly County Council, Architectural Conservation Officer
- Offaly County Council, Heritage Officer
- Offaly Local Enterprise Office
- Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly
- The Border, Midland and Western Regional Assembly.

4.2.3 Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) & Stakeholders

A copy of the scoping document was issued to the following NGOs and stakeholders:

- Bat Conservation Ireland
- BirdWatch Ireland
- Butterfly Conservation Ireland
- East Coast and Midlands Tourism
- Health and Safety Authority
- Irish Wildlife Trust
- Irish Peatland Conservation Council
- Irish Sports Council
- Irish Raptor Study Group
- Teagasc
- Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland.

In all there were 22 responses to the scoping report. A summary of the replies received is provided in Table 4.1 below. A summary of the responses to the letter issued on the proposed grid connection route and the responses received are summarised in Table 4.2.

Table 4.1: Pre-Submission Consultation Responses to the Scoping Report

Consultee	Date of Response	Response/Issues raised	Chapter of EIS where Issues Raised are Addressed
Southern & Eastern Assembly	04/11/2014	Mr. Byrne requested a copy of the Scoping Report could be referred to the Regional Planning Guidelines Officer for any observations on behalf of the Counties of Kildare and Meath. Mr. Byrne also assumed a similar notification has been forwarded to the Midland Office on behalf of the proposed developments in County Offaly.	N/A
Office of Public Works	04/11/2014, 25/11/2014	Request to be notified of EIS publication.	N/A
Offaly County Council	12/11/2014	Requested confirmation that the EIS scoping request is withdrawn as a result of the proposed development no longer being in County Offaly following a redesign.	N/A

Consultee	Date of Response	Response/Issues raised	Chapter of EIS where Issues Raised are Addressed
Fáilte Ireland	13/11/2014	Recommendation that the Fáilte Ireland Guidelines for the treatment of tourism in an EIS be taken into account in preparing the EIS.	Chapter 11 Human Environment
HSE	19/11/2014	Public consultation, human health impact assessment, protection of groundwater, mains water infrastructure, noise and vibration, air quality, staff facilities	Chapter 4 EIA Scoping, Consultation and Key Issues, Chapter 2 The Development, Chapter 9 Hydrology, Chapter 10 Water Quality, Chapter 6 Noise & Vibration, Chapter 05 Air & Climate, Chapter 11 Human Beings and CEMP in Appendix D
National Roads Authority	19/11/2014	Leinster Orbital Route, motorway and national road networks, conditions and/or modifications imposed by An Bord Pleanála regarding road schemes in the area, potential cumulative impacts, NRA DMRB, NRA Manual of Contract Documents for Road Works, NRA's Environmental Assessment and Construction Guidelines, NRA TTT Guidelines, haul routes	Chapter 13 Traffic & Transportation, Chapter 4 Consultations, Chapter 6 Noise & Vibration, Chapter 17 Interaction of the foregoing, Chapter 5 Air & Climate
Irish Water	21/11/2014	Raised general aspects relating to Water Services	Chapter 10 Water Quality
Department of Defence	21/11/2014	<p><i>"In respect of the consultation on the scoping report, it might be appropriate to include under 4.18.2 Consultation with the Department of Defence/Air Corps</i></p> <p><i>In 4.18.4 – additional potential impacts are</i></p> <p><i>Aviation activity may have to be constrained as a consequence of wind energy developments (CAA CAP764),</i></p> <p><i>While the IAA consultation document on Land Use Planning and Offshore Development points to impacts such as</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>- Creation of choke points in uncontrolled airspace;</i> <i>- Turbulence affecting smaller aircraft and helicopters;</i> <i>- Cumulative effect of multiple developments"</i> 	Chapter 16 Telecoms and Aviation

Consultee	Date of Response	Response/Issues raised	Chapter of EIS where Issues Raised are Addressed
Kildare County Council	21/11/2014	National Planning Policy, County Planning Policy, consideration of environmental sensitivities, geographic analysis, possible alternatives, possible impacts of the development on the equine industry, shadow flicker considerations, reduced noise turbine models, set noise limits with respect to hub heights, pre-construction, during construction and post construction transportation requirements, potential for dust generation, water quality requirements, experienced conservation architect required, fauna and flora requirements, movement of soil requirements of the Birds and Habitat regulations in relation to invasive species, landscape character areas, proximity of Donadea and Rahin forest parks, Department of Defence training area for pilots, cumulative impacts, public consultation initiatives, community gain proposals.	Chapter 1 Introduction, Chapter 2 The Development, Chapter 3 Policy, Chapter 4 Consultations, Chapter 5 Air & Climate Change, Chapter 6 Noise & Vibration, Chapter 7 Ecology, Chapter 8 Soils & Geology, Chapter 9 Hydrology, Chapter 10 Water Quality, Chapter 11 Human Being, Chapter 12 Shadow Flicker, Chapter 13 Traffic & Transportation, Chapter 14 Archaeology, Chapter 15 Landscape & Visuals, Chapter 16 Telecoms & Aviation, Chapter 17 Interactions of the foregoing, CEMP in Appendix D
Irish Peatland Conservation Council	03/12/2014	Request that the Lullymore Heritage Atlas be reviewed as part of the EIA process. Request to be notified of EIS publication. IPPC noted the presence of 20 butterfly species including the March Fritillary in the Lullymore West and in a site known as Lullybeg. IPPC also raised concerns over a proposed access road that is through Bord na Móna lands that the IPPC is hoping will form part of a greater Lullymore Biodiversity Loop Walk.	Chapter 7 Ecology, Chapter 11 Human Beings and Chapter 13 Traffic & Transportation
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine	03/12/2014	Request that a felling license be obtained prior to the felling or removal of any trees, if required. Request that the developer take note of the contents of the Tree Felling Policy for Wind Farm Development (http://www.agriculture.gov.ie/forestservice/treefelling/treefelling/). Request for additional info be provided in the EIS where the felling of forest areas is proposed. Request that data on potential agricultural/forestry impacts and proposed mitigation and monitoring measures be adopted with respect to site works, soil stability, water quality, landscape, ecology/habitats, monuments and likely impacts when the development is complete.	Chapter 6 Noise & vibration, Chapter 7 Ecology, Chapter 8 Soils & Geology, Chapter 9 Hydrology, Chapter 10 Water Quality, Chapter 14 Archaeology and Chapter 15 Landscape & Visuals and the CEMP in Appendix D

Consultee	Date of Response	Response/Issues raised	Chapter of EIS where Issues Raised are Addressed
Inland Fisheries Ireland	08/12/2014	IFI request that inland waters be considered in the planning stage of the proposed development especially as many fisheries waters have the potential to convey deleterious matter from the works. Temporary crossing structures if required require IFI approval as regards specification and timing installation. Permanent crossing structures should not damage fish habitat or create blockages to fish and macroinvertebrate passage. IFI strongly recommends that contact be made with OPW at the earliest stage in the planning and design process. Guidance on culvert and bridge crossings and bank protection works was provided. Advice on soil erosion/suspended solids was also given. No instream works shall be carried out without the written approval of Inland Fisheries Ireland.	Chapter 9 Hydrology and Chapter 10 Water Quality and the Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) in Appendix D
An Taisce	10/12/2014	The eligibility of the proposal to qualify for Strategic Infrastructure under current legislation and planning guidelines and policies is queried, the origin of the development as an export proposal is queried.	Chapter 03 Policy, Chapter 04 Consultation, Chapter 09 Hydrology, Chapter 10 Water, Chapter 11 Human Beings, Chapter 15 Landscape and Visuals, Chapter 17 Interaction of the Foregoing
Department of Arts Heritage and the Gaeltacht	12/12/2014	Requested to include an assessment of the visual impact of this development on the World Heritage Site at Brú na Bóinne, County Meath, and its impact on Ireland's World Heritage Sites on the Tentative list (2010). The EIS and AA screening/Natura Impact Statement (NIS) should consider these and other proposed windfarm projects when addressing the issue of cumulative impacts. Details of contracted windfarms not yet built are available on the Eirgrid website which could aid in determining any potential cumulative impacts. The EIS should include the impacts of construction, operation and decommissioning on the Natural Heritage. Survey methodologies should follow best practice and if necessary be modified to reflect the Irish situation. Complete project details including construction management plans (CMPs) need to be provided in order to allow an adequate EIS and appropriate assessment to be undertaken. The EIS process should identify any pre and post construction monitoring which should be carried out.	Chapter 14 Archaeology, Architecture and Cultural Heritage, Chapter 15 Landscape and Visual. Chapter 7 Ecology, , Chapter 9 Hydrology, Chapter 10 Water Quality, Appendix D CEMP and the NIS

Consultee	Date of Response	Response/Issues raised	Chapter of EIS where Issues Raised are Addressed
Waterways Ireland	17/12/2014	It is imperative that the structural and waterproof integrity of the canals and their infrastructure is maintained and that the works do not obstruct navigation of the canals. Any proposed work on Waterways Ireland's property must be fully discussed and agreed with formal written agreements in place. Attention is drawn to the 'Department's Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (2004/2011), in particular Chapter 13, wherein is stated (at 13.2.1) 'the attendant grounds of a structure are lands outside the curtilage of the structure but which are associated with the structure and are intrinsic to its function, setting and/or appreciation'	Chapter 2 Description of the Development, Chapter 8 Soils and Geology, Chapter 13 Traffic & Transportation, Chapter 4 Consultations
Bird Watch Ireland	18/12/2014	Generally supportive of development of low carbon energy sources. Concerns regarding the proximity of some of the proposed developments (western locations Ballinla and Clonbullogue) to a nearby site of importance for breeding wader species and potential for cumulative impact.	Chapter 7 Ecology
Butterfly Conservation Ireland	21/01/2015	It appears that no Marsh Fritillary population is directly affected by the proposed development in Derrybrennan and Lullymore, County Kildare. We know of no population in the Drehid area or in County Meath. Woodcock has been frequently recorded in the Derrybrennan and Lullymore area	Chapter 7 Ecology
Geological Society of Ireland	21/11/2014	Outlined GSI datasets available that are available for review.	Chapter 8 Soils and Geology, Chapter 9 Hydrology, Chapter 10 Water Quality

Table 4.2: Pre-Submission Consultation Responses to Proposed Grid Connection Routes

Consultee	Date of Response	Response/Issues raised	Chapter of EIS where Issues Raised are Addressed
Department of Defence	17/12/2014	Based on the information provided and assuming that the routes connecting to the national grid are underground, the Department of Defence has no observations to make	N/A
OPW	19/12/2014	Have no further comments at this stage	N/A
Kildare County Council	16/12/2014	Have no further comment to make in relation to the grid connection options	N/A
Kildare County Council National Roads Office	15/12/2014	Any potential impact on the National Road Network of the cable routes in relation to crossing of and proximity to should be considered and assessed.	N/A

The responses received were fully considered and issues raised were followed up through contact with the respondent where clarification was necessary and addressed throughout the EIS.

4.2.4 Telecommunication Service Providers

Telecommunication providers were contacted separately. Table 4.3 below details the correspondence with the telecommunication providers.

Table 4.3: Correspondence with the Service Providers

Telecommunications Operator	Impact Identified	Comments
Radio Telefís Éireann	No	Telecoms scoping email issued 13/11/2014. Protocol agreed and signed.
O2 Telefónica Ireland (Mosaic)	-	Telecoms scoping email issued 12/11/2014. No response received.
ESB Telecoms Ltd	Yes	Telecoms scoping email issued 12/11/2014. Response received on 17/11/2014 (excluding SCADA radio services).
ESB - high sites, polling radio network only	No	Telecoms scoping email issued 12/11/2014. Response received on 17/11/2014.
Eircom	Yes	Telecoms scoping email issued 13/11/2014. Responses received on 28/11/2014 and on 01/12/2014.
Mosaic - Meteor Communications (Mosaic)	-	Telecoms scoping email issued 12/11/2014. No response received.
Three (BT)	Yes	Telecoms scoping email issued 13/11/2014. Response received on 26/11/2014.
Vodafone (Netshare)	-	Telecoms scoping email issued 13/11/2014. No response received.

Telecommunications Operator	Impact Identified	Comments
BT	Yes	Telecoms scoping email issued 13/11/2014.
Ripplecom	Yes	Telecoms scoping email issued 13/11/2014. Response received on 21/11/2014 and on the 01/12/2014. Consultation meeting held on 22/12/2015 and on 09/02/2015.
UPC Ireland	No	Telecoms scoping email issued 25/11/2014. Response received on 08/01/2015.
Irish Broadband (Imagine)	No	Telecoms scoping email issued 25/11/2014. Response received on 25/11/2014.
Digiweb	-	Telecoms scoping letter issued 26/11/2014. No response received.
Magnet Networks Ltd	-	Telecoms scoping letter issued 26/11/2014. No response received.
Commission for Communications Regulation	-	Telecoms scoping letter issued 26/11/2014. No response received.
An Garda Síochána	-	Telecoms scoping letter issued 26/11/2014. No response received.
TETRA	-	Telecoms scoping email issued 25/11/2014. No response received.
TowerCom Ltd	-	Telecoms scoping email issued 25/11/2014. No response received.

Further details on the impacts on telecommunications are contained in Chapter 16 Telecommunications and Aviation.

4.3 Consultation with Prescribed Bodies and Key Stakeholders

In preparing this EIS, a programme of consultation has been undertaken with a wide range of statutory bodies and key stakeholders. A list of the consultation meetings is detailed below in Table 4.4. All concerns raised in the course of project design and impact appraisal are addressed in this EIS. Details of some of the key meetings are discussed in further detail below.

4.3.1 SID Pre-Application Consultation

In October 2014, Element Power Ireland Ltd. wrote to An Bord Pleanála to formally request a pre-application consultation meeting under section 37B of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, in respect of a proposed wind farm in North County Kildare and South County Meath.

The first pre-application consultation meeting was held on the 4th November 2014. At this meeting the project was presented to the Board. Details on the studies carried out and consultations which had taken place were discussed. The full record of the first meeting with the Board is provided in Appendix B of Volume 3.

A second meeting was held with the Board on the 23rd January 2015. At this meeting the Board raised a number of comments following the first meeting. A full copy of the record of this meeting is provided in Appendix B.

All comments raised by the Board at both meetings are addressed throughout the EIS.

4.3.2 Consultation Planning Authority

Element Power Ireland Ltd. has met with Kildare County Council Director of Services for Planning to introduce the Maighne Project and to discuss time frames associated with the proposed wind farm.

A scoping document was issued to Meath County Council and Kildare County Council. A response from Kildare County Council was received. Comments raised in the response have been addressed throughout the EIS.

A pre-application meeting took place with Kildare County Council Planning Department (KCCPD) and Kildare County Council Roads Department on the 12th December 2014.

4.3.3 Consultation with NPWS

Consultation with the NPWS began in 2012, when the Maighne project was being considered as part of the Greenwire Export project. Initial meetings defining the scope of the project and proposed survey effort were held. The efficacy of the proposed survey methods was discussed. This included consultation with the birds unit in regard to species of conservation concern and methods proposed to survey same. Following these consultations recommended changes to the surveying effort were incorporated into the study. Regular update meetings were held to discuss survey progress and disseminate initial findings. This process included meetings with senior staff in Dublin and regional staff.

On 5th December 2014, a meeting was held with senior staff in Dublin and the Maighne project as an independent project was introduced. A scoping document was issued to them prior to this meeting, in October 2014, for comment. A response was received on the 12th December 2014. Issues raised in response to the meeting and scoping document have been addressed in the EIS and in particular in Chapter 7 Ecology.

4.3.4 Consultation with IFI

A meeting was held with Inland Fisheries Ireland on the 28th of November 2014. At this meeting the proposed project was presented to the IFI. Water quality sampling and aquatic assessments were discussed. It was noted that three sites where EPA/WFD monitoring was undertaken that certain parameters have not achieved good status and that there are elevated ammonia levels in some areas due to the presence of peat soils.

A formal scoping document was issued to the IFI and a response to same was received on the 08th December 2014. Comments raised in the response have been addressed throughout the EIS.

4.3.5 Consultation with Department of Arts Heritage and the Gaeltacht

A meeting was held on the 03rd of December with the Department of Arts Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DoAHG). At this meeting the project was presented to the Department. Methods of assessment and the scope were presented, as was the approach taken regarding the characterisation of the existing environment and how the assessment of the impacts would be presented. The Department agreed in principle to the methods being applied. The DoAHG identified two sites where there will be a direct impact on the environs of monuments, namely, a potential moated site within the Drehid-Hortland cluster and a ringfort (KD017-004) in the Cloncumber cluster. The Department recommended geophysics and testing post consent for these two sites.

4.3.6 Consultation with EirGrid

A number of discussions have been held with EirGrid with regard to the proposed development. The grid connection point for the wind farm has not yet been determined. It is expected that the connection point will be agreed with EirGrid in 2015.

4.3.7 Consultation with Waterways Ireland

A number of discussions have been held with Waterways Ireland with regard to the proposed development. Meetings were held on the 20th November 2014, 08th December 2014 and 07th January 2015.

At the initial meeting, on the 20th November 2014, the project was presented to Waterways Ireland. The crossing of cables over the Grand Canal was discussed. The location of access tracks together with proposed haul routes and borrow pit locations were discussed with respect to the Grand Canal.

4.3.8 Details on Meetings and Consultations

A list of meetings and consultations is detailed in Table 4.4 below.

Table 4.4: Meetings and Consultations

Consultee	Date of Meeting	Main Discussion Items	Chapter of EIS where Issues Raised are Addressed
Meath County Council – Transportation Department	17/02/2015 and emails	Meath County Council was consulted in respect of the HV cable route between Drehid and Woodland. The road route was reviewed and technical details and road reinstatement requirements discussed.	Throughout the EIS and the outline CEMP in Appendix D
Kildare County Council Pre Planning Meeting	15/12/2014		Throughout the EIS and the outline CEMP in Appendix D
Kildare County Council (Roads, Transport & Public Safety)	12/12/2014, emails and letters	Kildare County Council was consulted regarding the MV and HV cable routes. The following areas were discussed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location of EirGrid Substation. • Use of overhead cable routes. • Use of cross-country cable routes. • Impact of construction on road fabric of existing bog rampart roads. • Use of Bord na Móna railways to lay cables. • Use of Regional Roads to lay cables instead of bog rampart roads. 	Throughout the EIS and the outline CEMP in Appendix D
An Bord Pleanála	04/11/2014	Pre-Application Consultation – Main elements of the project outlined including nature and extent of field work and consultations to date.	Throughout the EIS

Consultee	Date of Meeting	Main Discussion Items	Chapter of EIS where Issues Raised are Addressed
An Bord Pleanála	23/01/2015	The main issues raised at this meeting were that the development constituted one project, the alternative section should address geographical area and the connection of cabling should be given careful consideration.	Throughout the EIS
Department of Arts Heritage and Gaeltacht	03/12/2014	Key issues concerning potential impacts on the environs of monuments	Chapter 14 Archaeological, Architectural and Cultural Heritage
Iarnród Éireann – Irish Rail	15/01/2015 and emails	Cable crossing of the Dublin Sligo rail line west of Kilcock: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Option to attach cable to the bridge beams. • Option to undertake a trenchless crossing beneath the bridge structure. • Option is to lay cable on top of the bridge structure within the adjacent layby area. • Technical details and agreement/processes which would be put in place in advance of the works. 	Throughout the EIS and the outline CEMP in Appendix D
NRA	14/11/2014	Crossings of the M4 motorway: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trenchless crossing of the M4 near Moyvalley. • Trenchless crossing of the M4 at Johnstown. • Impact of trenchless crossings on existing drainage infrastructure. • Option to install HV cables within existing ducts on a motorway over-bridge where M4 is in cutting. • Technical details and agreement/processes which would be put in place in advance of the works. • Turbine delivery routes to the wind farm locations relating to the M4 motorway. 	Throughout the EIS and the outline CEMP in Appendix D

Consultee	Date of Meeting	Main Discussion Items	Chapter of EIS where Issues Raised are Addressed
NPWS	05/12/2014	An overview of the project was presented and an overview of the main ecological findings and the main mitigation strategy proposed were discussed.	Chapter 7 Ecology
Inland Fisheries Ireland	28/11/2014	Water quality sampling and aquatic assessments were discussed.	Chapter 7 Ecology, Chapter 9 Hydrology, Chapter 10 Water Quality
BT (BT and Three)	Phone calls and email correspondence	Potential conflicts with telecommunications services; mitigation strategy; way forward.	Chapter 17 Telecommunications and Aviation
ESB Telecommunications	Phone calls and email correspondence	Potential conflicts with telecommunications services; mitigation strategy; way forward.	Chapter 17 Telecommunications and Aviation
Netshare (Vodafone)	Phone calls and email correspondence	Potential conflicts with telecommunications services; mitigation strategy; way forward.	Chapter 17 Telecommunications and Aviation
Mosaic (Meteor and O2)	Phone calls and email correspondence	Potential conflicts with telecommunications services; mitigation strategy; way forward.	Chapter 17 Telecommunications and Aviation
RTÉ (2RN)	Phone calls & email correspondence	Potential conflicts with telecommunications services; mitigation strategy; way forward.	Chapter 17 Telecommunications and Aviation
Ripplecom	22/12/2014 & 09/02/2015	Potential conflicts with telecommunications services; mitigation strategy; way forward.	Chapter 17 Telecommunications and Aviation
	Phone calls & email correspondence	Potential conflicts with telecommunications services; mitigation strategy; way forward.	Chapter 17 Telecommunications and Aviation

Consultee	Date of Meeting	Main Discussion Items	Chapter of EIS where Issues Raised are Addressed
Waterways Ireland	20/11/2014	Cable crossing of the Grand Canal and Royal Canal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to letter received from Waterways Ireland contained in Appendix B of Volume 3 of the EIS. Haul routes, cable delivery routes and excavations near the Grand Canal. Technical details and agreement/processes which would be put in place in advance of the works. 	Chapter 2 Description of the Development, Chapter 9 Hydrology, Chapter 10 Water Quality, outlined CEMP in Appendix D and Chapter 13 Traffic and Transport
Department of Defence	03/10/2014	Potential concerns with aviation services; mitigation strategy; way forward.	Chapter 17 Telecommunications and Aviation
	05/11/2014	Potential concerns with aviation services; mitigation strategy; way forward.	Chapter 17 Telecommunications and Aviation
	21/11/2014	Potential concerns with aviation services; mitigation strategy; way forward.	Chapter 17 Telecommunications and Aviation
Irish Water	(Email)	MV and HV cable routes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Location of existing water services including surface water, foul sewers and watermains. 	Chapter 10 Water Quality, outlined CEMP in Appendix D
M4 PPP Co	(Email)	Crossings of the M4 motorway: No comments at the pre-planning stage.	Not applicable.
Kildare NRDO/Westmeath NRO	(Email)	Crossings of the M4 Motorway: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Received M4 CPO maps and schedules from Westmeath NRO. 	The outline CEMP in Appendix D

4.4 Public Consultation & Information Days

4.4.1 Introducing the concept of Wind Farms

When Element Power first publicly launched its Greenwire wind energy project on July 12th, 2012, Kildare and Meath were identified as two of the five counties proposed for inclusion in the project. Element Power conducted numerous national and local media interviews at the time of and following the launch which was covered extensively in the Meath Chronicle and on local radio station, LMFM and in the Leinster Leader and local radio station, KFM. The company also briefed local Oireachtas members at a specially convened event in Dublin on the day of the launch.

4.4.2 8,000 newsletters distributed in Kildare & Meath

In the months which followed, the company distributed some 350 project newsletters within County Meath and Kildare. There were four different colour editions (July '12, November/December '12, February '13 and April '13). The company also employed a Community Liaison Officer (CLO) in Meath and Kildare who became a direct point of contact for locals who might have questions regarding the proposed project. This dedicated community liaison Officers was in addition to three members of the company's on site Project Team in Kildare, a dedicated project office in Tullamore, a lo-call information line, a project website and dedicated e-mail address.

4.4.3 First Public Information Days

As the company's plans progressed, Element Power identified a need to organise a public information day in North Kildare to display maps of proposed sites and engage with the wider public on the company's intentions. The event was advertised in the Leinster Leader and on the project website, www.greenwire.ie.

The first public information event held in the area, in Derrinturn, Co. Kildare was on 11 July 2013. This public information event introduced the public to the proposed wind energy development in the areas and provided details of the study areas being considered in the region as part of the Greenwire project, as well as providing general details in relation to wind energy development. A total information team of 10 people from Element Power, external planning/ environmental consultants and professionals in wind farm development on hand to deal with any queries which might arise over an eight hour period – 4pm to 8pm.

A total of 22 A0 sized storyboards were put on display to explain the background to the project and how the company proposes developing wind turbines along with addressing some of the misconceptions.

Copies of the storyboards in A4 booklet form were made available for people to bring home and read in more detail. A poster-board containing a map of study areas and five A3 photomontages were also on display showing a typical proposed wind farm from distances of 500 metres, 1, 2, 4 and 8 kilometres. These were helpful in explaining the visual impact of the project.

The official attendance was 48 people with a broadly positive engagement on a host of issues ranging from proposed turbine locations, the community benefits policy, the possibility of making lands available for a project and the impact on neighbouring houses/farms. Specially commissioned 20 page information booklets were made available in addition to the project newsletters and feedback was invited from all who attended via a 'comments box'.



Photo 1: First Public Information Day

4.4.4 Extra resources deployed

Element Power has also set up a Community Liaison Team, who are engaged in ongoing daily/weekly consultation with the community based stakeholders. Numerous meetings have been held with individuals as well as voluntary groups, business groups and community groups in the area. Details of the proposed development have been provided, along with details on the proposed near neighbour scheme and community benefit scheme.

A YouTube channel was established with specially commissioned Element Power videos made available while in excess of 500 project information leaflets and community Benefit Flyers were distributed in the area immediately around the proposed sites.

4.4.5 Second Public Information Day

The company undertook a second public information day, this time in the Hamlet Court Hotel in Enfield, Co. Meath on Tuesday, 18th November 2014 to formally launch the Maighne Wind Farm project. In attendance were 10 company representatives, environmental and planning consultants (Fehily Timoney & Company and Arup) and project experts on hand to deal with issues raised by members of the public. Again, the event was advertised in the Leinster Leader a week in advance and also featured as a news item on local radio stations, LMFM and KFM, that morning with people being encouraged to attend.

The doors were open from 4pm to 8pm with an official attendance of 77. Twelve pano-pods displaying photomontages showing how the wind farm would be viewed from a number of locations around the five clusters were exhibited. A pano-pod is a modular 180-360 degree backlit display unit that curves about the views in an arc such that the entire panoramic image remains equidistant from the viewers' eyes thereby displaying a very accurate view of the proposed development.

A1 sized ordnance survey maps showing turbine locations as well as photography and information on the company's proposed Community Benefits Programme were also displayed.



Photo 2: Second Public Information Day

4.4.6 Main issues raised at Public Information Days

Overall, on both days the feedback was positive, with an emphasis on potential employment opportunities and economic benefits that the development could bring to the area. Issues that arose during these public consultation events are summarised as follows:

4.4.7 Turbine Locations

The primary point of interest and question at both information days were the turbine locations. These were presented as proposed locations on both instances.

4.4.8 Visual impact

There were 12 pano-pods displaying the photomontages showing how the wind farm will be viewed from a number of locations around the project. There were a number of both positive and negative comments in relation to the photomontages on display.

4.4.9 Economic Benefit & Community Benefit

There were a number of queries on the employment and economic opportunities that may arise. It was clearly outlined that most employment will be generated through the construction phase with a smaller number of employment opportunities during the operation phase.

The issue of the rates which would be payable to the local authorities was also discussed. Details on the proposed community benefit programme and near neighbour schemes was also discussed with the public who attended.

4.4.10 Noise

A number of people commented negatively on the wind energy industry. When questioned, the facts in relation to wind energy were explained in as much detail as possible. The IWEA 'Myths about Wind' document was made freely available at the meeting.

4.4.11 Planning process

Attendees queried the planning process and timelines. Information was provided on the Strategic Infrastructure Development planning process. Questions were also asked in relation to the Wind Energy Guidelines review. Attendees were informed on how they could become involved in the process and make submissions.

4.4.12 Public Relations

Some criticism of the advertisement of the events was given on both public information days. Following on from the feedback received at the first information day additional posters were placed at various locations for the second meeting across the project area. The community liaison officer along with the project team continued with their engagement with the community stakeholders before and after the public consultation days themselves.

4.4.13 Media

The company engages with local and national media as appropriate regarding the proposed development. Numerous press releases and advertorials have been issued to keep both the local and wider community informed as to relevant progress regarding the project.

4.4.14 Community Liaison Officer (CLO)

Following on from the initial public information day ‘The Greenwire Information Booklet June 2013’ was distributed to over 200 homes and businesses in the areas closest to the proposed development. This was managed by a locally based Community Liaison Officer (CLO) employed by Element Power to liaise with the various community organisations, business owners, individuals and other project stakeholders in the area.

Information from the CLO was provided through phonecalls, face to face meetings and via the Greenwire Information Booklet. Element Power Ireland Ltd. also issued a Community Fund – Expression of Interest form to organisations and individuals within the area. Response to this was positive with a number of groups filling in expression of interest forms.

Table 4.5: CLO stakeholder engagement: June 2013 – February 2015

Audience	No. of Engagements (Phone/Meetings/Emails)
Community/Voluntary Organisations	21
Sporting Organisations	35
Business People	58
Locals/Individuals	188
Project Landowners	28
Public Representatives	51

4.5 Local Landowners

Local landowners were also kept informed through the project and invited to attend the open days.

4.6 Conclusion

Extensive consultation has been undertaken with both the local community, local authority and prescribed bodies. The applicant has invested significant resources in its public consultation programme since first mooted the concept of wind energy in the area three years ago. The applicant has exceeded what might have been required but is satisfied that this level of engagement and commitment was beneficial to all community stakeholders

Overall feedback from the public consultation was positive, with an emphasis on potential employment opportunities and economic benefits that the development could bring to the area. Concerns regarding the visual impact are addressed in Chapter 15 Landscape and Visual.

Detailed discussions were held with a number of prescribed bodies and interested stakeholders, including the NPWS, IFI, Kildare County Council, Meath County Council, EirGrid, Department of Arts Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Waterways Ireland, National Roads Authority, Irish Water and Iarnród Éireann. Their comments and feedback were incorporated into the EIS.

A scoping document was issued to 55 Prescribed Bodies and interested stakeholders. Meetings were held with a number of consultees in advance of issuing the scoping document. In all there were 22 responses to the scoping report. Responses to the scoping report have been incorporated into the EIS.

Where concerns were raised during the consultation process, these were taken on board and addressed through the development of the project design and the EIS. It is clear that the EIS prepared for this project is extremely detailed and comprehensive and addresses the potential impacts of the development on all key environmental receptors.

It also addresses a number of issues in greater detail than would heretofore be addressed, in direct response to the public consultation process, such as:

- potential impacts on the bloodstock industry
- potential impacts on human health, including ELF and EMF
- potential impacts on property prices

Through the initial constraints assessment, the iterative design process undertaken as part of the EIS and through its detailed assessment of key environmental aspects, the applicant has addressed the key concerns raised by the public during the consultation process.

Element Power remains committed to engaging the public throughout the planning process and beyond. This is further demonstrated by the comprehensive community benefit fund being proposed as part of the project. As part of this process, input is sought from all interested parties, in particular, local community groups and associations as to how best this should be administered.