

Planning Report

Cunlaghfadda Green
Energy Project – Grid
Connection, Co. Mayo



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1.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Proposed Cunlaghfadda Green Energy Project ‘the Proposed Project’ consists of a 110kV onsite substation, loop-in grid connection, and associated infrastructure and works (‘the Proposed Grid Connection’) and 7 no. wind turbines, and associated infrastructure and works (‘the Proposed Wind Farm’) in Co. Mayo.

The Proposed Development for the Proposed Grid Connection will be the subject of a Strategic Infrastructure Development application for approval to An Coimisiún Pleanála under the provisions of Section 182A of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended and is the subject of this Planning Report.

The proposed development for the Proposed Wind Farm is the subject of a separate planning application to Mayo County Council under the provisions of Section 34 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended (Mayo County Council Planning Reference 2660398) and is the subject of a separate planning report. The Proposed Wind Farm will have an installed capacity of approximately 31.5 Megawatts. The Proposed Development will connect the Proposed Wind Farm to the national electricity grid via the 110kV Castlebar to Cloon overhead line. The site area of the Proposed Development, delineated by the red line planning application boundary is 93 hectares.

This Planning Report has been prepared in support of the planning application for the Proposed Development for the Proposed Grid Connection which is accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment Report and Natura Impact Statement. The terminology for the Cunlaghfadda Green Energy Project is defined in **Section 2.1** of this Planning Report.

The introductory sections of this Planning Report provide an overview of the Proposed Development, the Applicant, the site location and context, the site’s planning history and a summary of consultation undertaken. The design process is outlined, demonstrating a clear rationale for the selection of the site and its suitability for a renewable energy development. The iterative design process outlines the design stages from the initial design to the final design. Each design iteration responded to the specific constraints on the site, as they were identified by site surveys and detailed analysis.

The Proposed Development is strongly supported by European and national policy and legislation on renewable energy. At a European level, the Proposed Development is supported by the European Union revised Renewable Energy Directive and REPowerEU. At a national level, the Proposed Development is supported by the National Planning Framework First Revision, Climate Action Plan 2025, the National Energy Security Framework, among other national climate and renewable energy policies. The legally binding greenhouse gas emission reduction target and the obligations of public bodies under the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015, as amended, should also be considered in the assessment of this application. At a local level, the Proposed Development is supported by climate and renewable energy policies as set out in the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028. A full appraisal of the relevant policy and legislation is provided in **Section 6** and **Section 7** of this Report.

The development of transmission infrastructure such as the Proposed Development, which will enable the transfer of renewable energy to the national electricity grid is essential to meet European, national, regional and local climate and renewable energy targets. Ireland needs to scale up onshore wind energy development at an unprecedented rate to achieve its 9 Gigawatts and 80% renewable energy share targets by 2030, as set out in the Climate Action Plan 2025. The reality of achieving these targets is the installation of over 800 Megawatts of wind energy per year until 2030. The Proposed Development will enable the operation of the Proposed Wind Farm, by transferring the renewable wind energy generated to the national electricity grid.

A major step up in renewable energy deployment levels is now required for Ireland to reach its renewable energy target and its carbon budgets. The latest climate and energy reports all make one message abundantly clear; Ireland is not acting fast enough. The Environmental Protection Agency report *Ireland’s Greenhouse Gas Emissions Projections 2024-2055* (May 2025) highlights that Ireland is not on track to meet its national target of 51% emissions reduction target by 2030 compared to 2018 as required under the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015, as amended, nor is the country projected to meet its European Union target of 42% emissions reduction compared to 2005 under the

Effort Sharing Regulations. Similarly, the Climate Change Advisory Council make clear that *‘progress to reduce emissions is not sufficient for Ireland to meet its national and EU climate obligations’*¹. Without decisive action to facilitate renewable energy deployment, Ireland risks missing national and European Union commitments, incurring financial penalties, and undermining energy security.

If permitted, the Proposed Development will transfer approximately 31.5 Megawatts of clean and sustainable renewable wind energy, generated by the Proposed Wind Farm to Ireland’s national electricity grid and national renewable energy capacity. This will not only contribute to the decarbonisation of the electricity sector but will play a role in the decarbonisation of other sectors and the transition to a sustainable and climate neutral economy and society. As provided for in the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015, as amended, Ireland is legally bound to achieve net-zero emissions no later than 2050, and to a 51% reduction in emissions compared to 2018 by 2030.

To conclude, it is submitted that, based on the evidence provided in this Planning Report, the Proposed Development is strongly supported by European, national, regional and local planning policy and will contribute to the achievement of national and local climate and renewable energy targets. The Proposed Development will also support Ireland’s energy security by transferring indigenous renewable wind energy to the national electricity grid, which will reduce Ireland’s reliance on imported fossil fuels for energy generation. Ultimately, it is submitted that the Proposed Development is in accordance with principles of proper planning and sustainable development.

¹ <https://www.climatecouncil.ie/councilpublications/annualreviewandreport/CCAC-AR-2024-SfA-final.pdf>

2.

INTRODUCTION

This Planning Report has been prepared by MKO on behalf of Cunlaghfadda Green Energy Limited ('the Applicant'), to accompany a Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) planning application to An Coimisiún Pleanála ('ACP' or 'the Commission') under Section 182A of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended ('the Planning Act'). The planning application comprises a 110kV onsite substation, loop-in grid connection, and associated infrastructure and works ('the Proposed Development'). The Proposed Development Site is located in the townland of Cloonbaul in Co. Mayo. The site area of the Proposed Development, delineated by the red line planning application boundary, is 9.3 hectares ('ha').

The Proposed Development forms part of the Cunlaghfadda Green Energy Project ('the Proposed Project') which is comprised of the Proposed Development and the proposed 7 no. wind turbines, and associated infrastructure and works ('the Proposed Wind Farm').

The Proposed Development is the subject of this Planning Report and this planning application to the Commission under the provisions of Section 182A of the Planning Act.

The Proposed Development will connect the Proposed Wind Farm to the national electricity grid via the 110kV Castlebar to Cloon overhead line. The proposed development for Proposed Wind Farm is the subject of a separate planning application to Mayo County Council (MCC) under the provisions of Section 34 of the Planning Act (MCC Planning Reference 2660398) and is the subject of a separate planning report.

The Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and Appropriate Assessment Screening Report (AASR) and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) assess the Proposed Project which comprises both the Proposed Grid Connection and the Proposed Wind Farm and accompany both applications. The EIAR, and AASR and NIS also assess works to the Turbine Delivery Route and junction accommodation works.

2.1

Report Definitions

For the purposes of this Planning Report and, as set out in **Chapter 1** of the EIAR, the following definitions apply:

- Where the '**Proposed Development**' or the '**Proposed Grid Connection**' is referred to, this refers to the proposed 110kV onsite substation, underground 110kV cabling and end masts connecting the proposed 110kV substation to the 110kV Castlebar to Cloon overhead line, access tracks and all ancillary works and apparatus. The Proposed Grid Connection is described in detail in **Chapter 4** of the EIAR.
- Where the '**Proposed Wind Farm**' is referred to, this refers to the proposed turbines and associated foundations and hardstanding areas, including access tracks, underground cabling, meteorological mast, temporary construction compound, peat and spoil management, biodiversity enhancement, tree felling, site drainage, operational stage signage, turbine delivery route and junction accommodation works, and all ancillary works and apparatus. The Proposed Wind Farm is described in detail in **Chapter 4** of the EIAR.
- The '**Proposed Turbines**' refers to the 7 no. proposed turbines associated with the Proposed Wind Farm as outlined above.
- Where the '**Proposed Project**' is referred to, this encompasses the entirety of the project (the Proposed Grid Connection and the Proposed Wind Farm as described above) for the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in accordance with the EIA Directive. The Proposed Project is described in detail in **Chapter 4** of the EIAR.
- Where '**the Site**' is referred to, this relates to the primary study area for the EIAR, as delineated by the EIAR Site Boundary in green as shown on **Figure 3-2** of this Report and encompasses an area of approximately 165 ha.
- Where '**the Proposed Development Site**' is referred to, this relates to the area of the Proposed Development, delineated by the red line planning application boundary, as shown in **Figure 3-3** of this Report and encompasses area of 9.3 ha.

Report Content and Structure

This Planning Report provides a comprehensive evaluation and robust justification for the Proposed Development against relevant policy and legislation at the European, national, regional and local levels.

The Proposed Development is strongly supported by European and national policy and legislation on renewable energy as demonstrated in **Section 6** and **Section 7** of this Planning Report. The development of renewable energy transmission projects, such as the Proposed Development, is essential to meet European, national, regional and local climate and renewable energy targets. Critically, **Section 7** demonstrates that there is a clear and urgent need for additional renewable energy generation and transmissions projects to be developed across the State to meet Ireland’s legally binding greenhouse gas emission reduction targets as set out under the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015, as amended (‘the Climate Act’).

Section 7 of this Planning Report demonstrates that the Proposed Development is strongly supported in principle by the climate and renewable energy policies set out in the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028 (‘MCDP (as varied)’) including the policies and objectives of the Mayo Renewable Energy Strategy 2011-2020 (‘Mayo RES’). **Section 7** also evaluates the Proposed Development against the relevant provisions of the Draft Renewable Energy Strategy for County Mayo (April 2026) (‘Draft Mayo RES’).

Section 7 presents a comprehensive local planning policy compliance assessment which demonstrates that the Proposed Development is in accordance with all other relevant policies and objectives of the MCDP (as varied) including development management policies (refer to **Table 7-2**, **Table 7-3**, **Table 7-4** and **Table 7-5**).

Section 5.2 of this Planning Report provides a clear rationale for the selection of the Proposed Development Site demonstrating that it represents a suitable site for renewable energy development.

This Planning Report is structured as follows:

- **Introduction:** Introduction to the Proposed Development and an outline of the Planning Report definitions, structure and contents.
- **Proposed Development Background:** Outlines the Applicant for the Proposed Development, the site location and context, and the planning history.
- **Consultation:** Presents EIAR scoping, pre-application and community consultations details.
- **Proposed Development:** Description of the main elements of the Proposed Development subject to this planning application to ACP along with the design process for the Proposed Project from site selection through to the final design.
- **Legislative Context:** Requirements under the Planning Act, along with an overview of the legislative framework for renewable energy and climate action.
- **Planning Policy Context:** Review and evaluation of the Proposed Development against international, European, national, regional, and local policy.
- **Planning Assessment:** Evaluation of the Proposed Development against the relevant legislative and policy requirements.

3. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT BACKGROUND

3.1 The Applicant

The Applicant for the Proposed Development, Cunlaghfadda Green Energy Limited, is a subsidiary of Greensource Sustainable Developments Limited ('Greensource').

Greensource is an innovative Irish renewable energy company based in Adare, County Limerick that specialises in the development of renewable energy projects, working with communities from pre-planning to operation, and creating long-lasting local partnerships. Greensource has over ten years development and operational experience. Greensource has a highly skilled and experienced team who are committed to developing projects with successful outcomes for all stakeholders. Working with integrity and care for the local environment, the team has a strong track record, having successfully completed wind energy and other renewable projects in the west of Ireland.

3.2 Site Location and Context

The Site is located within a rural setting in south Co. Mayo, approximately 5.3 kilometres ('km') to the northwest of the town of Claremorris. The town of Castlebar is located approximately 16km north-west of the Site. The Site comprises a mix of agri-pastoral land, bog and private forestry. The N60 National Road runs north-south approximately 2km to the east. The R331 Regional Road runs northeast-southwest, approximately 5km from the southern boundary of the site. Existing access is via the L1505 and L15053 local roads to the south and the L5536 local road to the north. The site location context map is shown in **Figure 3-1** below. The Proposed Development Site falls within the townland of Cloonbaul in County Mayo. The Site, as shown in **Figure 3-2** below encompasses an area of approximately 165 ha and the area of the Proposed Development Site, delineated by the red line planning application boundary as shown below in **Figure 3-3**, is 9.3 ha.

The Proposed Development will connect the Proposed Wind Farm to the national electricity grid and comprises an onsite 'loop-in' 110kV substation which will connect to the nearby Castlebar to Cloon 110kV overhead transmission line via approximately 982 metres (m) of underground cabling route from the proposed onsite 110kV substation through agricultural land to the existing overhead line. The existing overhead line will be broken by 2 no. end masts (lattice type towers) to facilitate the connection.

Current land-use on the Proposed Development Site comprises of agricultural pastures and coniferous forestry. Current land-use on the Proposed Wind Farm comprises coniferous forestry, cutover peat and agriculture. Land-use in the wider landscape of the site comprises a mix of agriculture, peat cutting and low density residential.

A Site Location Context map, an EIAR Site Boundary map and a Planning Application Boundary map are shown in **Figure 3-1**, **Figure 3-2** and **Figure 3-3** respectively below.

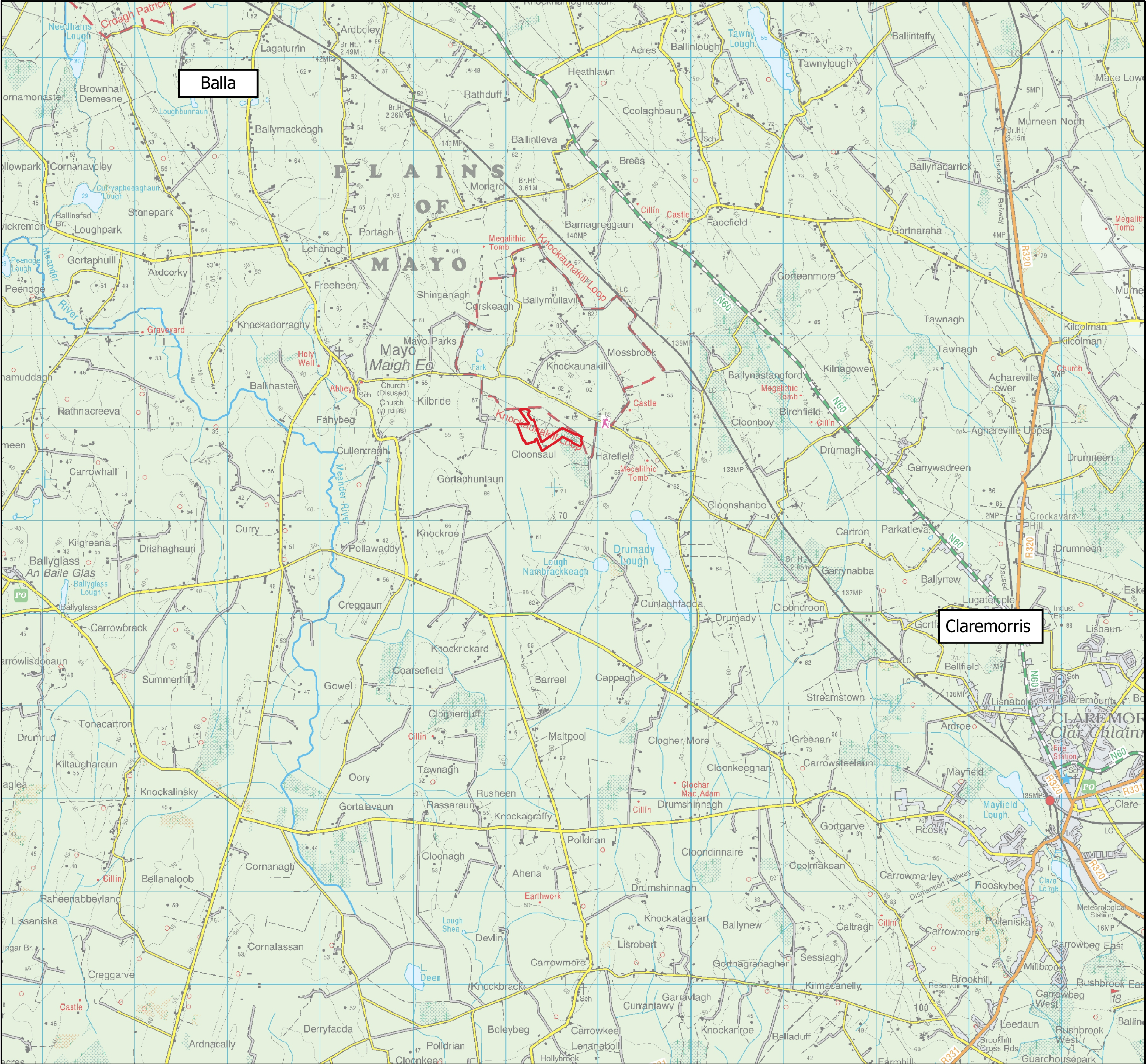
3.3 Planning History

3.3.1 Planning Applications within the Proposed Development Site

A planning search was carried out through the MCC and the Commission's online planning portals in May 2026 for relevant planning applications submitted within the past 10 years that fall within the planning application red line boundary of the Proposed Development which are outlined in **Table 3-1** below.

Table 3-1 Planning Applications within the Proposed Development Application Boundaries

Planning Authority	Pl. Ref.	Description	Planning Authority Decision
Mayo County Council	22780	Works to refurbish the existing Castlebar-Cloon 110kV overhead line which is approximately 57km long and comprises 252 no. wooden polesets and 40 no. steel angle masts between the existing Castlebar 110kv substation in the townland of Aghalusky, and the existing Cloon 110kv substation in the townland of Cloonascragh, Co. Galway. approximately 20km of the existing circuit is located within the functional area of Galway County Council and approximately 37km in the functional area of Mayo County Council.	Granted by MCC on 18/05/2023
Mayo County Council	2660398	We, Cunlaghfadda Green Energy Limited, intend to apply for a ten-year planning permission for development in the townlands of Knockroe, Cunlaghfadda, Harefield, Cloonbaul and Knockaunakill, County Mayo. The development will comprise the provision of a renewable energy development consisting of the following: i. 7 no. wind turbines with a top of foundation to blade tip height of 160 metres; a rotor blade diameter of 136 metres; and hub height of 92 metres, 1 no. meteorological mast with a height of 92 metres and subsequent decommissioning of the wind turbines and meteorological mast following a thirty five-year operational life from the date of full commissioning of the wind turbines; ii. Turbine and meteorological mast foundations and associated temporary and permanent hard-standing areas; iii. All associated underground electrical and communications cabling and subsequent decommissioning of all underground cabling within the site connecting the turbines to a proposed 110kV substation following a thirty-five-year operational life from the date of full commissioning of the wind turbines; iv. 1 no. temporary construction compound; v. Upgrade and widening of existing internal tracks and provision of new permanent and temporary site access tracks and all associated site drainage; vi. Upgrade and temporary road widening works along the L15053 and provision of 1 no. passing bay; vii. 1 no. new temporary site entrance off the L1505 in the townland of Knockroe to accommodate the delivery of abnormal loads and construction phase traffic; viii. 1 no. new permanent site entrance in the townlands of Cunlaghfadda and Cloonbaul; ix. 1 no. borrow pit; x. 10 no. peat and spoil management areas; xi. 2 no. temporary security cabins; xii. Tree felling and vegetation removal; xiii. Biodiversity enhancement areas; xiv. Site drainage; xv. Site fencing, gates and signage; and xvi. All related site works above and below ground and all ancillary development.	Decision due from MCC on 14/07/2026



Map Legend

Red Line Boundary

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Drawing Title

Site Location Context

Project Title

Proposed Cunlaghfadda Green Energy Project

Drawn By

JA

Checked By

NS

Project No.

220825

Drawing No.

Figure 3-1

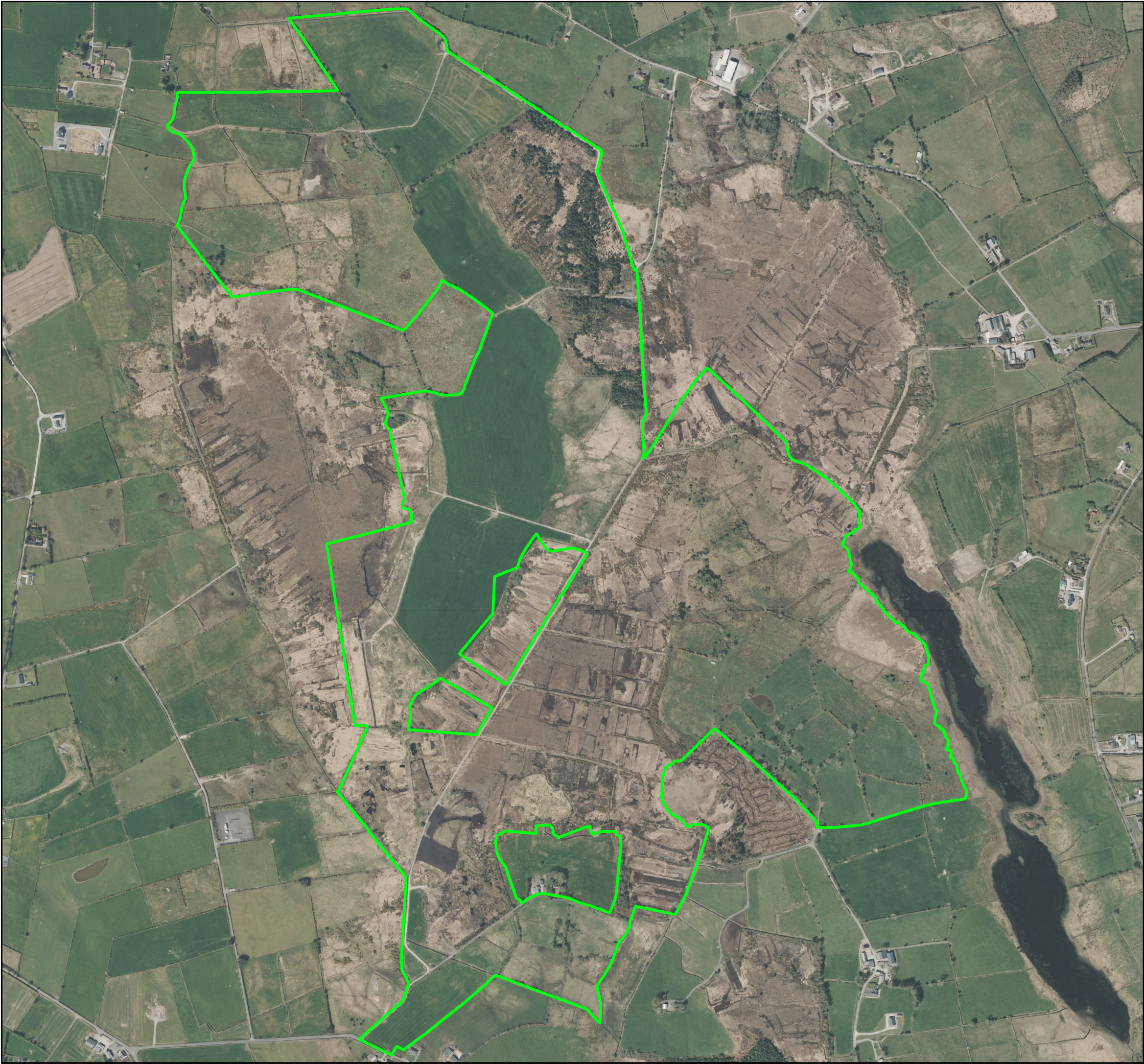
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Map Legend

 EIAR Site Boundary



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Drawing Title
EIAR Site Boundary

Project Title
Proposed Cunlaghfadda Green Energy Project

Drawn By NS	Checked By RK
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Project No. 220825	Drawing No. Figure 3-2
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Scale 1:8,000	Date 2026-06-10
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Map Legend

 Red Line Boundary



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Drawing Title
Planning Application Boundary

Project Title
Proposed Cunlaghfadda Green Energy Project

Drawn By JA	Checked By NS
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Project No. 220825	Drawing No. Figure 3-3
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Scale 1:7,000	Date 2026-06-10
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4. CONSULTATION

This section of the Report outlines the pre-application consultation undertaken by the Applicant for the Proposed Development. This includes Scoping as part of the EIAR, pre-application meetings with MCC and the Commission, and consultation with the local community.

4.1 EIAR Scoping

Scoping is the process of determining the content, depth and extent of topics to be covered in the environmental information to be submitted to a competent authority for projects that are subject to an EIA. This process is conducted by contacting relevant authorities and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) with interest in the specific aspects of the environment with the potential to be affected by the proposal. These organisations are invited to submit comments on the scope of the EIAR and the specific standards of information they require. Comprehensive and timely scoping helps ensure that the EIAR refers to all relevant aspects of the Proposed Project and its potential effects on the environment and provides initial feedback in the early stages of the EIAR preparation, when alterations are still easily incorporated into the design. In this way scoping not only informs the content and scope of the EIAR, but it also provides a feedback mechanism for the proposal design itself.

As part of the constraints mapping process, which is detailed in **Chapter 3** of the EIAR, telecommunications operators, were contacted in July 2022 (and again in November 2022, April/May/July 2023 and September 2025) in order to determine the presence of telecommunications links or aviation assets traversing or located in close proximity to the Proposed Wind Farm. **Table 2-6** of **Chapter 2** of the EIAR represents the latest scoping response received from all rounds of telecom scoping undertaken.

Following this initial exercise, an EIAR scoping document, providing details of the Proposed Project, was prepared by MKO and circulated in May 2023. The scoping document provided details of the Proposed Project and set out the scope of work for the EIAR. Consultees were invited to contribute to the EIAR by suggesting baseline data, survey techniques and potential impacts that should be considered as part of the assessment process and in the preparation of the EIAR.

A revised scoping exercise was carried out in February 2026 due to time elapsed from when previous scoping was carried out, updates in local and national policy and legislation, updates in relevant EIAR guidance, changes in the environmental baseline and refinement of the Proposed Project layout and design. Consultees were invited to contribute again to the EIAR, following these changes.

Refer to **Section 2.7.1** and **Section 2.7.2** of **Chapter 2** of the EIAR for further details.

4.2 Pre-Application Meetings

4.2.1 Mayo County Council

Two pre-application consultation meetings were held with MCC under the provisions of Section 247 of the Planning Act in relation to the Proposed Development. Both meetings included attendees from the Applicant and the Agent ('the project team') and MCC.

The pre-application consultation meetings are summarised in **Table 4-1** below. Further detail is provided in relation to each meeting in **Section 2.7.3.1.1** in **Chapter 2** of the EIAR.

Table 4-1 Mayo County Council Pre-Application Consultation Summary

Meeting Details	Matters Discussed
1st Meeting 16th January 2024 Online via Microsoft Teams	The project team gave an overview of the Proposed Project in the form of a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation which set out the following information: ➤ Introduction to the Proposed Project, the Applicant and project team ➤ Overview of the Site location and site selection process ➤ Proposed Wind Farm design, Proposed Development design, proposed haul route ➤ Site constraints, environmental Designations, habitats, ➤ Landscape and visual impact assessment ➤ Surveys completed to date ➤ Planning policy context ➤ Scoping, pre-application consultation & public consultation ➤ Environmental Impact Assessment Report ➤ Proposed Project timeline Following this presentation, there was further discussion held between the project team and the representatives of MCC. Matters discussed included: ➤ Proposed Grid Connection route ➤ Site constraints ➤ Archaeology ➤ Peat stability ➤ Landscape and Visual ➤ Ecology ➤ Planning policy context ➤ Scoping and community consultation ➤ Planning application contents
2nd Meeting 2nd March 2026 Online via Microsoft Teams	The project team gave an overview of the Proposed Project in the form of a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation which set out the following information: ➤ Introduction, Agenda, project progress, background, policy and consultation ➤ Designated sites and Biodiversity ➤ Ornithology ➤ Water ➤ Peat stability ➤ Noise and shadow flicker ➤ Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment ➤ Other material assets, transport delivery route and temporary construction entrance ➤ Planning application documents and drawings ➤ Project timeline and conclusion Following this presentation, there was further discussion held between the project team and the representatives of MCC. Matters discussed included: ➤ Renewable Energy Strategy for County Mayo ➤ Works to the public road ➤ Landowner letters of consent ➤ Landscape and visual impacts ➤ Residential amenity ➤ RED III

4.2.2 An Coimisiún Pleanála

The Applicant engaged with the Commission, then An Bord Pleanála under the provisions of Section 182E of the Planning Act, as to whether the Proposed Development would meet the thresholds of the Seventh Schedule of the Planning Act. The Applicant opened consultations with the Commission in February 2024 in relation to the Proposed Development which comprises an onsite 110kV substation

which will break into the existing Castlebar to Cloon 110kV overhead line that traverses the site via a loop in loop out connection. An SID meeting under the provisions of Section 182E of the Planning Act was held with the Commission on the 9th of May 2024.

The pre-application consultation meeting is summarised in **Table 4-2** below. Further detail is provided in relation to the meeting in **Section 2.7.3.1.2** in **Chapter 2** of the EIAR.

Table 4-2 An Coimisiún Pleanála Pre-Application Consultation Summary

Meeting Details	Matters Discussed
9th of May 2024 Online via Microsoft Teams	The project team gave an overview of the Proposed Project in the form of a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation which set out the following information: ➤ Introduction to the Proposed Project, the Applicant and the project team ➤ Site location ➤ Proposed Development infrastructure ➤ Planning policy context ➤ Section 182A criteria ➤ Environmental designations ➤ Environmental Impact Assessment Report ➤ Scoping, pre-application consultation & public consultation ➤ Proposed Project timeline Following this presentation, there was further discussion held between the project team and the representatives of the Commission. Matters discussed included: ➤ Planning application for the Proposed Wind Farm ➤ County Development Plan ➤ Website ➤ Proposed Project timeline ➤ Environmental Impact Assessment Report ➤ Engagement with the NPWS ➤ Strategic Infrastructure Development

SID Determination

A letter received from the Commission dated the 4th of July 2024 stated that under Section 182E, it is the opinion of the Commission that the Proposed Development falls within the scope of the Section 182A of the Planning Act. This confirmed that the Proposed Development constitutes SID and therefore the planning application should be made directly to the Commission.

4.3

Community Consultation

The community consultation carried out for the Proposed Project was based around engaging with the local community in an open, honest and transparent manner with the aim to not only provide clear and understandable information but also to gain feedback to understand the views of the local community.

To inform local residents about the Proposed Project, a project Community Liaison Officer (CLO) was appointed, and an introductory information pack was posted in March 2026 to all householders within a c. 2km radius of the Proposed Project. All the information sent to the local community was also made available for public viewing on the project information website. The information contained in the pack and distributed to each household consisted of the following:

- A company brochure, which provided an overview of the Applicant, the Proposed Project and some general information about wind energy;
- A site location map;
- Dedicated contact details (name, phone and email) for the CLO in relation to the project, along with a web address for the dedicated project website.

Following the initial notification of the proposal to the local community, the CLO liaised with interested parties in helping them to understand the proposal and respond to any queries or concerns raised. Door-to-door visits to all households within a c. 1km radius of the Proposed Project were held on the 10th of March 2026. Further consultations were organised, with the CLO attending in-person meetings with individuals to answer queries relating to the Proposed Project. A letter was posted to all households within a c. 1km radius of the Proposed Project, inviting them to a community clinic, which was held on the 8th of April 2026 in McWilliam Park Hotel, Claremorris, County Mayo.

The consultation process has been an extremely valuable exercise and has provided a detailed, and enhanced understanding of the key issues and concerns of the local community. There is currently on-going consultation with the local community, and it is the intention of the Applicant to continue with the consultation for the entire lifespan of the Proposed Project.

The development of the Proposed Project will provide an enduring economic benefit to the communities surrounding the Proposed Project, through the community benefit package for residents and community groups, employment during the construction and operation of the Proposed Project and through the annual rates payable to the Local Authority.

Please refer to the Community Engagement Report at **Appendix 2-2** of the EIAR for further details

5. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

5.1 Proposed Development Description

The Proposed Development is described as follows in the statutory notices:

“In accordance with Section 182A of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, Cunlaghfadda Green Energy Limited gives notice of its intention to make an application to An Coimisiún Pleanála for permission for the following proposed development in the townland of Cloonbaul, Co. Mayo.

The proposed development will consist of the provision of the following:

- i. 1 no. 110kV electrical substation compound consisting of 2 no. single storey control buildings with welfare facilities, all associated electrical plant and apparatus, underground cabling, lighting columns, lightning masts, fencing and access gates, signage, 2 no. wastewater holding tanks and 2 no. rainwater harvesting tanks;*
- ii. The installation of c. 982 metres of 110kV underground cabling, 2 no. new end masts with a height of c. 16 metres and associated hard-standing areas to facilitate the new ‘loop-in/loop-out’ connection into the existing Castlebar to Cloon 110kV overhead line;*
- iii. A telecommunications tower with a height of 36 metres and associated foundation, hard-standing area, fencing and access gate;*
- iv. A temporary construction compound;*
- v. Provision of new permanent and temporary construction site access tracks;*
- vi. Tree felling and vegetation removal;*
- vii. Site drainage; and*
- viii. All related site works above and below ground and all ancillary development.*

A ten-year planning permission is sought.”

A full description of the Proposed Development is provided in **Chapter 4** of the EIAR. The Proposed Development layout is illustrated in **Figure 5-1** below.



Map Legend

Red Line Boundary

Proposed Underground Grid Connection

Proposed End Masts

Proposed 110kV Substation

Proposed Construction Compound

Proposed Grid Connection New Tracks

Temporary Construction Track

Proposed Felling

Wind Farm Infrastructure and Enhancement
(Subject to seperate S34 Application)

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Drawing Title

Proposed Grid Connection Layout

Project Title

Proposed Cunlaghfadda Green Energy Project

Drawn By

JA

Checked By

NS

Project No.

220825

Drawing No.

Figure 5-1

Scale

1:12,000

Date

2026-06-12

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5.2

Proposed Development Design Process

The Proposed Development is being proposed to enable the generation and transfer of renewable wind energy from the Proposed Wind Farm to the national electricity grid, the design process of the Proposed Development forms part of the overall design process of the Proposed Project, which includes the Proposed Development and the Proposed Wind Farm.

The process of identifying a suitable location for a development such as the Proposed Project is influenced by a number of factors. While wind speeds, the area of suitable or available land, proximity to a grid connection point and planning policy are all very important, a wind energy development must be commercially viable/competitive, as otherwise it will never attract the necessary project finance required to see it built.

The Site has been identified as having potential for a wind energy development as a result of a nationwide search of suitable lands. The site selection process has been constraints and facilitators led. Facilitators are factors that give an advantage to a proposed project, while constraints are restrictions that inform the location and design of a project by highlighting sensitivities. A nationwide constraints analysis was undertaken and included avoidance of environmental designations (Natura 2000 sites), review of national, regional and local policies and objectives, adequate setbacks from sensitive receptors, proximity to national grid nodes, avoidance of direct impacts on known cultural heritage assets, access and constructability.

5.2.1

Strategic Site Selection

A 38kV onsite substation was initially proposed at the Site as part of Proposed Development Layout Iteration No. 1, with the location of the proposed substation being in the east of the Site. The location of the 38kV onsite substation was selected based on a review of constraints on site and proximity to the existing road network. The location selected was deemed most appropriate, allowing the 38kV underground grid cabling route to be located entirely within the existing road network thus minimising environmental effects and excavated peat and spoil.

As discussed in **Section 3.2.6 of Chapter 3** of the EIAR, a 110kV loop-in grid connection was pursued following a detailed review of the 38kV grid connection options available at the Site, and an alternative grid connection layout was chosen. Because of this, a larger footprint was required for a 110kV substation in comparison to the previous 38kV substation proposed as per Proposed Project Layout Iteration No. 2 discussed in **Section 3.2.6 of Chapter 3** of the EIAR, with an alternative location also being proposed to minimise length of underground grid connection to the existing Cloon to Castlebar 110kV overhead line. The new location proposed is in the northwest section of the Site.

This location was deemed to be suitable due to low value ecological habitats it is located on, proximity to the Cloon to Castlebar 110kV OHL to facilitate the connection of the Proposed Wind Farm to the national grid, and the existing ground conditions.

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

- Local Policy
- Environmental Sensitivities
- Grid Connection
- Sensitive Receptors
- Site Scale

These criteria are discussed in further detail in **Section 3.2.5 of Chapter 3** of the EIAR.

The Proposed Development will connect the Proposed Wind Farm to the national grid via a new onsite 'loop-in' 110kV substation connected to the nearby Cloon to Castlebar 110kV overhead transmission line via approximately 982 m of underground cabling route which will run in a north-eastward direction from

the proposed onsite 110kV substation through agricultural land to the existing overhead line. The existing overhead line will be broken by 2 no. end masts (lattice type towers) to facilitate the connection to the Proposed Wind Farm. Details regarding potential alternative grid connection options are considered and presented in **Section 3.2.6 of Chapter 3** of the EIAR.

From the review of the criteria set out in **Section 3.2.5 of Chapter 3** of the EIAR, the Site was identified as a suitable location for the provision of a renewable energy development at the scale proposed comprising 7 no. wind turbines. The Site is located on a mix of agriculture-pastoral lands and peatland which allows the Proposed Development to take advantage of the existing access tracks (some of which will be upgraded) and highlights the suitability of the Site as it can make sustainable use of established items of infrastructure. Please note, all required setbacks from sensitive receptors, as set out above, are achievable.

The Site is not located within or adjacent to European Union (EU) or national protected areas, but Annex I Transition mires and quaking bogs and Annex I Molinia meadows are present within the Site. No infrastructure is proposed within these areas, however as identified above, proposed biodiversity enhancement and management proposals do encompass a portion of this area. These measures include enhancement of 1.16ha of Molinia meadow which will provide dual benefits for both the Annex I habitat and marsh fritillary butterflies, planting of 2.5km of treeline/ hedgerow planting and enhancement and planting of 3.5ha of native woodland within the Site.

From the review of the criteria set out in **Section 3.2.5 of Chapter 3** of the EIAR, the Proposed Development was identified for the provision of a connection of the Proposed Wind Farm to the national grid. The 110kV underground electrical cabling route is located within the Site landholding and does not cross any public road sections.

Factoring all required environmental constraints into the project design, a site of considerable scale, with the Proposed Wind Farm having an estimated installed capacity of 31.5 MW, and potential to power approximately 19,542 Irish households with renewable energy and displace 19,731 tonnes of carbon dioxide per annum (690,588 tonnes over the 35-year operational life) was established. The Site is considered appropriate for wind energy development and represents a positive contribution to European and national climate action targets.

Once the current Site emerged as a suitable location for the provision of the Proposed Project, the Applicant approached the relevant landowners in order to assemble the land necessary for the Proposed Project. Arising from site assembly discussions, the current Site was identified and brought forward as being capable of accommodating a cohesive viable area of sufficient size to cater for the Proposed Project.

Throughout the design process, the layout of the Proposed Project has been revised and refined to take account of the findings of all desk-based assessments, site surveys/ investigations and baseline assessments which have brought the design from its first initial layout to the current proposed layout; please see **Section 5.2.3** below for further details.

Refer to **Section 3.2.5 of Chapter 3** of the EIAR for further details.

5.2.2 Detailed Constraints and Facilitators Mapping

The constraints mapping process involves the placing of buffers around different types of constraints so as to clearly identify the areas within which no development works will take place.

The constraints map for the Site, as shown in **Figure 5-2** below, was produced following a desk study of all site constraints. **Figure 5-2** encompasses the following constraints:

- Sensitive Receptors
- Designated sites
- Telecommunications and gas pipelines
- Hydrology
- Archaeology
- Habitats and Biodiversity

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

- Available lands for development;
- Acceptable wind resource;
- General accessibility of all areas of the site due to existing track infrastructure; and
- Limited extent of constraints.

The constraints, associated buffers and facilitators at the Site are discussed in further detail in **Section 3.2.4 of Chapter 3** of the EIAR.

The inclusion of the constraints on a map of the Site allows for a viable area to be identified. Following the mapping of all known constraints, detailed site investigations were carried out by the project team.

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

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

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

Refer to **Section 3.2.4 of Chapter 3** of the EIAR for further details. Please also refer to the Constraints and Facilitators map in **Figure 5-2** below.

5.2.3 Grid Connection Design Process

The Proposed Development will connect the Proposed Wind Farm to the national grid via a new onsite ‘loop-in’ 110kV substation connected to the nearby Cloon to Castlebar 110kV overhead transmission line. This will be connected via approximately 982 m of underground cabling route which will run in a north-eastward direction from the proposed onsite 110kV substation through agricultural land to the existing overhead line. The existing overhead line will be broken by 2 no. end masts (lattice type towers) to facilitate the grid connection. Please see **Figure 5-1** above.

Given the close proximity of the Cloon to Castlebar 110kV overhead line and how it intersects the northern section of the Site, this grid connection option is the most optimal national grid connection point when considering the initial grid connection design involving a 38kV grid connection. The proposed 110kV underground grid cabling route is c. 982 m long and located entirely within private land within the Site for which the necessary agreements are in place, thus minimising any impacts on local road users during the construction phase.

Based on the findings of the multi-disciplinary site visits, the Proposed Development was designed to minimise any effects on ecological habitats on site, with consideration being made to minimise the loss of hedgerow and treeline. The Proposed Development went through two separate iterations. Refer to **Section 3.2.7 of Chapter 3** of the EIAR for further details.



Map Legend

EIAR Site Boundary

National Monuments

National Monuments 50m Buffer

National Inventory of Architectural Heritage Buildings

National Inventory of Architectural Heritage 50m Buffer

Lakes

Lakes 50m Buffer

EPA Mapped Watercourse

EPA Watercourse 50m Buffer

Sensitive Receptors

Sensitive Receptors 640m Buffer

Irish Rail Railway

Irish Rail 180m Buffer

Telecoms Links

Telecoms 100m Buffer

High Pressure GNI Centreline

High Pressure GNI 184m Buffer

Medium Pressure GNI Centreline

Medium Pressure GNI 184m Buffer

Cathodic Protection Centreline

Cathodic Protection GNI 184m Buffer

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Drawing Title

Constraints and Facilitators

Project Title

Cunlaghfadda Green Energy Project

Drawn By

JA

Checked By

NS

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Drawing No.

Figure 5-2

Scale

1:20,000

Date

2026-05-18

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6. LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

6.1 Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended

6.1.1 Planning Application

This SID planning application for the Proposed Development is being made to the Commission pursuant to Section 182A of the Planning Act. Under the provisions of Section 247 of the Planning Act two pre-application consultation meetings were held with MCC in relation to the Proposed Development. Following pre-application consultation with the Commission in relation to the Proposed Development, a letter received from the Commission dated the 4th of July 2024 stated that under Section 182E, it is the opinion of the Commission that the Proposed Development falls within the scope of the Section 182A of the Planning Act. This confirmed that the Proposed Development constitutes SID and therefore the planning application should be made directly to the Commission.

6.1.2 Requirement for Environmental Impact Assessment Report

The EIA Directive 2011/92/EU, as amended (the ‘EIA Directive’), has been incorporated into Irish law primarily through the Planning Act and the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended (‘the Planning Regulations’).

Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning Regulations identifies classes and scales of development that require EIA. The relevant class of development in this case relates to “*installations for the harnessing of wind power for energy production (wind farms) with more than 5 turbines or having a total output greater than 5 megawatts*”, as per Item 3(i) of the Schedule. The Proposed Project exceeds 5 Megawatts in scale and proposes more than 5 turbines and therefore is subject to EIA. As such, the application for the Proposed Development is accompanied by an EIAR.

6.1.3 Requirement for Appropriate Assessment/ Natura Impact Statement

Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive sets out the requirement for an Appropriate Assessment (AA) of any plan or project that is not directly related to the management of a protected site but is likely to have a significant effect on it. This assessment evaluates the potential implications for the site in light of its conservation objectives. Competent authorities are mandated to grant development consent only if it is ascertained that a proposed project will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned or if it will, if there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest why it should proceed, and the relevant criteria is met.

Under Section 177U of the Planning Act, the legal requirements pertaining to AA set out in Part XAB of the Planning Act, apply to this application for planning permission under Section 182A of the Planning Act. This planning application is therefore accompanied by an AA Screening report and NIS.

6.2 The Planning and Development Act 2024

The Planning and Development Act 2024, as amended (‘the New Planning Act’) was signed into law by the President on the 17th of October 2024, after passing in both Houses of the Oireachtas. At the time of lodgement of this planning application, the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) remains in place until such time as the New Planning Act is commenced by Ministerial Orders, with the Government indicating that this will be done on a phased basis.

Should the consenting provisions of the New Planning Act commence while this application is being decided, it is noted in Section 188 of the New Planning Act that, upon repeal of the Planning Act, a grant of permission under Section 182B of the Planning Act will be deemed to be a permission granted under Section 123 of the New Planning Act.

6.3 Climate and Renewable Energy Legislation

6.3.1 European Legislation

The Renewable Energy Directive (RED) is the EU’s legal framework for the development of renewable energy across all sectors of the EU economy, supporting clean energy cooperation across EU countries. Since its adoption in 2009, the RED has evolved through three major iterations -RED I (2009), RED II (2018), and RED III (2023)- each raising ambition to support decarbonisation and energy security.

Under RED I, Member States were legally required to meet a 20% share of renewables in final energy consumption by 2020. RED II increased this target to 32% by 2030. Most recently, RED III, which entered into force in November 2023, raised the target further to 42.5% by 2030, with an indicative ambition of 45%, in line with the REPowerEU Plan.

In order to ensure that the RED III target of 42.5% is achieved, EU Member States must notify their climate and energy objectives, targets, policies, and measures to the European Commission and were established under Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Governance of the Energy Union and Climate Action (‘the Governance Regulation’)². The Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC) submitted an updated National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP) 2021-2030 to the European Commission in July 2024. The updated NECP committed to achieving a 43% share of renewable energy in total energy consumption by 2030. In the trajectories set out in the updated NECP, it states that Ireland’s proposed trajectory will not be in line with the desired trajectory set out in the Governance Regulation.

Given that, of 27 EU member states, Ireland had one of the lowest proportions of renewable energy at 16% in 2024³, the implementation of RED III represents both a legal obligation and an opportunity to remove procedural bottlenecks that hinder critical infrastructure.

Regulation (EU) 2026/667 of the European Parliament and the Council was adopted on the 11th of March 2026. The Regulation amends Regulation (EU) 2021/1119 with regard to the setting of an EU intermediate climate target for 2040.

Considering the scientific advice of the European Scientific Board on Climate Change and a detailed impact assessment, the Regulation sets a legally binding intermediate climate target of a 90% reduction in GHG emissions by 2040, compared to 1990 levels.

The Regulation supports the European Climate Law’s objective of climate neutrality by 2050. The Proposed Project by generating and providing renewable energy to the national electricity grid, will support the decarbonisation of the electricity sector, which will support the decarbonisation of other sectors. The Proposed Project by reducing reliance on GHG emitting fossil fuels will support the achievement of a 90% reduction in GHG emissions by 2040 (relative to 1990 levels) and climate neutrality by 2050.

² Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Governance of the Energy Union and Climate Action, available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32018R1999>

³ https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=File:Renewable_energy_2024_infographic.jpg

6.3.2

National Legislation

Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015, as amended

The Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015, as amended (‘the Climate Act’) establishes a legislative imperative to reduce Ireland’s carbon emissions. The Climate Act legally binds Ireland to achieve net-zero emissions no later than 2050, and to a 51% reduction in emissions by the end of this decade.

The Climate Act also incorporates the following key provisions:

- Embeds the process of setting binding and ambitious emissions-reductions targets in law;
- Provides for a national climate objective, which commits to pursue and achieve no later than 2050, the transition to a climate resilient, biodiversity-rich, environmentally sustainable and climate-neutral economy;
- Provides that the first two five-year carbon budgets proposed by the Climate Change Advisory Council should equate to a total reduction of 51% over the period to 2030, relative to a baseline of 2018;
- The role of the Climate Change Advisory Council has been strengthened;
- The government must adopt carbon budgets that are consistent with the Paris agreement and other international obligations;
- Actions for each sector will be detailed in the Climate Action Plan which must be updated annually; and
- Local Authorities must prepare individual Climate Action Plans which will include both mitigation and adaptation measures and will be updated every five years.

Section 15(1) below places an obligation on public bodies to exercise their functions in favour of climate concerns when making decisions, unless it is objectively impracticable to do so.

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

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

The implications for public bodies in exercising their functions in accordance with Section 15 of the Climate Act has been interpreted by the Supreme Court in its judgment of 4th February 2026 (Coolglass Wind Farm Limited v An Coimisiún Pleanála [2026] IESC 5). The Supreme Court confirmed that consenting authorities must make decisions in a manner ‘consistent with’ the approved national long term climate action strategy, ‘in so far as is practicable’. The Supreme Court held that when considering whether a decision to grant planning permission would be consistent with the climate policies and objectives listed in section 15, a planning authority is entitled to presume that compliance with the development plan, which itself has been prepared in accordance with section 15, will be compliant with those climate policies and objectives. As demonstrated in this Report, the Proposed Development complies with the development plan and the objectives therein. Accordingly, it is submitted that granting permission for the Proposed Development is consistent with the section 15 climate policies and objectives.

7.

PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

This Section provides a summary of the planning, renewable energy and climate policy context relevant to the Proposed Development. A more detailed overview of planning policy at all levels is set out in **Chapter 2** of the EIAR.

It is clear from the policies outlined below that the Proposed Development is strongly supported in principle by policy at all levels. The following section contains a synopsis of the current policies in place and their relevance to the Proposed Development.

The Proposed Development sits within a policy framework characterised by several recent crises, which have significantly influenced policy changes in recent years. These crises have heightened the imperative for Ireland to transition towards a renewable energy-focused electricity grid and have emphasised the necessity for diversifying its energy sources.

7.1

International, European, National and Regional Policy

7.1.1

International Policy

Paris Agreement

On an international level, Ireland is a signatory of the Paris Agreement, a global initiative adopted in 2015 that aims to address climate change by limiting global warming to well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, with efforts to limit the increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius. Under the Paris Agreement, countries submit Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), outlining their individual climate action plans and commitments. Ireland's contribution comes under the European Union's (EU) NDCs targets and is based on the European Union's 2030 emissions reductions targets.

7.1.2

European Policy

European Green Deal

On a European level, the European Green Deal, initially introduced by the European Commission in December 2019, sets out the 'blueprint' for a transformational change of the 27-country bloc from a high- to a low carbon economy. The European Green Deal is intended to work through a framework of regulation and legislation setting clear overarching targets, e.g. a bloc-wide goal of net-zero carbon emissions by 2050 and a 55% cut in emissions by 2030 (compared with 1990 levels). This is a substantial increase compared to the existing target, upwards from the previous target of at least 40% (2030 Climate & Energy Framework), and furthermore, these targets demonstrate the ambition necessary to keep the global temperature increase to well below 2°C and pursue efforts to keep it to 1.5°C as per the Paris Agreement.

The EU Fit for 55

The EU Fit for 55 package was published in late 2021 with the aim of reducing EU emissions by at least 55% by 2030 compared to 1990 levels and making the EU carbon-neutral by 2050. This EU package is a set of proposals to revise all existing EU acts on climate and energy and increase the EU target for renewables in the overall energy mix from 32% in 2030 to 40%.

Renewable Energy Directive & REPowerEU

In November 2023, a revision of the Renewable Energy Directive⁴ (RED III), came into force. RED III increases the EU wide renewable energy target from 32% set under the previous revision of the directive to at 42.5%, with an ambition to reach 45% by 2030. This increase comes following the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the publication of REPowerEU plan in May 2022. REPowerEU aims to make Europe independent from Russian fossil fuels including oil and gas by rapidly transitioning to renewable energy. The plan aims to accelerate the scale up of renewables by speeding up the permitting process and placing renewable energy developments in the category of overriding public interest. Notwithstanding that REPowerEU specifically relates to making Europe independent from fossil fuels imported from Russia, the provision of indigenous renewable energy developments such as the Proposed Project, will reduce Ireland's vulnerability to price fluctuations and geopolitical risks associated with the importation of fossil fuels.

AccelerateEU

AccelerateEU was published by the European Commission in April 2026. AccelerateEU addressed the EU's rising energy costs and the acceleration of the renewable energy transition to strengthen energy resilience.

AccelerateEU sets out five pillars which set out the key areas of action of the plan, they are as follows:

1. *Closer EU coordination,*
2. *Protecting consumers and businesses,*
3. *More homegrown clean energy,*
4. *Stepping up our energy system, and*
5. *Boosting investments.*

The two pillars relevant to the Proposed Project relate to increasing indigenous renewable energy and improving our energy system. The Proposed Project which is an indigenous renewable wind energy development with an onsite 110kV substation that will produce and increase Ireland's renewable energy capacity and will provide a new substation which will connect to the national electricity grid.

7.1.3 National Policy

Climate Action Plan 2025

The CAP25 represents the third statutory update to Ireland's climate roadmap under the Climate Act. Building on the foundations laid by previous plans, CAP25 refines and strengthens the strategies necessary to deliver Ireland's legally binding carbon budgets and sectoral emissions ceilings. It sets out a clear trajectory to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 51% by 2030 and to achieve climate neutrality no later than 2050.

A cornerstone of CAP25 is the decarbonisation of Ireland's electricity system through a substantial increase in renewable energy generation. The plan reaffirms ambitious targets for renewable electricity share which includes 80% by 2030, and 50% by 2025. This is to be achieved through the accelerated deployment of onshore wind (6 GW by 2025; 9 GW by 2030), offshore wind (at least 5 GW by 2030), and solar energy (up to 5 GW by 2025; 8 GW by 2030).

CAP25 also highlights the importance of upgrading the national electricity grid, specifically to support the transition to renewable energy. The Proposed Development will facilitate the transfer of renewable wind energy to the national electricity grid and will also stabilise the grid by transmitting the renewable energy produced by the Proposed Wind Farm at an appropriate voltage.

⁴ Directive (EU) 2018/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2018 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources (recast)

National Development Plan 2021-2030

The National Development Plan 2021-2030 (NDP) sets out the major public investment projects identified by Government which are to play a significant role in addressing the opportunities and challenges faced by Ireland over the coming years such as housing, health, population growth, and most relevant to the subject development, climate change. It is stated that the NDP will be the *'largest and greenest ever delivered in Ireland'*, and in this regard, the NDP highlights that extensive consultation was undertaken to ensure that the plan adequately supports the implementation of climate action measures.

One of the NDP's strategic climate priorities is the need for low carbon, resilient electricity systems; specifically, the plan commits to increasing the share of renewable electricity up to 80% by 2030. This is characterised by the NDP as an *'unprecedented commitment to the decarbonisation of electricity supplies'*, which is certainly an ambitious and an explicit driver for the deployment of new renewable generators such as the Proposed Project. The focus of investment in renewable energy infrastructure is to contribute to a long-term, sustainable and competitive energy future for Ireland.

In relation to the national electricity grid, the NDP highlights the investment that EirGrid and ESB Networks will make to enable a greater percentage of wind and solar renewable energy onto the grid and to support energy security. It is noted that the reliability of electricity supplies will also be strengthened through investment in the electricity transmission and distribution grid. The focus of investment in regulated network infrastructure is to contribute to a long-term, sustainable and competitive energy future for Ireland.

The National Development Plan Review 2025 (NDP Review) sets out a comprehensive capital investment framework for the period 2026-2035, totalling €275.4 billion. Within this framework wind energy is recognised as a key enabler of the State's legally binding commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 51% by 2030, including a 75% reduction in emissions from the electricity sector. To support the expansion of renewable electricity generation, the Government has allocated €3.5 billion in equity funding to ESB Networks and EirGrid to enhance grid transmission and distribution infrastructure, which will directly facilitate increased integration of wind energy developments such as the Proposed Project.

National Planning Framework First Revision (2025)

On 8th April 2025, the Government approved the National Planning Framework First Revision (Revised NPF) which was subsequently passed through both Houses of the Oireachtas. The Revised NPF aims to address changes that have occurred in Ireland since 2018.

The Revised NPF provides an updated projection for the population of Ireland, with the population expected to increase to 6.1 million by 2040. This population growth will place further demand on both the built and natural environment, and subsequently, the services required to meet said demands.

National Strategic Outcome 8 to Transition to a Carbon Neutral and Climate Resilient Society remains unchanged.

Regional Renewable Energy Capacity Allocations have been introduced under the Revised NPF. This was one of the key actions for CAP24 and is supported under CAP25. The Northern and Western Region, in which the Proposed Development is located, is allocated a target of installing an **additional 1,389 MW of onshore wind energy, by 2030**.

Under **NPO 74** Regional Assemblies are required to plan for the delivery of the regional renewable electricity capacity allocations outlined in the Revised NPF and identify allocations for each of the local authorities within their RSES. Furthermore, **NPO 75** requires Local Authorities to plan for the delivery of Target Power Capacity (MW) allocations consistent with the relevant RSES, through their City and County Development Plans. At the time of writing, no local Target Power Capacity allocations have been established, however it is clear from the regional allocation that the Northern and Western Region is set to deliver a significant amount of onshore wind energy in the coming years.

The Revised NPF has identified the key future planning and development priorities for the Northern and Western Region which includes *"harnessing the potential of the region in renewable energy terms in accordance with the capacity allocation targets set out in Chapter 9: Climate Transition and Our*

Environment, across the technological spectrum from wind and solar, in addition to biomass and wave energy”.

The introduction of renewable energy targets represents a more active and prescriptive approach to land use planning for renewable energy development. The Revised NPF aligns the national target of 9GW of onshore wind energy with the policies and objectives of Local Authorities. Regarding this, it is clear that the provision and transfer of new renewable energy generation through the Proposed Development is in line with aims and objectives of the Revised NPF, which seeks to transition to a carbon neutral economy.

In relation to the national electricity grid, **NPO 71** states the following:

“Support the development and upgrading of the national electricity grid infrastructure, including supporting the delivery of renewable electricity generating development.”

The Proposed Development, which will provide a grid connection to the Proposed Wind Farm will support the delivery and transmission of renewable wind energy to the national electricity grid.

National Energy Security Framework

The National Energy Security Framework (NESF) was adopted in 2022, and implements many of the aims and objectives of REPowerEU on a national level, reinforcing the State’s requirement to urgently diversify away from imported fossil fuels and accelerate the roll out of renewables. The NESF is supported by the recently published Energy Security Package ‘Energy Security in Ireland to 2030’. The Energy Security Package provides further long-term energy security measures which includes the prioritisation of achieving a renewables-led energy system.

Programme for Government – Securing’s Ireland’s Future (January 2025)

The Programme for Government 2025 – Securing Ireland’s Future (January 2025) places specific emphasis on climate change, recognising that time is critical in addressing the climate crisis. The Programme states that the Government is committed to taking *“decisive action to radically reduce our reliance on fossil fuels and to achieve a 51% reduction in emissions from 2018 to 2030, and to achieving net-zero emissions no later than 2050”*.

The Programme states that the next ten years are a critical period in addressing the climate crisis, and therefore, a deliberate and swift approach to reducing more than half of Ireland’s carbon emissions over the course of the decade (2020-2030) must be implemented. The programme states that the Government are committed to reducing Greenhouse Gas emissions by an average 7% per annum over the next decade in a push to achieve a net-zero emissions by the year 2050.

Regarding renewable energy generation, the Programme notes that the Government is committed to the rapid decarbonisation of the energy sector. The Programme states the Government’s ongoing support and commitment to take *“the necessary action to deliver at least 70% renewable electricity by 2030”*. This target has been updated by subsequent Climate Action Plans.

7.1.4 Regional Policy Context

Northern and Western Regional Assembly Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy 2020-2032

The Northern and Western Regional Assembly (NWRA) was established in 2015, and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2020-2032 (RSES) for the Northern and Western Region (Galway, Roscommon, Leitrim, Sligo, Donegal, Monaghan, Mayo and Cavan) came into effect in January of 2020. The RSES provides a long-term, strategic development framework for the future physical, economic and social development of the Northern and Western Region. The RSES seeks to achieve balanced regional development and full implementation of the NPF.

The principal statutory purpose of the RSES is to support the implementation of the NPF and NDP and the economic policies and objectives of the Government. The RSES aims to build on the Region’s strengths and potential to become a more prosperous, sustainable, climate resilient and attractive region for the benefit of all its people up to 2040 and beyond.

The Northern and Western Region is characterised by the RSES as having ‘*a unique natural endowment of ample carbon-neutral, energy supplies*’ such as wind. Specifically, the Western Region is stated as being ‘*particularly rich*’ in renewable energy resources dispersed across the region. The RSES acknowledges that the region has a pivotal role in delivering a successful transition to Ireland’s proposed low carbon economy with huge potential for growth in renewables. In order to facilitate the growth of renewables within the region, the RSES notes that the NWRA aims to encourage stakeholders, i.e. industry, commercial etc., to be the first to facilitate new opportunities and concentrate on possibilities to further advance renewable energy generation and use. The RSES is ultimately supportive of the future growth of renewable energy technology in the region and sets a clear precedent to identify and capitalise on those opportunities associated with the transition to renewable energy generation. Under the Revised NPF, the Northern and Western Region has been allocated a target of installing an **additional 1,389 MW of onshore wind energy, by 2030.**

It should be noted that at the time of writing of this Planning Report, the NWRA has commenced their review of the RSES with a new strategy to be prepared. The NWRA is conducting a pre-draft RSES consultation survey between Thursday 26th March 2026 and Friday 22nd May 2026. The current NWRA RSES remains the relevant regional spatial and economic strategy for the Northern and Western Region at the time of submission.

Policies within the RSES relevant to the Proposed Development are as follows:

- **RPO 4.17:** *“To position the region to avail of the emerging global market in renewable energy by stimulating the development and deployment of the most advantageous renewable energy systems, including:*

... Encourage the development of the transmission and distribution grids to facilitate the development of renewable energy projects and the effective utilisation of the energy generated from renewable sources having regard to the future potential of the region over the lifetime of the Strategy and beyond.”
- **RPO 8.3:** *“The Assembly support the necessary integration of the transmission network requirements to allow linkages with renewable energy proposals at all levels to the electricity transmission grid in a sustainable and timely manner.”*

The Proposed Development which comprises a 110kV onsite substation, loop-in grid connection, and associated infrastructure and works will enable the delivery of renewable wind energy generated by the Proposed Wind Farm to the national electricity grid.

Table 7-1 below sets out the compliance of the Proposed Development against relevant policy at the international, European, national and regional level.

Table 7-1 International, European, National & Regional Policy Objective and Compliance Summary Table

Policy Document	Targets / Objectives	Compliance
Paris Agreement	Limit global warming to well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, with efforts to limit the increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius.	The Proposed Development will transfer clean, renewable and sustainable wind energy to the national electricity grid, which will reduce reliance on greenhouse gas emitting fossil fuels for energy generation. This will contribute to limiting global warming.
Renewable Energy Directive	42.5% renewable energy by 2030, aiming for 45%.	The Proposed Development will support the increase of Ireland's renewable energy share, contributing towards Ireland's climate and energy obligations under EU law.
REPowerEU	- Accelerate the roll-out of renewables. - Increase the 2030 target for renewables from 40%-45%. - Tackle slow and complex permitting for major renewable projects	Considering the urgency required under the REPowerEU, it is imperative that all suitable sites, such as the site of the Proposed Development, are developed for renewable energy generation and transmission as soon as possible, in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development.
European Green Deal	- Increase renewable energy share - Reduce greenhouse gas emissions - Clean energy transition	The Proposed Development will transfer clean renewable onshore wind energy to the national electricity grid, which will increase Ireland's renewable energy share, reduce reliance on greenhouse gas emitting fossil fuels for energy generation and will support the transition to a clean, renewables led energy system.
Climate Action Plan 2025	9GW of onshore wind by 2030, 6GW by 2025.	The Proposed Development will contribute towards the CAP25 goals of 9GW of wind energy by 2030. Onshore wind is identified as being critical in the decarbonisation of the electricity sector, and the Proposed Development will enable the generation and transfer of renewable wind energy to the national electricity grid.
The National Planning Framework First Revision	National Strategic Outcome 8: Transition to a low carbon and climate resilient economy.	The Proposed Development is in line with the National Strategic Outcome 8 of the Revised NPF which seeks to transition to a low carbon and climate resilient economy. If permitted, the Proposed

		Development will contribute to the achievement of National Policy Objectives 70, 71, 73, 74 and 75.
National Development Plan 2021 - 2030	National Strategic Outcomes 8: Transition to a Climate-Neutral and Climate Resilient Society	The NDP is clear in its priority to reach a low carbon, climate resilient society over the lifetime of the plan. The Proposed Development, if permitted, will transmit clean, renewable electricity to the national grid, furthering development objectives of the NDP.
The National Energy & Climate Plan 2021 – 2030	- Decarbonisation - Renewable energy - Energy security	The Proposed Development will contribute to achieving key decarbonisation and energy security objectives by connecting a new renewable electricity generator to the national grid.
National Energy Security Framework	- Ensuring security of energy supply in the near-term; - Reducing our dependency on imported fossil fuels in the context of the phasing out of Russian energy imports across the EU.	The Proposed Development will help reduce the need for imported fossil fuels for electricity, improving national energy security.
Energy Security in Ireland to 2030 – Energy Security Package	- Reduced and Responsive Demand. - Renewables-Led System. - More Resilient Systems. - Robust Risk Governance.	The Proposed Development supports the objectives to ensure the State's energy security. The Proposed Development serves as a grid connection to a domestic renewable energy generator capable of providing clean electricity to the national electricity grid.
Northern and Western Region – Regional Economic & Spatial Strategy 2020-2032	- RPO 4.17: To position the region to avail of the emerging global market in renewable energy by stimulating the development and deployment of the most advantageous renewable energy systems, including: - Stimulating the development and deployment of the most advantageous renewable energy; - RPO 4.18: Support the development of secure, reliable and safe supplies of renewable energy, to maximise their value, maintain the inward investment, support indigenous industry and create jobs.	The Proposed Development will transfer clean and renewable wind energy to the national electricity grid, reducing reliance on greenhouse gas emitting fossil fuels for energy generation and supporting the region's transition to a low carbon, climate resilient and sustainable economy and society. The Proposed Development which forms part of a renewable energy development will align with national climate and renewable energy policy and targets as set out in the RSES.

7.2 Local Policy Context

This Section provides a summary and detailed assessment of the Proposed Development against the relevant policies and objectives contained in local planning policy documents, namely the MCDP including the Mayo RES and the Mayo LACAP.

7.2.1 Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028

The MCDP was adopted by the Elected Members of MCC at the conclusion of the Special Meeting on the 29th of June 2022 and came into effect on the 10th of August 2022. On the 8th of December 2025, MCC made Variation no. 1 to the MCDP (MCDP (as varied)) to align with the NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirements set for Co. Mayo, Section 28 Guidelines on NPF Implementation Housing Growth Requirements were published in July 2025 by the DHLGH.

On the 28th of April 2026, MCC published Proposed Draft Variation No. 2 of the MCDP (as varied), which seeks to update the Mayo RES to align with European Union and national planning and climate policy. A new Draft Renewable Energy Strategy for County Mayo (April 2026) ('Draft Mayo RES') has been published with the proposed variation documents alongside a Strategic Environmental Assessment Report and NIS Report. Further details of the Draft Mayo RES are provided in **Section 7.2.3** in this Report.

The MCDP (as varied) is the statutory county development plan in effect for the County and provides the framework against which all planning applications for development in the county are assessed. The policies and objectives set out within the MCDP (as varied) have maintained strong linkages with the key aims and themes set out within the previous development plan. Climate change is again emphasised as one of the greatest global challenges, with MCC acknowledging that continual action is needed for Mayo to become a low carbon and climate resilient county.

The importance of climate action is outlined at the beginning of 'Chapter 11: Climate Action and Renewable Energy' of the MCDP (as varied) as it states, *"The overall vision and strategic aims of the county development plan have been influenced by climate action"*. The strategic aim of Chapter 11 is outlined below:

"... to transition to a low carbon and climate resilient county, with an emphasis on reduction in energy demand and greenhouse gas emissions, through a combination of effective mitigation and adaptation responses to climate change; in addition to maximising the opportunities to become a national leader in renewable energy generation, whilst increasing the resilience of our Natural and Cultural Capital to climate change by planning and implementing appropriate adaptation measures."

Section 11.6.5 of the MCDP (as varied) relates to 'Decarbonizing Mayo' and identifies electricity generation as one of the key sectors driving Ireland's transition towards a low carbon economy.

The MCDP (as varied) states that *"Continued development of renewable energy sources in Mayo will help Ireland achieve our national targets. Mayo has an enormous wind resource with the potential to underpin an entire new economy in the county"*. It also establishes a minimum 'realistic deliverable' wind energy generation target of 600MW for the duration of the MCDP (as varied).

The MCDP (as varied) includes policies in relation to climate action and reducing greenhouse gas emissions which aligns the County with wider European, national and regional objectives. The MCDP (as varied) also includes policies regarding renewable energy and electricity grid infrastructure. **Table 7-2** below sets out the policies and objectives within the MCDP (as varied) relevant to the Proposed Development. A statement of compliance is included with regard to each relevant policy outlined. It is demonstrated through **Table 7-2** that the Proposed Development is in compliance with the relevant policies and objectives of the MCDP (as varied).

Development Management Standards

Section 8.8 Renewable Energy and Section 8.9 of Volume 2 of the MCDP (as varied) sets out the Development Management Standards that MCC may consider when considering applications for renewable energy developments and specifically grid connections such as the Proposed Development. The Proposed Development is assessed against each of the requirements as set out in **Table 7-3** below. It is demonstrated through **Table 7-3** that the Proposed Development is in compliance with the relevant Development Management Standards of the MCDP (as varied).

Table 7-2 MCDP (as varied) Local Policy Compliance Summary Table

Policy Theme	Policy/ Objective	Compliance
Climate Action	SO 4 Low Carbon and Climate Resilient County To transition to a low carbon and climate resilient county, by promoting sustainable settlement patterns, the integration of land-use and sustainable modes of transport, encourage walking, cycling and public transport, increasing reliance on green energy sources, encouraging urban and rural communities to facilitate effective change and by building climate change resilience and climate action into all services and functions of Mayo County Council.	The Proposed Development which will transfer renewable wind energy to the national electricity grid aligns with SO 4, as it will integrate clean, renewable energy into the grid, helping to electrify and decarbonise other sectors, therefore, reducing the reliance on imported fossil fuels and improving the sustainability and security of Ireland’s national and regional energy system. By transmitting c. 31.5 MW of renewable wind energy, the Proposed Development will support the County and Ireland to transition to a low carbon and climate resilient society.
	CSO 7 To implement all land use planning policies and objectives in a manner which takes account of and is consistent with the Core Strategy, in order to accelerate a transition to a greener, low carbon and climate resilient county with a focus on reduced travel demand through the promotion of sustainable settlement patterns.	By enabling the supply of sustainable renewable wind energy, the Proposed Development will reduce the need for greenhouse gas emitting, non-renewable sources like coal and oil for energy generation, helping to transition toward a greener, low carbon economy and society and cleaner energy usage in the County.
	CAP 1 To support and enable the implementation and achievement of European and national objectives for climate adaptation and mitigation as detailed in the following documents, taking into account other provisions of the Plan (including those relating to land use planning, energy, sustainable mobility, flood risk management and drainage); Climate Action Plan (2019 and any subsequent versions); ➤ National Climate Change Adaptation Framework (2018 and any subsequent versions). ➤ Relevant provisions of any Sectoral Adaptation Plans prepared to comply with the requirements of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015, including those seeking to contribute towards the National Transition Objective, to pursue, and achieve, the transition to a low carbon, climate resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by the end of the year 2050; and Mayo Council	The Proposed Development is in compliance with CAP 1. On a European level, the Proposed Development will support the contribution of the Proposed Wind Farm to the RED III target of 42.5% renewable energy share. On a national level, the Proposed Development will support the contribution of the Proposed Wind Farm to the onshore wind energy target of 9GW and 80% renewable energy share by 2030 as set out in CAP25. Furthermore, the Proposed Development will also support the contribution to the legally binding target of net-zero emissions no later than 2050, and 51% reduction in emissions by 2030, as set out in the Climate Act.

Policy Theme	Policy/ Objective	Compliance
	Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (2019-2024 and any subsequent versions).	The Proposed Development will support the National Climate Objective under the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015, as amended and aid in achieving the climate change and renewable energy objectives to reach national targets and transition to a low-carbon economy.
	CAP 2 To support the National Climate Change Strategy and methods of reducing anthropogenic greenhouse gases on an ongoing basis through implementation of supporting objectives in this Plan, particularly those supporting use of alternative and renewable energy sources, sustainable transport, air quality, coastal zone management, flooding and soil erosion and promotion of the retention of, and planting of trees, hedgerows and afforestation, subject to no significant adverse effects on the environment including the integrity of the Natura 2000 network.	By providing c. 31.5 MW of renewable wind energy from the Proposed Wind Farm to the grid, the Proposed Development is in line with CAP 2, as it will reduce reliance on fossil fuels for energy generation, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and supporting the transition towards a low carbon, climate resilient, and environmentally sustainable economy and society. The EIAR, NIS and this Planning Report demonstrate that it is not anticipated that the Proposed Development will result in any likely significant effects on the environment and will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of any Natura 2000 site. Refer to the EIAR, NIS, Sections 6 to 8 of this Report for further details.
	CAP 4 To support local, regional, national and international initiatives for climate adaptation and mitigation and to limit emissions of greenhouse gases through energy efficiency and the development of renewable energy sources, which make use of all natural resources, including publicly owned lands, in an environmentally acceptable manner.	The Proposed Development is in line with local, regional, national and international initiatives for climate adaptation and mitigation and to limit emissions of greenhouse gases as it will provide sustainable and renewable wind energy to the grid, reducing the County and Ireland's reliance on greenhouse gas emitting fossil fuels for energy generation in an environmentally acceptable manner.
	CAP 6 To support the transition to a competitive, low carbon, climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050, by way of reducing greenhouse gases, increasing renewable energy, and improving energy efficiency and supporting nature- based solutions to climate adaptation and mitigation that provides co-benefits.	The Proposed Project aligns with CAP 6 as it will integrate clean, renewable electricity into the grid, helping to electrify and decarbonise other sectors, therefore reducing reliance and greenhouse gas emitting fossil fuels and supporting the transition

Policy Theme	Policy/ Objective	Compliance
		towards a low carbon, climate resilient and environmentally sustainable economy and society.
	CAP 9 To support Ireland’s renewable energy commitments outlined in national policy by facilitating the development and exploitation of all appropriate renewable energy sources at suitable locations within the county, where such development does not have a negative impact on the surrounding environment (including water quality), landscape, biodiversity or local amenities, so as to provide for further residential and enterprise development within the county.	The Proposed Development will support with Ireland’s renewable energy commitments as it will provide c. 31.5 MW of renewable wind energy to the national electricity grid at a suitable location. The EIAR, NIS and this Planning Report demonstrate that it is not anticipated that the Proposed Development will result in any likely significant effects on the environment and that the Proposed Development is in line with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area in which the Proposed Development site is located. Refer to the EIAR, NIS, Sections 6 to 8 of this Report for further details.
	CAO 2 To support, facilitate and advance the achievement of the goals, objectives and actions of Climate Ready Mayo, the Climate Change Adaptation Strategy for County Mayo.	The Proposed Development will support with the climate action objectives of County Mayo as it will reduce reliance on greenhouse gas emitting fossil fuels for energy generation and provide c. 31.5 MW of environmentally sustainable and renewable wind energy to the national electricity grid.
Renewable Energy	INP 22 To co-operate and liaise with statutory and other energy providers in relation to power generation, in order to ensure adequate power capacity for the existing and future business and enterprise needs of the county.	The Proposed Development, which will transfer approximately 31.5 MW of renewable wind energy is in line with INP 22 as it will integrate renewable energy to the national electricity grid and increase energy security.
	CAO 1 To support and advance the provision of renewable energy resources and programmes in line with the Government’s National Renewable Energy Action Plan (NREAP), the Governments’ Energy White Paper “Ireland’s Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Future” (2015-	Through the provision of a grid connection for a wind energy generator, the Proposed Development will support the provision of renewable energy to the grid as set out in national policy, and

Policy Theme	Policy/ Objective	Compliance
	2030) and any other relevant policy adopted during the lifetime of this plan.	will support the transition towards a low carbon and climate resilient economy and society.
	REP 1 To support Ireland’s renewable energy commitments outlined in national policy by facilitating the development and exploitation of a range of renewable energy sources at suitable locations within the county, where such development does not have a negative impact on the surrounding environment (including water quality), landscape, biodiversity or local amenities to ensure the long-term sustainable growth of the county.	The Proposed Development is in line with REP 1 to support commitments outlined in national policy for the provision of renewable energy developments. The Proposed Development Site is considered to be suitable for the provision of a renewable wind energy development at this location as outlined in this Planning Report and in the accompanying EIAR. As set out in the EIAR, the Proposed Development is not anticipated have any likely significant effects on the environment. Please refer to Table 7-3 and Table 7-5 of this Report for further details on the Proposed Development’s consideration of hydrology and hydrogeology, landscape and visual, biodiversity, and population and human health. Please refer to the Hydrology and Hydrogeology, Landscape and Visual, Biodiversity policy theme sections in this Table (Table 7-2) for further details on the Proposed Development’s compliance with relevant policies and objectives. Refer to the EIAR, NIS, Sections 6 to 8 of this Report for further details.
	REP 3 To actively encourage and support the sustainable development, renewal and maintenance of energy generation infrastructure in order to maintain a secure energy supply, while protecting the landscape, archaeological and built heritage and having regard to the provisions of the Habitats Directive.	The provision of the Proposed Development will aid in increasing the security of energy supply through the provision of indigenous renewable energy to the grid, which will reduce reliance on imported fossil fuels for energy generation. As outlined in the EIAR and NIS, the Proposed Development is not anticipated have any likely significant effects on the environment. Chapter 6 of the EIAR states that the Proposed Project has been deliberately designed to minimise the effects on biodiversity by avoiding Annex I habitat and areas of high value for fauna. The

Policy Theme	Policy/ Objective	Compliance
		Proposed Project also includes a Biodiversity Mitigation and Enhancement Plan (BMEP) (Appendix 6-4 of the EIAR), which proposes enhancement measures for habitats and fauna within the Site. Furthermore, no botanical species listed under the Flora (Protection) Order (S.I. No. 235 of 2022), listed in Annex II of the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), or listed in the Irish Red Data Books were recorded within the Site. The NIS, which accompanies this Planning Application has been prepared to provide the competent authorities with the information necessary to complete an Appropriate Assessment screening and an Appropriate Assessment for the Proposed Project in compliance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive. The NIS concludes that the Proposed Project, individually or in-combination with other plans or projects, will not adversely affect the integrity of any European Site. Please refer to Table 7-3 and Table 7-5 of this Report for further details on the Proposed Development’s consideration of landscape and visual, cultural heritage and biodiversity. Please refer to the Landscape and Visual, Cultural Heritage and Biodiversity policy theme sections of this Table (Table 7-2) for further details on the Proposed Development’s compliance with relevant policies and objectives. Refer to the EIAR, NIS, Sections 6 to 8 of this Report for further details.
	REP 6 To work with relevant stakeholders and industry to establish Mayo as a centre of excellence for renewable energy research and development activities.	The Proposed Development represents an opportunity for the provision of approximately 31.5 MW of wind energy onto the national electricity grid. This in combination with County Mayo’s existing renewable energy developments will aid in achieving MCC’s aim of being a “<i>Centre of Excellence for Renewable Energy Research and Development Activities</i>” and its strategic

Policy Theme	Policy/ Objective	Compliance
		aim of becoming a national leader in renewable energy generation.
	REP 7 To promote the harnessing of wind energy to contribute toward decarbonising County Mayo, including new emerging by-product markets.	The provision of the Proposed Development will result in the transfer of approximately 31.5 MW of renewable wind energy onto the national grid. This will increase the share of renewable energy on the grid, reducing reliance on fossil fuels for energy generation.
	REO 1 To co-operate with the Northern and Western Regional Assembly in identifying Strategic Energy Zones as areas suitable for larger, energy generating projects, community and micro energy production, whilst ensuring environmental constraints and a regional landscape strategy are considered.	The Proposed Development will support the Northern and Western Region of achieving an additional 1,389 MW of onshore wind energy by 2030, as set out in the Revised NPF whilst ensuring environmental constraints and a regional landscape strategy are considered as demonstrated in the EIAR.
	REO 6 To ensure all renewable energy proposal comply with the provisions of the Mayo County Council Renewable Energy Strategy 2011-2022 (or as updated).	The Proposed Development aligns with the provisions of the Mayo RES. Table 7-4 and Table 7-5 of this Report respectively demonstrate that the Proposed Development is in accordance with the policies and objectives of the Mayo RES and the mitigation measures as set out within the Mayo RES. Refer to Table 7-4 and Table 7-5 of this Report.
	REO 8 To encourage the development of wind energy, in accordance with Government policy, and having regard to the Landscape Appraisal of County Mayo and the Wind Energy Development Guidelines (2006) and Mayo Renewable Energy Strategy (RES), or any revisions thereof or future guidelines, and ensure consistency with the provisions of RPO 4.16 and RPO 5.2(b) of the RSES (2020-2032).	The Proposed Development accords with national policy in relation to climate action and renewable energy, as it will transmit renewable wind energy onto the grid, reducing reliance on greenhouse gas emitting fossil fuels for energy generation and contributing to the 9 GW onshore wind energy and 80% renewable energy share as set out in CAP25. Chapter 13 of the EIAR, considers the Landscape Appraisal of County Mayo in its assessment of likely significant effects of the Proposed Development on landscape and visual.

Policy Theme	Policy/ Objective	Compliance
		Table 7-3 of this Report provides a compliance statement against the MCDP (as varied) Development Management Standards in relation to renewable energy developments. Table 7-4 and Table 7-5 of this Report respectively demonstrate that the Proposed Development is in accordance with the policies and objectives of the Mayo RES and the mitigation measures as set out within the Mayo RES. The Proposed Development aligns with the provisions of the RSES of the Northern and Western Region. Refer to Chapter 13 of the EIAR, Table 7-3, Table 7-4 and Table 7-5 of this Report for further details.
	REO 23 To support and facilitate the achievement of the minimum renewable energy target of 600MW for County Mayo over the plan, and to review/revise this target to ensure consistency with any future renewable energy strategies for the Northern and Western Region.	The provision of grid connections such as the Proposed Development for renewable energy developments is in line with REO 23. The Proposed Development will transfer approximately 31.5 MW of energy onto the national grid, which will support MCC in its minimum renewable energy target of 600 MW for County Mayo over the plan period.
Grid Connection	INP 21 To support the provision of high-quality, electricity infrastructure and development of an enhanced electricity supply, to serve the existing and future needs of the county and to facilitate new transmission infrastructure projects, including the delivery and integration of renewable energy proposals to the electricity transmission grid in a sustainable and timely manner, whilst seeking to minimise any adverse impacts on local communities and protect and maintain biodiversity, wildlife habitats, scenic amenities, including protected views and nature conservation.	The Proposed Wind Farm will integrate onto the national electricity grid via the Proposed Development, which includes an onsite loop-in electrical substation which will connect into the existing Castlebar-Cloon 110kV overhead line. The Proposed Development which will enable the generation and provision of wind energy aligns with INP 21, as it will integrate clean, renewable wind energy onto the grid for the County and Ireland.

Policy Theme	Policy/ Objective	Compliance
	INO 37 To facilitate the progression of and implement improvements to the existing electricity networks and facilitate the development of new transmission infrastructure projects in accordance with EirGrid's Implementation Plan Strategy 2020-2025 (or any superseding strategy) that might be brought forward during the lifetime of this plan	The EIAR, NIS and this Planning Report demonstrate that it is not anticipated that the Proposed Development will result in any likely significant effects on the environment and that the Proposed Development is in line with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area in which the Proposed Development site is located.
	INO 39 To seek the delivery of the necessary integration of transmission network requirements to facilitate linkages of renewable energy proposals to the electricity transmission grid, in a sustainable and timely manner.	Please refer to Table 7-3 and Table 7-5 of this Report for further details on the Proposed Development's consideration of population and human health, biodiversity, and landscape and visual. Please refer to the Biodiversity, and Landscape and Visual policy sections of this Table (Table 7-2) for an assessment of the Proposed Development against the relevant biodiversity and landscape policies and objectives of the MCDP. Refer to the EIAR, NIS, Sections 6 to 8 of this Report for further details.
	INO 38 To ensure the provision, where feasible, of electricity cables located underground.	Each of the proposed turbines and the meteorological mast (part of the Proposed Wind Farm) will be connected to the onsite 110kV electricity substation (part of the Proposed Development) via underground 20/33 kilovolt ('kV') electricity cabling. The 110kV electricity cabling from the substation to the 2 no. end masts will also be underground.
	EDO 69 To support and facilitate renewable energy initiatives that facilitate a low carbon transition.	The Proposed Development forms part of a renewable energy development will support the transition to a low carbon economy and society by generating sustainable wind energy, which will reduce reliance on greenhouse gas emitting fossil fuels for energy generation.

Policy Theme	Policy/ Objective	Compliance
Biodiversity	NEP 1 To support the protection, conservation and enhancement of the natural heritage and biodiversity of County Mayo, including the protection of the integrity of European sites, that form part of the Natura 2000 network, the protection of Natural Heritage Areas, proposed Natural Heritage Areas, Ramsar Sites, Nature Reserves and Wild Fowl Sanctuaries (and other designated sites including any future designations).	The NIS, which accompanies this planning application provides an assessment of all potential direct or indirect adverse effects on European Sites, taking into account all relevant guidance including the European Commission’s Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites - Methodological guidance on Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (EC, 2021). The Proposed Project is not located within any European Sites or nationally designated sites. The River Moy SAC, Balla Turlough SAC and Lough Mask SPA have been fully assessed within the AASR and NIS that accompanies this planning application. The AASR and NIS have been prepared to provide the competent authorities with the information necessary to complete an Appropriate Assessment screening and an Appropriate Assessment for the Proposed Project in compliance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive. The NIS concludes that the Proposed Project, individually or in-combination with other plans or projects, will not adversely affect the integrity of any European Site. The NIS concludes that following an examination, evaluation and analysis, in light of best scientific knowledge and the conservation objectives of the site, and, on the basis of objective information, having taken into account the relevant mitigation measures, it can be concluded that the Proposed Project will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of any European Sites, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. Chapter 6 of the EIAR, which accompanies this planning application assesses the likely significant effects that the Proposed Project may have on biodiversity, flora and fauna, and includes an Ecological Impact Assessment.

Policy Theme	Policy/ Objective	Compliance
		Chapter 6 of the EIAR considers all designated sites. Table 6-5 provides details of all relevant European Sites, Nationally Designated Sites (including Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) & proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs) and Ramsar Sites as within the likely Zone of Influence of the Proposed Project. Table 6-5 identifies 3 no European Sites, the River Moy SAC, Balla Turlough SAC and Lough Mask SPA within the likely Zone of Influence of the Proposed Project. The potential for significant effects and/or adverse effects on the integrity of European Sites is fully assessed in the AA Screening Report and NIS, as summarised above. There are no NHAs located within the likely Zone of Influence of the Proposed Project. The nearest NHA to the Site is the Cunnagher More Bog NHA, located over 21km to the north of the Site. No connectivity or potential pathways for significant effects on this or any other NHAs were identified. Table 6-5 identifies 2 no. pNHAs within the likely Zone of Influence of Proposed Project and of these, Lough Mask Complex pNHA (also a SAC) and Balla Turlough pNHA (also a SAC), within the likely Zone of Influence of the Proposed Project which are assessed throughout Chapter 6 of the EIAR and the NIS. There are no Ramsar Sites located within the likely Zone of Influence of the Proposed Project. The nearest Ramsar Site to the Proposed Project is the Lough Corrib SAC, located over 15km to the south of the Site. As such the proposed development will not have a significant effect on biodiversity or natural heritage. The Proposed Project is not located within or adjacent to any Nature Reserves.

Policy Theme	Policy/ Objective	Compliance
		The Proposed Project includes a BMEP (Appendix 6-4 of the EIAR), which proposes enhancement measures for habitats and fauna within the Site. Chapter 6 concludes that, provided the Proposed Project will be constructed and operated in accordance with the design, best practice and mitigation measures described within the EIAR, significant individual or cumulative effects on biodiversity are not anticipated at international, national, county or local scales on any of the identified Key Ecological Receptors. Refer to Chapter 6 of the EIAR and the NIS for further details.
	NEP 7 To encourage the effective management of native and semi-natural woodlands, groups of trees and individual trees in the discharge of development management functions.	The BMEP included in Appendix 6-4 of the EIAR sets out measures to enhance biodiversity within the Site. As a result, suitable habitat for the population of marsh fritillary within the Site is proposed, in addition to native woodland planting and a net gain in linear habitats. Detailed mitigations and enhancement proposals are in place to protect bats, their roosts and commuting corridors in line with the MCDP (as varied). As part of the BMEP, any hedgerows and scrub to be lost to facilitate the Proposed Project will be replaced by replanting of additional linear hedgerow and treeline habitat within the Site as well as non-linear areas of native trees/scrub such that there will be a net gain in linear habitats and native woodland habitat within the Site. Chapter 6 of the EIAR states that the Proposed Project has been deliberately designed to minimise the effects on biodiversity by avoiding Annex I habitat and areas of high value for fauna. Furthermore, no botanical species listed under the Flora (Protection) Order (S.I. No. 235 of 2022), listed in Annex II of
	NEO 4 To protect and enhance biodiversity and ecological connectivity in County Mayo, including woodlands, trees, hedgerows, semi-natural grasslands, rivers, streams, natural springs, wetlands, stonewalls, geological and geo-morphological systems, other landscape features and associated wildlife, where these form part of the ecological network.	
	NEO 8 To maintain, protect and where possible enhance the natural heritage and biodiversity of bogs, fens and turloughs, where appropriate in County Mayo.	

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		the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), or listed in the Irish Red Data Books were recorded within the Site. Following the incorporation of the mitigation measures described in Chapter 6 of the EIAR, no significant negative effects on cutover bog habitats are anticipated at any geographic scale. The Proposed Project has been specifically designed to avoid direct impacts on identified species-rich cutover bog and the area of transition mires and quaking bog habitat within the Site. Provided the Proposed Project is constructed and operated in accordance with the design, best practice and mitigation measures described within this application, significant individual or cumulative effects on biodiversity are not anticipated at international, national, county or local scales on any of the identified Key Ecological Receptors. Refer to Chapter 6 and Appendix 6-4 of Chapter 6 of the EIAR for further details.
	NEO 11 To ensure that the impact of development within or adjacent to national designated sites, Natural Heritage Areas, Ramsar Sites and Nature Reserves likely to result in significant adverse effects on the designated site is assessed by requiring the submission of an Ecological Impact Assessment report (EcIA), Environmental Report (ER), an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR), if deemed necessary, and/ or a Natura Impact Assessment (NIS), if deemed necessary, prepared by a suitably qualified professional, which should accompany planning applications.	Chapter 6 of the EIAR, which accompanies this planning application assesses the likely significant effects that the Proposed Project may have on biodiversity, flora and fauna, and includes an Ecological Impact Assessment. The NIS, which accompanies this planning application provides an assessment of all potential direct or indirect adverse effects on European Sites, taking into account all relevant guidance including the European Commission’s Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites - Methodological guidance on Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (EC, 2021).

Policy Theme	Policy/ Objective	Compliance
		The EIAR was prepared by suitably qualified professionals as set out at Section 6.1.4 of Chapter 6 of the EIAR. The NIS was prepared by suitably qualified professionals as set out in Section 1.3 of the NIS. Chapter 6 of the EIAR considers designated sites. Table 6-5 provides details of all relevant European Sites, Nationally Designated Sites (including NHAs & pNHAs) and Ramsar Sites as within the likely Zone of Influence of the Proposed Project. The Proposed Project is not located within any European Sites or nationally designated sites. However, Table 6-5 identifies 3 no European Sites, the River Moy SAC, Balla Turlough SAC and Lough Mask SPA within the likely Zone of Influence of the Proposed Project. The River Moy SAC, Balla Turlough SAC and Lough Mask SPA have been fully assessed within the AASR and NIS that accompanies this planning application. The AASR and NIS have been prepared to provide the competent authorities with the information necessary to complete an Appropriate Assessment screening and an Appropriate Assessment for the Proposed Project in compliance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive. The NIS concludes that the Proposed Project, individually or in-combination with other plans or projects, will not adversely affect the integrity of any European Site. There are no NHAs located within the likely Zone of Influence of the Proposed Project. The nearest NHA to the Site is the Cunnagher More Bog NHA, located over 21km to the north of the Site. No connectivity or potential pathways for significant effects on this or any other NHAs were identified.

Policy Theme	Policy/ Objective	Compliance
		Table 6-5 identifies 2 no. pNHAs within the likely Zone of Influence of Proposed Project and of these, Lough Mask Complex pNHA (also a SAC) and Balla Turlough pNHA (also a SAC), within the likely Zone of Influence of the Proposed Project which are assessed throughout Chapter 6 of the EIAR and the NIS. There are no Ramsar Sites located within the likely Zone of Influence of the Proposed Project. The nearest Ramsar Site to the Proposed Project is the Lough Corrib SAC, located over 15km to the south of the Site. As such the proposed development will not have a significant effect on biodiversity or natural heritage. The Proposed Project is not located within or adjacent to any Nature Reserves. Chapter 6 concludes that, provided the Proposed Project will be constructed and operated in accordance with the design, best practice and mitigation measures described within the EIAR, significant individual or cumulative effects on biodiversity are not anticipated at international, national, county or local scales on any of the identified Key Ecological Receptors. Refer to Chapter 6 of the EIAR and the NIS for further details.
	NEP 8 To support measures for the prevention and/or eradication of invasive species as appropriate within the county.	Japanese knotweed (<i>Reynoutria japonica</i>) was identified within the Site and is present within the proposed construction footprint. As such, a site-specific Invasive Species Management Plan (ISMP) (refer to Appendix 6-5 of the EIAR) has been prepared which allows for the treatment of Japanese knotweed both within and adjacent to the construction footprint in order to mitigate the potential for spread of this species as a result of the
	NEO 16 To ensure that where the presence of invasive species is identified at the site of any proposed development or where the proposed activity has an elevated risk of resulting in the presence of these species,	

Policy Theme	Policy/ Objective	Compliance
	details of how these species will be appropriately managed and controlled will be required.	Proposed Project. Additionally, Japanese knotweed is proposed for treatment within other areas of the Site, subject to licence and necessary consents being in place. Refer to Chapter 6 and Appendix 6-5 of the EIAR for further details.
Lands, Soils and Geology	NEP 6 To support the maintenance of geological and geomorphological heritage values of County Geological Sites and through consultation with the Geological Survey of Ireland and seek to promote access to such sites, where possible.	Chapter 8 of the EIAR, was prepared by Hydro-Environmental Services (HES) and assesses the likely significant effects that the Proposed Project may have on the land, soils and geology. Chapter 8 states that there are no geological heritage sites mapped in the vicinity of the Site. Furthermore, it states that there is not potential for effects on any geological heritage site, and no mitigation measures are required. Refer to Chapter 8 of the EIAR for further details.
Hydrology and Hydrogeology	INO 18 To ensure new development is adequately serviced with surface water drainage infrastructure, which meets the requirements of the Water Framework Directive, associated River Basin Management Plans and Catchment Flood Risk Assessment Management (CFRAM) Plans.	Chapter 9 of the EIAR, was prepared by Hydro-Environmental Services (HES) and provides a detailed assessment in relation to surface water drainage and site drainage. Drainage mapping was undertaken as part of the assessment using OSI mapped watercourses, aerial photography, field surveys, and LiDAR data (please refer Figure 9-6, Chapter 9 of the EIAR). The site is facilitated by natural drainage and a network of manmade drains. The Proposed Project has been designed to work with the site's existing drainage infrastructure wherever possible, including existing access roads and drainage channels from forestry, peat cutting, and farming activities. This minimizes the requirement for new construction/excavation which could potentially impact downstream watercourses unless managed appropriately.

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		The assessment concludes that existing forestry and agricultural drains have no major ecological or hydrological value and can be readily integrated into the Proposed Project drainage scheme. The Proposed Project is therefore adequately serviced with surface water drainage infrastructure which meets the requirements of the Water Framework Directive (WFD), as detailed in Appendix 9-4 of the EIAR. Refer to Chapter 9 and Appendix 9-4 of the EIAR for further details.
	INO 19 To ensure that a flood risk assessment is carried out for any development proposal where a flood risk is identified in accordance with the Planning System and Flood Risk Management (DoEHLG/OPW 2009) and Circular PL2/2014. This assessment shall be appropriate to the scale and nature of risk to the potential development.	Chapter 9 of the EIAR provides detailed assessment regarding the susceptibility of the Proposed Project to flooding. A flood risk identification study was undertaken, as detailed in Chapter 9 and Appendix 9-1, to identify existing potential flood risks associated with the Proposed Project. From this study, it was identified that there were no instances of recurring or historical flooding recorded within the Site. Chapter 9 also concludes that the site is not liable to fluvial, coastal, or groundwater flooding. Refer to Chapter 9 and Appendix 9-1 of the EIAR for further details.
	NEO 6 To protect surface waters, aquatic and wetland habitats and freshwater and water dependent species through the implementation of all appropriate and relevant Directives and transposed legislation and seek to protect and conserve the quality, character and features of inland waterways by controlling developments close to navigable and non-navigable waterways.	Chapter 9 of the EIAR provides detailed assessment in relation to designated sites and habitats in the vicinity of the Proposed Project. The assessment concludes that the Proposed Project is not located within any designated conservation site, however there are downstream hydrological connections with some of the

Policy Theme	Policy/ Objective	Compliance
		Natura 2000 sites in the region as described in Table 9-2, Chapter 9 of the EIAR. Due to the predominance of peat and low permeability till, water will generally leave the Proposed Project site as surface water, rather than as groundwater flows, and will enter the River Robe and the Meander River downstream of the Site. This is the primary pathway for connectivity with downstream designated sites. There are several groundwater dependent SAC's and pNHA's within 10km but in excess of 5km from the Site. Given the local nature of the hydrogeological regime at the Site (high rates of surface water runoff and low rates of groundwater recharge) there is limited potential for effects on these designated sites at this distance. Refer to Chapter 9 of the EIAR for further details.
	NEP 19 To protect existing groundwater sources and aquifers in the county and to manage development in a manner consistent with the protection of these resources.	Chapter 9 of the EIAR provides detailed assessment in relation to potential impact of the Proposed Project on groundwater and aquifers. The Proposed Project does not involve any abstraction of groundwater or significant alteration of drainage patterns. Therefore, the quantitative status (i.e. the available quantity (volume) of groundwater and surface water locally) to the receiving waters will remain unaltered during the construction and operational phase of the Proposed Project. There is no direct discharge from the site to downstream receiving waters. Mitigation for the protection of surface water during the construction, operation and decommissioning phases of the Proposed Project will ensure the qualitative status of the receiving waters will not be altered by the Proposed Project.

Policy Theme	Policy/ Objective	Compliance
		There is also mitigation proposed to protect groundwater quality within the site during the construction, operational and decommissioning phases of the Proposed Project. These mitigation measures will ensure the qualitative status of the underlying Groundwater Bodies (GWB) will not be altered by the Proposed Project. There will be no change in GWB or Surface Water Bodies (SWB) status in the underlying GWB or downstream SWBs resulting from the Proposed Project. There will be no change in quantitative (volume) or qualitative (chemical) status, and the underlying GWB and downstream SWBs are protected from any potential deterioration. Refer to Chapter 9 and Appendix 9-4 of the EIAR for further details.
	NEP 20 To meet our targets to achieve ‘good status’ in all water bodies in compliance with the Water Framework Directive and to cooperate with the implementation of the National River Basin Management Plan 2018-2021, and subsequent plans.	Chapter 9 and Appendix 9-4 of the EIAR provides detailed assessment in relation to compliance of the Proposed Project with the WFD. The assessment concludes that the Proposed Project will not jeopardise the objectives to achieve ‘Good’ surface water/groundwater status, ecological potential, chemical status or quality status. The Proposed Project does not permanently exclude or compromise the achievement of the objectives of the WFD in other waterbodies within the same river basin district. Refer to Appendix 9-4 and Chapter 9 of the EIAR for further details.

Policy Theme	Policy/ Objective	Compliance
	NEP 21 To manage, protect and enhance surface water and ground water quality to meet the requirements of the Water Framework Directive.	Chapter 9 and Appendix 9-4 of the EIAR provide detailed assessment in relation to compliance of the Proposed Project with the WFD. The assessment concludes that the Proposed Project will not jeopardise the objectives to achieve ‘Good’ surface water/groundwater status and is compliant with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC). Refer to Appendix 9-4 and Chapter 9 of the EIAR for further details.
	NEO 37 To ensure that the Water Framework Directive, the River Basin Management Plan and any subsequent Water Management Plans are fully considered throughout the planning process.	The Water Action Plan 2024 is Ireland’s 3rd River Basin Management Plan (2022 - 2027). The objectives of the Water Action Plan 2024 have been integrated into the design of the Proposed Project and include: • Ensure full compliance with relevant EU legislation; • Prevent deterioration; • Meet the water standards and objectives for designated protected areas; • Protect high-status waters; and, • Implement targeted action and pilot schemes in focus sub-catchments aimed at (i) targeting water bodies close to meeting their objective and (ii) addressing more complex issues that will build knowledge for future cycles. Refer to Appendix 9-4 and Chapter 9 of the EIAR for further details.
	NEO 38 To ensure, through the implementation of the River Basin Management Plan(s) and the associated Programmes of Measures and any	Chapter 9 of the EIAR provides a detailed assessment in relation to potential impact of the Proposed Project on existing

Policy Theme	Policy/ Objective	Compliance
	other associated legislation or revised plans, with all relevant stakeholders, the protection and improvement of all drinking waters, surface water, coastal and transitional waters and ground waters throughout the county.	groundwater sources and aquifers in line with the River Basin Management Plan (2022 - 2027).
	NEO 39 To manage in a sustainable manner, the existing groundwater sources and aquifers in the county and manage development in a manner consistent with the sustainable management of these resources, in conformity with the EU Environmental Objectives (Groundwater) Regulations 2010 and the second cycle National River Basin Management Plan 2018-2021, and any subsequent plans and the Groundwater Protection Scheme.	The Proposed Project does not involve any abstraction of groundwater or significant alteration of drainage patterns. Therefore, the quantitative status (i.e. the available quantity (volume) of groundwater and surface water locally) to the receiving waters will remain unaltered during the construction and operational phase of the Proposed Project.
	NEO 40 To protect groundwater sources through the implementation of the Groundwater Protection Scheme and Source Protection Zones. Development proposals within these zones which have the potential to pose a risk to groundwater will be required to demonstrate that no reasonable alternative site is available, and that groundwater quality will be protected to the satisfaction of the Council.	There is no direct discharge from the site to downstream receiving waters. Mitigation for the protection of surface water during the construction, operation and decommissioning phases of the Proposed Project will ensure the qualitative status of the receiving waters will not be altered by the Proposed Project.
	NEO 41 To protect both ground and surface water resources and to work with Irish Water to develop and implement Drinking Water Safety Plans, to protect sources of public water supply and their contributing catchment, and to work with the National Federation of Group Water Schemes, in respect of Source Protection Plans for Group Water Schemes to protect these sources.	There is also mitigation proposed to protect groundwater quality within the site during the construction, operational and decommissioning phases of the Proposed Project. These mitigation measures will ensure the qualitative status of the underlying Groundwater Bodies (GWB) will not be altered by the Proposed Project. There will be no change in GWB or Surface Water Bodies (SWB) status in the underlying GWB or downstream SWBs resulting from the Proposed Project. There will be no change in quantitative (volume) or qualitative (chemical) status, and the underlying GWB and downstream SWBs are protected from any potential deterioration. Refer to Chapter 9 and Appendix 9-4 of the EIAR for further details.

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Air Quality	NEO 44 Promote the achievement of best ambient air quality, compatible with sustainable development, in accordance with the EU Ambient Air Quality and Cleaner Air for Europe (CAFE) Directive (2008/50/EC) and by ensuring that all air emissions associated with new developments are within Environmental Quality Standards as set out in the Air Quality Standards Regulations 2011 (SI No. 180 of 2011) (or any updated/ superseding documents).	Chapter 10 of the EIAR assesses the likely significant effects of the Proposed Development on Air Quality and has regard to Clean Air for Europe (CAFE) Directive (Directive 2008/50/EC) on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe) (as amended by Directive EU 2015/1480), and the Air Quality Standards Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 180 of 2011) as amended by the Air Quality Standards (Amendments) and Arsenic, Cadmium, Mercury, Nickel and Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons in Ambient Air Regulations, 2016 (S.I. 659 2016). Once the mitigation proposals as outlined in the Chapter 10 of the EIAR assessment are implemented during the construction phase of the Proposed Project, there will be no cumulative negative effect on air quality. Exhaust and dust emissions during the operational phase of the Proposed Project will be minimal, relating to the use of maintenance machinery and vehicles onsite, and therefore there will be no measurable negative cumulative effect with other developments on air quality. The nature of the Proposed Project is such that, once operational, it will have a long-term, moderate, positive impact on the air quality. There will be no measurable negative cumulative effect with other developments on air quality, and it is not significant. Refer to Chapter 10 of the EIAR for further details
Noise	NEP 25 To promote the implementation of the Noise Directive 2002/49/EC and associated Environmental Noise Regulations 2006, as amended.	Chapter 12 of the EIAR assess the likely significant noise and vibration effects of the Proposed Development. The assessment of effects for the Proposed Project has been undertaken with reference to the most relevant guidance documents relating to environmental noise and vibration. With the application of best-practice controls and monitoring, the Proposed Project is not expected to result in significant noise

Policy Theme	Policy/ Objective	Compliance
		or vibration effects at nearby noise-sensitive locations during any phase of development. Please refer to Chapter 12 of the EIAR for further details.
Landscape and Visual	NEP 14 To protect, enhance and contribute to the physical, visual and scenic character of County Mayo and to preserve its unique landscape character.	The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) in Chapter 13 of the EIAR determined that no Significant landscape and visual effects were identified. Overall, the Proposed Project is effectively accommodated within the landscape without any Significant effects on the key scenic or landscape sensitivities of receptors identified in the 20km LVIA Study Area. The Proposed Project is appropriately designed and suitably scaled, and it has been demonstrated that no significant landscape and visual effects are likely to arise. Refer to Chapter 13 of the EIAR for further details.
	NEO 25 To consider applications for development, along Mayo's' Scenic routes, that can demonstrate a clear need to locate in the area concerned, whilst ensuring that it: ➤ Does not impinge in any significant way on the character, integrity and distinctiveness of the area. ➤ Meets high standards in siting and design. ➤ Contributes to and enhances local landscape character. ➤ Satisfies all other criteria, with regard to, inter alia, servicing, public safety and environmental considerations. Rural housing applications along Scenic Routes must comply with the requirements set out in Objective RHO 3 (Chapter 3).	Chapter 13 of the EIAR presents the LVIA. Chapter 13 confirms that the Proposed Development has been strategically sited in a location with at a large set-back distance from designated scenic routes and views identified in local planning policy. Furthermore, the Proposed Development has been strategically sited in a location set-back from sensitive landscape receptors (Vulnerable Features – Skylines, Ridgelines and Shorelines) and will therefore not alter the physical fabric of these sensitive landscape receptors. Overall, the LVIA in Chapter 13 determined that no Significant landscape and visual effects were identified. Overall, the Proposed Project is effectively accommodated within the landscape without any Significant effects on the key scenic or landscape sensitivities of receptors identified in the 20km LVIA Study Area. The Proposed Project is appropriately designed and

Policy Theme	Policy/ Objective	Compliance
		suitably scaled, and it has been demonstrated that no significant landscape and visual effects are likely to arise. Refer to Chapter 13 of the EIAR for further details.
	NEO 27 To ensure all development proposals are consistent with the Landscape Appraisal of County Mayo and the associated Landscape Sensitivity Matrix and future editions thereof.	Chapter 13 of the EIAR, considers the Landscape Appraisal of County Mayo in its assessment of likely significant effects of the Proposed Development on landscape and visual. Components of the Proposed Development, such as the proposed 110kV substation and end masts, are not deemed to be as visually prominent as the Proposed Turbines which form part of the Proposed Wind Farm, however, the proposed 110kV substation and end masts do have the potential to give rise to localised landscape and visual effects. These elements are given full consideration and assessment throughout Chapter 13 of the EIAR. Visual effects arising from the construction of the proposed 110kV substation, 2 no. new end masts, and associated temporary construction compound, as experienced by visual receptors in the immediate vicinity of the Site are considered to be localised, ‘Negative’, ‘Short Term’, ‘Not Significant’ effects. On balance, these effects are not considered significant. Visual effects of the proposed 110kV onsite substation during the operational phase are likely to be highly localised, ‘Long-term’, ‘Negative’ and will be ‘Slight’. On balance, these effects are not considered significant. Visual effects of the proposed connection to the existing 110kV overhead line of the Proposed Development are likely to be localised, ‘Long-term’, ‘Negative’ and will be ‘Not Significant’. On balance, these effects are not considered significant. Refer to Chapter 13 of the EIAR for further details.

Policy Theme	Policy/ Objective	Compliance
	NEO 29 Require a Landscape/Visual Impact Assessment to accompany significant proposals, located within or adjacent to sensitive landscapes, where appropriate.	Chapter 13 of the EIAR assesses the likely significant landscape and visual impacts arising as a result of the Proposed Project. Chapter 13 also assesses the proposed onsite 110kV substation that forms part of the Proposed Development. Components of the Proposed Development, such as the proposed 110kV substation and end masts, are not deemed to be as visually prominent as the Proposed Turbines which form part of the Proposed Wind Farm, however, the proposed 110kV substation and end masts do have the potential to give rise to localised landscape and visual effects. These elements are given full consideration and assessment throughout Chapter 13 of the EIAR. Visual effects arising from the construction of the proposed 110kV substation, 2 no. new end masts, and associated temporary construction compound, as experienced by visual receptors in the immediate vicinity of the Site are considered to be localised, ‘Negative’, ‘Short Term’, ‘Not Significant’ effects. On balance, these effects are not considered significant. Visual effects of the proposed 110kV onsite substation during the operational phase are likely to be highly localised, ‘Long-term’, ‘Negative’ and will be ‘Slight’. On balance, these effects are not considered significant. Visual effects of the proposed connection to the existing 110kV overhead line of the Proposed Development are likely to be localised, ‘Long-term’, ‘Negative’ and will be ‘Not Significant’. On balance, these effects are not considered significant. Overall, the LVIA in Chapter 13 determined that no Significant landscape and visual effects were identified. Overall, the Proposed Project is effectively accommodated within the landscape without any Significant effects on the key scenic or landscape sensitivities of receptors identified in the 20km LVIA Study Area. The Proposed Project is appropriately designed and

Policy Theme	Policy/ Objective	Compliance
		suitably scaled, and it has been demonstrated that no significant landscape and visual effects are likely to arise. Refer to Chapter 13 of the EIAR for further details.
Material Assets - Waste	INP 8 To promote the sustainable management of waste generation and investment in different types of waste treatment and support a healthy environment, economy and society.	Chapter 15 of the EIAR considers waste management. A Waste Management Plan (WMP) has been prepared and forms part of the Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) in Appendix 4-5 of the EIAR. The WMP outlines the methods of waste prevention and minimisation by recycling, recovery and reuse at each stage of construction of the Proposed Project. Disposal of waste will be a last resort. All waste generated onsite during the construction phase will be contained in a waste skip at a waste storage area onsite. This waste storage area will be kept tidy with a skip clearly labelled to indicate the allowable material to be disposed of therein. The expected waste volumes generated onsite are unlikely to be large enough to warrant source segregation at the Proposed Project. Therefore, all waste streams generated onsite will be deposited into a single waste skip. The waste material will be transferred to a Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) by a fully licenced waste contractor where the waste will be sorted into individual waste stream for recycling, recovery or disposal. Refer to Chapter 15 and Appendix 4-5 of the EIAR for further details.
Cultural Heritage	BEP 1 To support and promote the protection, appropriate management and sympathetic enhancement of the county's archaeological heritage within the Plan area, in particular by implementing the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and the National Monuments Act 1930 (as amended).	Chapter 14 of the EIAR considers archaeological, architectural and cultural heritage.

Policy Theme	Policy/ Objective	Compliance
	BEP 3 To encourage the management and maintenance of the county's archaeological heritage, including historic burial grounds, in accordance with best conservation practice that considers the impact of climate change.	There are no recorded archaeological sites, or groups of sites, within the Proposed Wind Farm, the Proposed Development or the Turbine Delivery Route areas. There are 94 no. archaeological sites, or groups of sites, within the 5km study area of the Proposed Wind Farm. None are located within the 50m study areas of the Proposed Development or the Turbine Delivery Route accommodation areas. Within Chapter 14, an assessment of the potential, indirect operational impacts on the archaeological, architectural and cultural heritage resource have been carried out. Negative operational impacts ranging from imperceptible to moderate are predicted, however no significant impacts have been identified. Slight indirect negative effects have been identified to AH95 (a round tower subject to Preservation Orders and recorded as a National Monument) and AH97 (a ringfort subject to Preservation Orders). These are not significant. No indirect negative effects have been identified to AH96 (a crannog subject to Preservation Orders). Following the implementation of the above mitigation measures, there will be no significant residual effects on the previously unrecorded archaeological resource. No significant negative operational effects have been predicted to archaeological heritage, built heritage, cultural heritage or designed landscape sites, including recorded archaeological monuments, National Monuments, monuments subject to Preservation Orders, Protected Structures, and structures recorded on the NIAH. Please refer to Chapter 3 and Chapter 14 of the EIAR for further details.
	BEO 1 To protect the archaeological heritage and sites identified in the Record of Monuments and Places, National Monuments in the ownership or guardianship of the State in addition to National Monuments that are the subject of Preservation Orders, and to safeguard the integrity of the archaeological sites in their setting.	
	BEO 4 To ensure that development in the vicinity of a Recorded Monument or Zone of Archaeological Potential is sited and designed in a sensitive manner, avoiding adverse effects on landscape setting and context of monument.	
	BEO 6 To protect archaeological sites, monuments, underwater archaeology and archaeological objects in their setting, which are listed on the Record of Monuments and Places for Mayo.	

Policy Theme	Policy/ Objective	Compliance
	BEO 5 To protect all sites and features of archaeological interest discovered subsequent to the publication of the Record of Monument and Places, in situ (or at a minimum preservation by record), having regard to the advice and recommendations of the National Monuments Service of the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.	Chapter 14 of the EIAR consider archaeological, architectural and cultural heritage. Following the implementation of the construction mitigation measures as set out in Chapter 14 of the EIAR, there will be no significant residual effects on the previously unrecorded archaeological resource. This is due to the fact that any archaeological remains that are encountered during the course of monitoring or test trenching will be subject to preservation by record or preservation in-situ. Cultural heritage, designated landscape and townland boundary features subject to direct effects will be subject to a detailed photographic and written survey prior to construction. Refer to Chapter 14 of the EIAR for further details.

Table 7-3 Local Development Management Standards – Renewable Energy Compliance Summary Table

Development Management Standards	Compliance
8.8 Renewable Energy Renewable energy developments will generally be considered where it can be demonstrated that there will not have an adverse impact on the environment or on adjoining properties, in particular on: ➤ Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna ➤ Population and Human Health ➤ Water Quality ➤ Soil ➤ Air and Climatic Factors ➤ Material Assets ➤ Cultural Heritage ➤ Landscape.	➤ Chapter 6 of the EIAR assesses the likely significant effects, both alone and cumulatively with other projects, that the Proposed Project may have on Biodiversity. The chapter also sets out the mitigation measures proposed to avoid, reduce or offset any potential significant effects identified. Following this assessment, no significant cumulative effects on biodiversity, flora or fauna have been identified. Chapter 7 of the EIAR assesses the likely significant effects that the Proposed Project may have on bird species. The assessment concludes that no significant effects as a result of the Proposed Project are foreseen on Key Ornithological Receptors of the Site. ➤ Chapter 5 of the EIAR assessed key issues including population, human health, employment and economic activity, land use, residential amenity (including visual amenity, shadow flicker and noise), community facilities and services, tourism, property values, traffic and health and safety. The Proposed Project will be constructed, operated and decommissioned in accordance with the design, best practice and mitigation as described within the EIAR, ensuring no significant effects on population and human health at international, national or county scale. ➤ Chapter 9 of the EIAR assesses the likely significant effects that the Proposed Project may have on hydrology and hydrogeology and sets out the mitigation measures proposed to avoid, reduce or offset any potential significant effects that are identified. With the implementation of the mitigation measures detailed in the EIAR, the cumulative assessment found that there will be no significant effects on the hydrological and hydrogeological environments. No significant effects on the water environment will occur during the construction, operation or decommissioning of the Proposed Project. ➤ Chapter 8 of the EIAR assesses the likely significant effects that the Proposed Project may have on land, soils and geology and sets out the mitigation measures proposed to avoid, reduce or offset any potential significant effects that are identified. The assessment confirms there will be no significant cumulative effects on land, soil and geology as a result of the Proposed Project. ➤ Chapter 10 identifies, describes and assesses the potential significant direct and indirect effects on air quality arising from the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Proposed Project. There will be no net carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions from operation of the Proposed Project. The production of renewable energy from the Proposed Project will have a Long-Term Moderate Positive effect on air quality due to the offsetting of approximately 19,731 tonnes of Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) per annum, or 690,588 tonnes of carbon dioxide over the proposed 35-year lifecycle of the Proposed Project. Chapter 11 identifies, describes, and assesses the potential significant direct and indirect effects on climate arising from the construction,

Development Management Standards	Compliance
	operation and decommissioning of the Proposed Project. During the construction phase of the Proposed Project, there will be a permanent, imperceptible, negative effect on climate as a result of greenhouse emissions. During the operational phase of the Proposed Project, there will be a long-term, Moderate Positive Effect on Climate as a result of reduced greenhouse gas emissions from the operation of the Proposed Project and the habitat enhancement proposed. Any impact and consequential effects that occurs during the decommissioning phase are similar to that which occur during the construction phase, be it of less impact. ➤ Chapter 15 of the EIAR identifies the Traffic and Transport, Telecommunications and Aviation and other material assets related to the Proposed Project. ○ The Traffic and Transport assessment has been carried out in accordance with EPA Guidelines 2022 and is supported by a Traffic Management Plan (TMP) and Route Access Survey. The environmental effects of the traffic generated by the Proposed Project has been assessed in Chapter 10, Chapter 11 and Chapter 12. ○ There are no electromagnetic interference impacts for telecommunications and aviation assets or operations associated with the construction phase of the Proposed Project and therefore no mitigation is required. There are no operators with telecommunication links traversing the Site. ○ An Aviation Review Statement was undertaken for the Proposed Project following feedback received during the scoping exercise which concluded that the Proposed Project will have no residual impact on aviation. Furthermore, all lighting requirements requested by the IAA and the Department of Defence will be met by the Applicant. ○ Chapter 15 of the EIAR also considers other utilities or built services in the area such as electricity supply and transmission, water and gas. In order to assess the potential for significant effects on built services and waste management in the vicinity of the Proposed Project, scoping requests were made to EirGrid, Uisce Éireann, Gas Networks Ireland (GNI) and numerous sections of Mayo County Council, including the Roads Department and Environment Department. Please refer to Section 2.7 of Chapter 2 of the EIAR for details in relation to the EIA scoping exercise. ➤ Chapter 14 of the EIAR was prepared by IAC Archaeology and includes an archaeological, architectural, and cultural heritage assessment of the Proposed Project. There are no recorded archaeological sites, or groups of sites, within the Proposed Project. Following the implementation of the mitigation measures specified in the EIAR, there shall be no significant

Development Management Standards	Compliance
	residual effects on the previously unrecorded archaeological resource. There are no recorded archaeological sites, or groups of sites, within the Proposed Wind Farm, the Proposed Development or the Turbine Delivery Route areas. There are 94 no. archaeological sites, or groups of sites, within the 5km study area of the Proposed Wind Farm. None are located within the 50m study areas of the Proposed Development or the Turbine Delivery Route accommodation areas. ➤ Chapter 13 of the EIAR assesses the likely significant landscape and visual impacts arising as a result of the Proposed Project. ○ Components of the Proposed Development, such as the proposed 110kV substation and end masts, are not deemed to be as visually prominent as the Proposed Turbines which form part of the Proposed Wind Farm, however, the proposed 110kV substation and end masts do have the potential to give rise to localised landscape and visual effects. These elements are given full consideration and assessment throughout Chapter 13 of the EIAR. Visual effects arising from the construction of the proposed 110kV substation, 2 no. new end masts, and associated temporary construction compound, as experienced by visual receptors in the immediate vicinity of the Site are considered to be localised, ‘Negative’, ‘Short Term’, ‘Not Significant’ effects. On balance, these effects are not considered significant. Visual effects of the proposed 110kV onsite substation during the operational phase are likely to be highly localised, ‘Long-term’, ‘Negative’ and will be ‘Slight’. On balance, these effects are not considered significant. Visual effects of the proposed connection to the existing 110kV overhead line of the Proposed Development are likely to be localised, ‘Long-term’, ‘Negative’ and will be ‘Not Significant’. On balance, these effects are not considered significant. ○ The assessment concludes that no significant landscape and visual effects were identified. Overall, the Proposed Project is effectively accommodated within the landscape without any Significant effects on the key scenic or landscape sensitivities of receptors identified in the 20km LVIA Study Area. The Proposed Project is appropriately designed and suitably scaled, and it has been demonstrated that no significant landscape and visual effects are likely to arise.

Development Management Standards	Compliance
8.9 Electricity Lines Electricity transmission lines are an essential and inevitable element in providing the necessary energy for economic and social progress. The development of electricity transmission lines shall be subject to the following: <u>Amenity Impacts</u> New transmission lines should have regard to existing residential amenity and environmental designations and should mitigate against any significant diminution of views of special amenity value. Applications for new transmission lines shall be accompanied by a justification statement of the regional importance of, and demonstrated need for, the proposed development in strengthening the electricity network in the region.	It should be noted that the Proposed Development is being brought forward to enable the transmission of renewable wind energy generated by the Proposed Wind Farm onto the national electricity grid. The Proposed Development will connect the Proposed Wind Farm to the national grid via a new onsite ‘loop-in’ 110kV substation connected to the nearby Cloon to Castlebar 110kV overhead transmission line. This will be connected via approximately 982 m of underground cabling route which will run in a north-eastward direction from the proposed onsite 110kV substation through agricultural land to the existing overhead line. The existing overhead line will be broken by 2 no. end masts (lattice type towers) to facilitate the grid connection. Please see Figure 5-1 above. Given the close proximity of the Cloon to Castlebar 110kV overhead line and how it intersects the northern section of the Site, this grid connection option is the most optimal national grid connection point when considering the initial grid connection design involving a 38kV grid connection. The proposed 110kV underground grid cabling route is c. 982 m long and located entirely within private land within the Site for which the necessary agreements are in place, thus minimising any impacts on local road users during the construction phase. <u>Amenity Impacts</u> Chapter 5 of the EIAR assessed key issues including population, human health, employment and economic activity, land use, residential amenity (including visual amenity, shadow flicker and noise), community facilities and services, tourism, property values, traffic and health and safety. The Proposed Project will be constructed, operated and decommissioned in accordance with the design, best practice and mitigation as described within the EIAR, ensuring no significant effects on population and human health at international, national or county scale. The NIS, which accompanies this planning application provides an assessment of all potential direct or indirect adverse effects on European Sites, taking into account all relevant guidance including the European Commission’s Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites - Methodological guidance on Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (EC, 2021). The Proposed Project is not located within any European Sites or nationally designated sites. The River Moy SAC, Balla Turlough SAC and Lough Mask SPA have been fully assessed within the

Development Management Standards	Compliance
	AASR and NIS that accompanies this planning application. The AASR and NIS have been prepared to provide the competent authorities with the information necessary to complete an Appropriate Assessment screening and an Appropriate Assessment for the Proposed Project in compliance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive. The NIS concludes that the Proposed Project, individually or in-combination with other plans or projects, will not adversely affect the integrity of any European Site. Chapter 6 of the EIAR assesses the likely significant effects, both alone and cumulatively with other projects, that the Proposed Project may have on Biodiversity. The chapter also sets out the mitigation measures proposed to avoid, reduce or offset any potential significant effects identified. Following this assessment, no significant cumulative effects on biodiversity, flora or fauna have been identified. Chapter 7 of the EIAR assesses the likely significant effects that the Proposed Project may have on bird species. The assessment concludes that no significant effects as a result of the Proposed Project are foreseen on Key Ornithological Receptors of the Site. Chapter 13 of the EIAR assesses the likely significant landscape and visual impacts arising as a result of the Proposed Project. The assessment concludes that no significant landscape and visual effects were identified. Overall, the Proposed Project is effectively accommodated within the landscape without any Significant effects on the key scenic or landscape sensitivities of receptors identified in the 20km LVIA Study Area. The Proposed Project is appropriately designed and suitably scaled, and it has been demonstrated that no significant landscape and visual effects are likely to arise. <u>Need for Proposed Grid Connection Development</u> The Proposed Project delivers significant benefits at national and regional levels, by helping to contribute to Ireland's renewable energy targets and reducing dependence on fossil fuels. The Proposed Project also provides economic benefits at a local level through the community benefit package for residents and community groups, employment during the construction and operation of the Proposed Development and through the annual rates payable to the Local Authority. The Proposed Development will contribute to long-term economic sustainability, and the transition to a low carbon and climate resilient society. By facilitating the transmission of c. 31.5 MW of renewable wind energy to the national electricity grid, the Proposed Development will support the sustainable social and economic growth of the region and the State. The proposed on-site 110kV

Development Management Standards	Compliance
	substation will form part of the national electricity grid once constructed and energised and will enhance the capacity of grid infrastructure in the County. The Proposed Development is in accordance with and has the support of European, national, regional and local policies pertaining to achieving the transition to a low carbon economy and climate resiliency, increasing renewable energy generation, and enhancing energy security. At a European level, the Proposed Development is supported by RED III and REPowerEU. At a national level, the Proposed Development is supported by the Revised NPF, CAP25, the National Energy Security Framework, among other national climate and renewable energy policies. The legally binding greenhouse gas emission reduction target and the obligations of public bodies under the Climate Act, should also be considered in the assessment of this application. At a local level, the Proposed Development is supported by climate and renewable energy policies as set out in the MCDP (as varied). A full appraisal of the relevant policy and legislation is provided in Section 6 and Section 7 of this Report.

7.2.2

Renewable Energy Strategy for County Mayo 2011-2020

The Renewable Energy Strategy for County Mayo 2011-2020 (Mayo RES) forms part of Volume 4 of the MCDP (as varied).

Policy Objectives REO 6 of the MCDP (as varied) aims to ‘*To ensure all renewable energy proposal comply with the provisions of the Mayo County Council Renewable Energy Strategy 2011-2022 (or as updated).*’ The Mayo RES sets out guidance designed to allow County Mayo to both contribute to meeting the national legally binding targets while also capitalising on those opportunities associated with the generation and harnessing of renewable energy in a sustainable manner.

It should be noted that at the time of writing of this Planning Report, MCC have published Proposed Draft Variation No. 2 (‘the variation’) of the MCDP (as varied), which seeks to update the renewable energy strategy for County Mayo. The variation includes a Draft Renewable Energy Strategy for County Mayo (April 2026). MCC conducted consultation on the variation between Tuesday, 28th April 2026 and Tuesday, the 26th May 2026 at 5pm. The current Mayo RES remains the relevant renewable energy strategy in force for County Mayo at the time of submission.

The vision as outlined in the Mayo RES is as follows:

*“The renewable energy development vision for County Mayo is to harness the energy and economic potential of County Mayo presented by renewable technologies in order to provide benefits for both local communities and the global environment. In doing so, the elements of the natural, cultural (architectural and archaeological) and landscape heritage that define Mayo for local people and visitors alike will be protected. **It is recognised, however, that change is an integral part of cultural heritage and that in order for communities and businesses to thrive Mayo needs new developments.** Renewable energy projects will, therefore, **be developed in ways that protect the integrity of environmentally designated sites; maximise local and regional benefits; and minimise or avoid negative impacts on the environment and society.**” (emphasis added)*

A primary aim of the Mayo RES is to set out an integrated, comprehensive suite of policy objectives for renewable energy development in Mayo that seek to encourage wind energy developments at appropriate locations and to guide the location and design of new proposals. The Mayo RES identifies areas within County Mayo according to a hierarchy from priority areas to areas open for consideration. There are four categories relating to wind energy designations within the Mayo RES, as follows:

- **“Priority Areas** are areas which have secured planning permission and where on shore wind farms can be developed immediately.
- **Tier 1 - Preferred (Large Wind Farms)** are areas in which the potential for large wind farms is greatest.
- **Tier 1 - Preferred (Cluster of Turbines)** are areas identified as being most suitable for smaller clusters of wind turbines (clusters of up to three to five turbines depending on site conditions and visual amenity).
- **Tier 2 - Open for Consideration** identifies areas which may be considered for wind farms or small clusters of wind turbines but where the visual impact on sensitive or vulnerable landscapes, listed highly scenic routes, scenic routes, scenic viewing points and scenic routes will be the principal consideration. The Tier 2 classification will be reviewed by the Council following a determination by EirGrid of grid infrastructure for the County.”

The 7 no. proposed turbines of the Proposed Wind Farm are all located entirely within an area designated in the Mayo RES as ‘*Tier 1-Preferred (Cluster of Turbines)*’ for wind energy development. It is important to note that the Proposed Development forms part of the Proposed Project which is a wind energy development. The Proposed Development will facilitate the connection of the Proposed Wind Farm to the national electricity grid.

It is vital that wind energy developments that accord with proper planning and sustainable development and are located within areas designated for wind energy developments in the Mayo RES are progressed in order to meet European, national, regional and local climate action and renewable energy targets.

Section 6.5 of the Mayo RES provides guidance on how planning applications for renewable energy developments are assessed in the County:

*“Notwithstanding the potential areas identified in this Strategy **all proposed renewable developments will be assessed on the principles of proper planning and sustainable development**, ensuring minimal adverse environmental impact, including flooding, and taking full account of the presence and requirement to protect all Natura 2000 sites and (proposed) Natural Heritage Sites. Projects will be subject to Habitats Directive Assessment where considered appropriate.” (emphasis added)*

The Mayo RES also states that all applications for renewable energy developments must demonstrate that the Proposed Development is in compliance with the requirements set out in the mitigation measures of the Mayo RES and the policies and objectives of the MCDP (as varied).

“Applicants/developers applying for planning permission for renewable energy developments will be required to demonstrate that any proposed renewable energy developments comply with the requirements set out in the mitigation measures below, along with requirements set out in the Mayo County Development Plan 2008-2014 or relevant Local Area Plan (or subsequent plans) and any national guidelines in relation to the location of renewable energy developments.”

The Proposed Development is considered to be acceptable and in accordance with the policies and objective of the MCDP (as varied) and the Mayo RES and the proper planning and sustainable development of the Proposed Development Site as detailed throughout this Report.

As set out in the EIAR and in this Planning Report, the Proposed Development has been designed in accordance with the opportunities and sensitivities set out in the Mayo RES and presents an appropriate and suitable opportunity for wind energy development. Having regard to the factors listed above, the Proposed Development Site is in close proximity to the existing energy transmission network and road network, requires minimal vegetation removal and has suitable wind speeds.

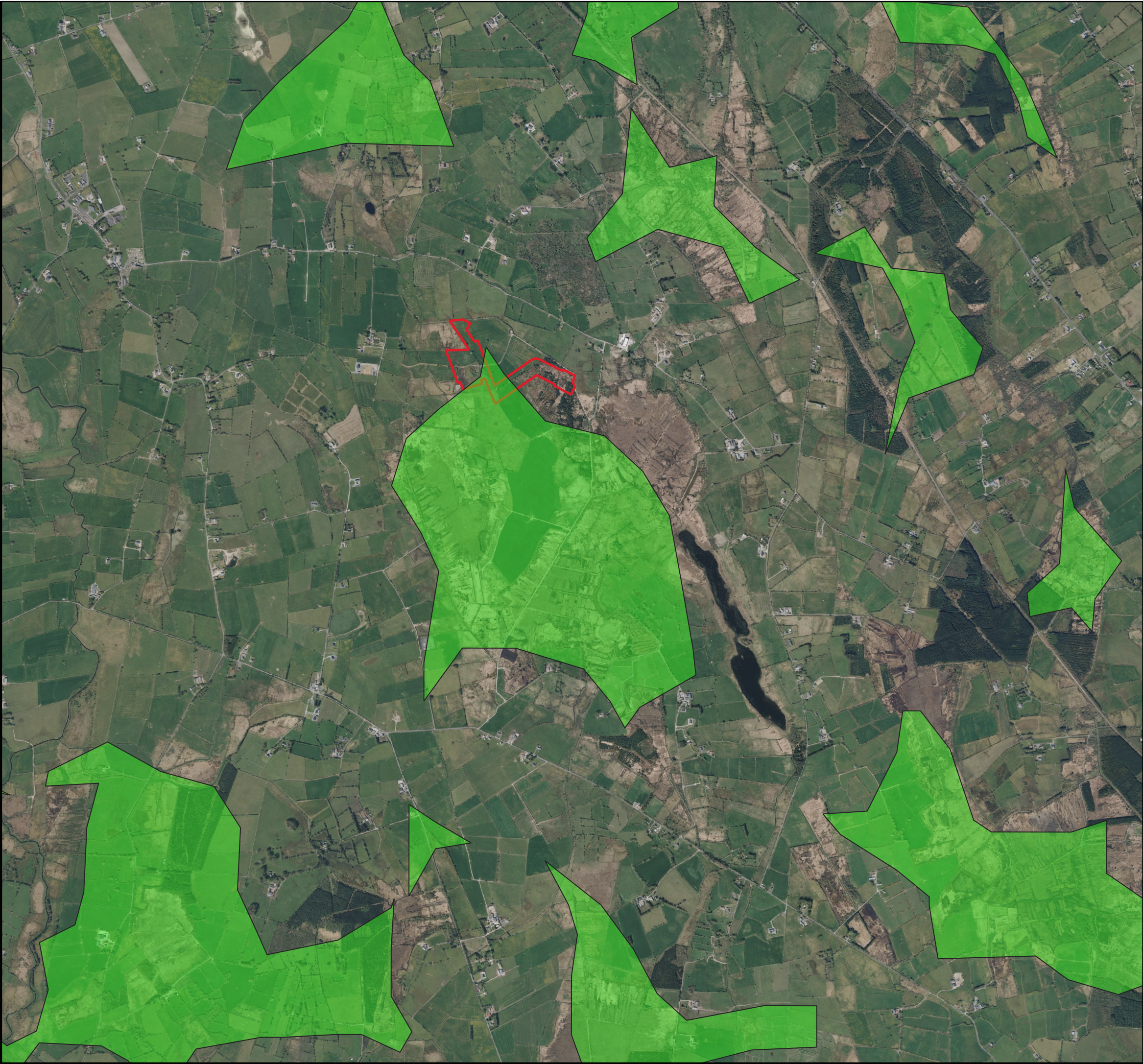
Additionally, the Proposed Development Site has few sensitivities constraining wind energy development. The Proposed Development Site is not prone to landslides (as detailed in **Chapter 8** and **Appendix 8-1 of Chapter 8**, both of the EIAR) and has been designed to avoid neighbouring high value Annex 1 habitat areas (as detailed in **Chapter 6** of the EIAR). The population density is 14.87 persons per square kilometre within the Population Study Area (**Section 5.3.1 of Chapter 5** of the EIAR) which is lower than the population density of County Mayo at 24.68 per square kilometre. Additionally, no likely significant landscape and visual effects are anticipated in relation to the Proposed Development (as detailed in **Chapter 13** of the EIAR).

Table 7-2 and **Table 7-3** demonstrate that the Proposed Development is in compliance with the policies and objectives of the MCDP (as varied) and the Development Management Standards of the MCDP (as varied) respectively. Furthermore, **Table 7-4** and **Table 7-5** below respectively demonstrate that the Proposed Development is in accordance with the policies and objectives of the Mayo RES and the mitigation measures as set out within the Mayo RES.

Furthermore, the design of the Proposed Development, takes account of the identified site constraints, and the EIAR, NIS and this Planning Report demonstrate that the Proposed Development will not result in any likely significant effects on the environment. As such, the Proposed Development is considered to be acceptable.

The Proposed Development has been demonstrated to be in line with the proper planning and sustainable development of the Proposed Development Site and will contribute to the transition to a low carbon, climate resilient and environmentally sustainable County in County Mayo. The Proposed Development will also support County Mayo in its strategic aim to become a national leader in renewable energy generation, as the Proposed Development will integrate approximately 31.5 MW of renewable

wind energy into the national electricity grid. Additionally, the Proposed Development will also support the achievement of European, national and regional climate action and renewable energy targets.



Map Legend

Red Line Boundary

Mayo County Council WES 2022-2028

Tier 1 - Preferred (Cluster of Turbines)

Tier 1 - Preferred (Large Windfarm)

Tier 2 - Open to Consideration



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Drawing Title

Renewable Energy Strategy for County Mayo 2022-2028

Project Title

Proposed Cunlaghfadda Green Energy Project

Drawn By

JA

Checked By

NS

Project No.

220825

Drawing No.

Figure 7-1

Scale

1:20,000

Date

2026-06-12



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Table 7-4 Mayo RES Policy Compliance Summary Table

Policy/ Objective	Compliance
Policy 1 Climate Change It is the policy of the Council to support the National Climate Change Strategy 2007-2012.	The Proposed Development which forms part of a renewable energy development is in line with Policy 1, as the Proposed Development will support national climate action and renewable energy policies. Specifically, the Proposed Development will help contribute to the 9 GW onshore wind energy and 80% renewable energy share goals of CAP25. The Proposed Development will also help contribute to Ireland's legally binding target of a 51% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and net-zero emissions by 2050 as set out in the Climate Act.
Objective 1.1 It is an objective of the Council to assist in achieving national targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions associated with energy production by encouraging and promoting the reduction in energy consumption and by encouraging renewable energy developments at appropriate locations within the County, having regard to relevant planning guidance and the principles of proper planning and sustainable development and through the implementation of this Strategy.	The Proposed Development aligns with Objective 1.1 as it will help contribute to the achievement of national targets in relation to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The Proposed Development will support with this objective by transferring sustainable, renewable wind energy to the grid, that will reduce Ireland's reliance on greenhouse gas emitting fossil fuels for energy generation. It has been demonstrated in the EIAR, NIS and this Planning Report that the Proposed Development is located in an area suitable for wind energy development and aligns with relevant planning guidance and the principles of proper planning and sustainable development. Refer to the EIAR, NIS, Sections 6 to 8 of this Report for further details.
Objective 1.2 It is an objective of the Council to encourage renewable energy production from wind, wave, tide, biomass, biofuel, biogas, solar power, tidal, hydro and geothermal sources in the County, particularly at locations set out in the Maps accompanying this Strategy and having regard to principles of proper planning and sustainable development.	The 7 no. proposed turbines of the Proposed Wind Farm are all located entirely within an area designated in the Mayo RES as '<i>Tier 1-Preferred (Cluster of Turbines)</i>' for wind energy development. The Proposed Development forms part of the Proposed Project which is a wind energy development. The Proposed Development will facilitate the connection of the Proposed Wind Farm to the national electricity grid. Through the EIAR, NIS and this Planning Report, it has been demonstrated that the Proposed Development is in line with the proper planning and sustainable development of the Proposed Development Site. Refer to the EIAR, NIS, Sections 6 to 8 of this Report for further details.

Policy/ Objective	Compliance
Objective 1.3 It is an objective of the Council to assist in achieving the target that a minimum of 16% of the County's overall energy requirements and 42.5% of the County's electricity requirements will be provided from renewable sources by 2020 by implementing this Strategy.	The Proposed Development which forms part of a renewable energy development aligns with Objective 1.3 as it will provide renewable wind energy to the grid, contributing to MCC's minimum renewable energy target of 600 MW for County Mayo. The Proposed Development will also support MCC's strategic aim of becoming national leader in renewable energy generation.
Policy 2 The Natural and Built Environment It is the policy of the Council to ensure that a balance between the provision of renewable energy developments and the preservation and conservation of the natural and built environment is maintained, subject to compliance with the requirements of the Habitats and Birds Directives.	The 7 no. proposed turbines of the Proposed Wind Farm are all located entirely within an area designated in the Mayo RES as '<i>Tier 1-Preferred (Cluster of Turbines)</i>' for wind energy development. The Proposed Development forms part of the Proposed Project which is a wind energy development. The Proposed Development will facilitate the connection of the Proposed Wind Farm to the national electricity grid. A comprehensive EIAR and NIS have been prepared, which assess all potential impacts on the natural and built environment and set out appropriate mitigation measures where required.
Objective 2.1 It is an objective of the Council to ensure full compliance with European and National legislation in relation to renewable energy production and protection of the environment.	The Proposed Project compliance with European and National legislation has been demonstrated in Section 7.1 of this Planning Report and detailed in Chapter 2 of the EIAR.
Objective 2.2 It is an objective of the Council to follow a sustainable plan led approach to renewable energy development within County Mayo through the implementation of this Strategy, in particular guiding renewable energy developments to preferred locations as set out in Section 6.4 and requiring all renewable energy developments to comply with standards and mitigation measures outlined in Section 6.5.	The 7 no. proposed turbines of the Proposed Wind Farm are all located entirely within an area designated in the Mayo RES as '<i>Tier 1-Preferred (Cluster of Turbines)</i>' for wind energy development. The Proposed Development forms part of the Proposed Project which is a wind energy development. The Proposed Development will facilitate the connection of the Proposed Wind Farm to the national electricity grid. '<i>Tier 1-Preferred (Cluster of Turbines)</i>' is defined as "<i>areas in which the potential for large wind farms is greatest</i>". It is therefore considered that the Proposed Project is located within an area designated for wind energy developments in the Mayo RES and is in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development.

Policy/ Objective	Compliance
Objective 2.3 It is an objective of the Council that all proposed renewable developments will be assessed on the principles of proper planning and sustainable development, ensuring minimal adverse environmental impact to biodiversity, flora and fauna; population and human health; soil; water; air and climatic factors; material assets; cultural heritage; and landscape. Full account shall be taken of the presence and requirement to protect all Natura 2000 sites, natural Heritage Areas, proposed Natural Heritage Areas, the national Park and Nature Reserves. Projects will be subject to Habitats Directive Assessment where considered appropriate.	The EIAR and NIS accompanying this planning application comprehensively assess potential impacts of the Proposed Project on biodiversity, flora and fauna, population and human health, soil, water, air and climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage, and landscape and set out appropriate mitigation measures where required. The Proposed Project is not located within any European Sites or nationally designated sites. The River Moy SAC, Balla Turlough SAC and Lough Mask SPA have been fully assessed within the Appropriate Assessment Screening and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) that accompanies this planning application. The NIS concludes that the Proposed Project, individually or in-combination with other plans or projects, will not adversely affect the integrity of any European Site. A cumulative assessment was undertaken to consider the potential for the Proposed Project to interact with other plans and projects in the surrounding area, including other wind farms and large-scale developments. Following this assessment, no significant cumulative effects on biodiversity, flora or fauna have been identified.
Objective 2.4 It is an objective of the Council to ensure that renewable energy developments do not interfere with, damage, remove, or impinge on the visual amenity of, existing rights of way, public walking and cycling routes, scenic routes and scenic views, architectural heritage including protected structures and Architectural Conservation Areas, archaeological heritage including recorded monuments, Ballycroy National Park and vulnerable or sensitive landscapes in the County.	Chapter 13 of the EIAR assesses the likely significant landscape and visual impacts arising as a result of the Proposed Project. The assessment concludes that no significant landscape and visual effects were identified. The Proposed Project is effectively accommodated within the landscape without any significant effects on the key scenic or landscape sensitivities of receptors identified in the 20km LVIA Study Area. The Proposed Project is appropriately designed and suitably scaled, and it has been demonstrated that no significant landscape and visual effects are likely to arise.
Objective 4.1 It is an objective of the Council to ensure that the advantages presented by renewable energy development outweigh the disadvantages for the majority of the community residing in the area of any proposed renewable energy development, and for the wider environment, when assessing planning applications for renewable energy development.	The Proposed Project delivers significant benefits at National and Regional levels, by helping to contribute to Ireland's renewable energy targets and reducing dependence on fossil fuels. The Proposed Project also provides economic benefits at a local level through the community benefit package for residents and community groups, employment during the construction and operation of the Proposed Development and through the annual rates payable to the Local Authority. The 7 no. proposed turbines of the Proposed Wind Farm are all located entirely within an area designated in the Mayo RES as '<i>Tier 1-Preferred (Cluster of Turbines)</i>' for wind energy

Policy/ Objective	Compliance
	development. The Proposed Development forms part of the Proposed Project which is a wind energy development. The Proposed Development will facilitate the connection of the Proposed Wind Farm to the national electricity grid. The EIAR and NIS accompanying this planning application comprehensively assess potential impacts of the Proposed Project on biodiversity, flora and fauna, population and human health, soil, water, air and climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage, and landscape and set out appropriate mitigation measures where required. A cumulative assessment was undertaken to consider the potential for the Proposed Project to interact with other plans and projects in the surrounding area, including other wind farms and large-scale developments. Following this assessment, no significant cumulative effects on biodiversity, flora or fauna have been identified. It is therefore considered that the advantages of the proposed development, including its contribution to a sustainable energy future and the local economy, clearly outweigh any disadvantages for both the local community and the wider environment.

Table 7-5 Local Renewable Energy Strategy Mitigation Measures and Compliance Summary Table

Mitigation Measures	Compliance
Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna	Chapter 6 of the EIAR assesses the likely significant effects, both alone and cumulatively with other projects, that the Proposed Project may have on Biodiversity (excluding birds, which are assessed separately in Chapter 7 of the EIAR). The Chapter also sets out the mitigation measures proposed to avoid, reduce or offset any potential significant effects identified. The Proposed Project is not located within any European Sites or nationally designated sites. The River Moy SAC, Balla Turlough SAC and Lough Mask SPA have been fully assessed within the Appropriate Assessment Screening and NIS that accompanies this planning application. This report has been prepared to provide the competent authorities with the information necessary to complete an Appropriate Assessment screening and an Appropriate Assessment for the Proposed Project in compliance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive. The NIS concludes that the Proposed Project, individually or in-combination with other plans or projects, will not adversely affect the integrity of any European Site. A cumulative assessment was undertaken to consider the potential for the Proposed Project to interact with other plans and projects in the surrounding area, including other wind farms and large-scale developments. Following this assessment, no significant cumulative effects on biodiversity, flora or fauna have been identified. It is therefore concluded that, provided the Proposed Project is constructed and operated in accordance with the design, best practice and mitigation measures described within this application, significant individual or cumulative effects on biodiversity are not anticipated at international, national, county or local scales on any of the identified Key Ecological Receptors. Chapter 7 of the EIAR assesses the likely significant effects that the Proposed Project may have on bird species. Firstly, a brief description of the Proposed Project is provided. This is followed by a comprehensive description of the methodologies that were followed in order to obtain the information necessary to complete a thorough assessment of the potential effects of the Proposed Project on bird species. Based on the detailed assessment, it is considered that the potential effects of the Proposed Project upon birds will not be significant. Effects associated with habitat loss, disturbance displacement, collision risk and cumulative effects have been assessed to be no greater than long-term slight negative effect (EPA, 2017) and low effect significance (Percival, 2003). The implementation of the prescribed mitigation measures will render any potential effects on avian receptors to low significance. In conclusion, no significant effects as a result of the Proposed Project are foreseen on Key Ornithological Receptors of the Site. Please refer to Chapter 6 and Chapter 7 of the EIAR, and the NIS for further details.

Mitigation Measures	Compliance
Population and Human Health	Chapter 5 of the EIAR assesses the likely significant effects that the Proposed Project May have on population and human health. The key issues examined in Chapter 5 of the EIAR include population, human health, employment and economic activity, land use, residential amenity (including visual amenity, shadow flicker and noise), community facilities and services, tourism, property values, traffic and health and safety. The Proposed Project will be constructed, operated and decommissioned in accordance with the design, best practice and mitigation that is described within the EIAR, ensuring that significant effects on population and human health employment and economic activity, land-use, residential amenity, community facilities and services, tourism, property values and health and safety are not anticipated at international, national or county scale. Please refer to Chapter 5 of the EIAR for further details.
Soils and Geology	Chapter 8 of the EIAR assesses the likely significant effects that the Proposed Project may have on land, soils and geology and sets out the mitigation measures proposed to avoid, reduce or offset any potential significant effects that are identified. The Proposed Project has a very small development footprint when compared to the overall area of the Site. Therefore, no significant effects on land will occur during the construction, operation or decommissioning phases of the Proposed Project. The peat and mineral soil/subsoil deposits at the Site are not designated in this area (i.e. they do not form part of a designated site). For this reason, and with the implementation of the mitigation measures detailed in the EIAR and the best practice measures detailed in relation to spoil management, no significant effects on soils or subsoils will occur during the construction, operation or decommissioning phases of the Proposed Project. Similarly, with the implementation of the mitigation measures outlined in the EIAR, no significant effects on the underlying siltstone bedrock geology will occur during the construction, operation, or decommissioning phases of the Proposed Project. An assessment of potential cumulative effects associated with the Proposed Project and other developments on land, soils and geology has been completed. The land, soils and geology assessment confirms there will be no significant cumulative effects on land, soil and geology as a result of the Proposed Project. Please refer to Chapter 8 of the EIAR for further details.

Mitigation Measures	Compliance
Water Protection > Freshwater > Groundwater	Chapter 9 of the EIAR assesses the likely significant effects that the Proposed Project may have on hydrology and hydrogeology and sets out the mitigation measures proposed to avoid, reduce or offset any potential significant effects that are identified. No significant effects to surface water (quality and flows) and groundwater (quality and quantity, and any local groundwater wells) will occur as a result of the Proposed Project provided the proposed mitigation measures outlined in the EIAR are implemented. The EIAR presents proven and effective mitigation measures to mitigate the release of sediment which will reduce the concentration of suspended solids to acceptable levels. The storage and handling of hydrocarbons/chemicals will be carried out using best practice methods which will ensure the protection of surface and groundwater quality. The base of the substation transformer will be bunded and capable of holding 110% of the stored oil volume. The Proposed Project drainage system will ensure that all surface water runoff at the Site is attenuated and there will be no increase in the downstream flood risk as a result of the Proposed Project. A WFD Compliance Assessment has been completed for all water bodies (surface water and groundwater bodies) with the potential to be impacted by the Proposed Project. With the implementation of the mitigation measures detailed in the EIAR there will be no change in the WFD status of the underlying groundwater body or downstream surface water bodies as a result of the Proposed Project. The Proposed Project has been found to be fully compliant with the WFD and will not prevent any waterbody from achieving its WFD objectives. An assessment of potential cumulative effects associated with the Proposed Project and other developments on the hydrological and hydrogeological environment has been completed. With the implementation of the mitigation measures detailed in the EIAR, the cumulative assessment found that there will be no significant effects on the hydrological and hydrogeological environments. No significant effects on the water environment will occur during the construction, operation or decommissioning of the Proposed Project. Please refer to Chapter 9 of the EIAR for further details.
Noise	Chapter 12 of the EIAR assesses the potential noise and vibration effects associated with the Proposed Project during the construction, operational, and decommissioning phases, with particular regard to nearby noise-sensitive locations (NSLs). During the construction phase, temporary noise and vibration will arise from activities such as access track construction, grid connection works, and construction traffic. These activities will occur intermittently and move progressively across the site. The assessment demonstrates that predicted noise and vibration levels at nearby homes will generally remain within accepted limits. Where noise may

Mitigation Measures	Compliance
	be temporarily noticeable at the closest locations, effects will be short-term and not significant. Noise monitoring will be undertaken where appropriate to confirm compliance with the adopted limits. During the operational phase, noise will arise from the onsite 110kV substation.. Noise from the substation is predicted to be low and well below relevant assessment criteria. No perceptible vibration effects are anticipated during operation. Post-commissioning monitoring will be undertaken to confirm compliance, and any complaints will be investigated in accordance with best practice. The decommissioning phase is expected to result in noise and vibration effects similar to, or lower than, those experienced during construction. These effects will be temporary and not significant. Cumulative noise and vibration effects with other nearby developments have been considered and are not expected to give rise to significant impacts. Overall, with the application of best-practice controls and monitoring, the Proposed Project is not expected to result in significant noise or vibration effects at nearby noise-sensitive locations during any phase of development. Please refer to Chapter 12 of the EIAR for further details.
Climatic Factors	Chapter 11 of the EIAR identifies, describes, and assesses the potential significant direct and indirect effects on climate arising from the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Proposed Project. Harnessing more energy by means of wind farms will reduce dependency on fossil fuels, thereby resulting in a reduction in harmful emissions that can be damaging to human health and the environment. During the construction phase of the Proposed Project, there will be a permanent, imperceptible, negative effect on climate as a result of greenhouse emissions. During the operational phase of the Proposed Project, there will be a long-term, Moderate Positive Effect on Climate as a result of reduced greenhouse gas emissions from the operation of the Proposed Project and the habitat enhancement proposed. Any impact and consequential effects that occurs during the decommissioning phase are similar to that which occur during the construction phase, be it of less impact. The Proposed Project will have an export capacity of approximately 31.5MW and therefore will help contribute towards the achievement of national and international emission reduction targets, provide much needed grid infrastructure, and the capacity to offset 19,731tCO₂e per annum, or 690,588 tCO₂e over the proposed 35-year operational life. Carbon losses to the atmosphere will be offset

Mitigation Measures	Compliance
	by the Proposed Project in approximately 39 months of operation. Please see Section 11.4.3.2 of Chapter 11 of the EIAR for details on carbon savings/offset calculations. Please refer to Chapter 11 of the EIAR for further details.
Flooding	Chapter 9 of the EIAR assesses the likely significant effects that the Proposed Project may have on hydrology and hydrogeology and sets out the mitigation measures proposed to avoid, reduce or offset any potential significant effects that are identified. A flood risk assessment has been completed for the Proposed Project and concluded that the Site is located in Flood Zone C and is at low risk of flooding. The Proposed Project drainage system will ensure that all surface water runoff at the Site is attenuated and there will be no increase in the downstream flood risk as a result of the Proposed Project. Please refer to Chapter 9 of the EIAR for further details.
Transport Infrastructure > Roads and Transportation > Ireland West Airport Knock	Chapter 15 of the EIAR addresses the likely significant effects of the Proposed Project on transportation infrastructure. During the 12-18 month construction stage of the Proposed Project, it is forecasted that the additional traffic that will appear on the public road network serving the Site which will have a slight, short-term negative effect on existing road users, which will be minimised with the implementation of the mitigation measures included in the proposed Traffic Management Plan (TMP) included as Appendix 15-2 of the EIAR. There will be no significant impacts. The traffic impact of the Proposed Project will be imperceptible during the operational stage. The residual impacts will be imperceptible, long term and negative. There will be no significant impacts. Ireland West Airport is considered in Chapter 15 of the EIAR. An Aviation Review Statement was produced by Ai Bridges (Appendix 15-6 of the EIAR) to investigate any potential significant effects that the Proposed Project may have on the aeronautical resource in the wider area following feedback received from Ireland West Airport through the scoping exercise. Please refer to Chapter 3, Chapter 15, Appendix 15-2 and Appendix 15-6 of the EIAR for further details.
Waste Infrastructure	Chapter 15 of the EIAR considers waste management. A Waste Management Plan (WMP) has been prepared and forms part of the Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) in Appendix 4-5 of the EIAR. The WMP outlines the methods of waste

Mitigation Measures	Compliance
	prevention and minimisation by recycling, recovery and reuse at each stage of construction of the Proposed Project. Disposal of waste will be a last resort. All waste generated onsite during the construction phase will be contained in a waste skip at a waste storage area onsite. This waste storage area will be kept tidy with a skip clearly labelled to indicate the allowable material to be disposed of therein. The expected waste volumes generated onsite are unlikely to be large enough to warrant source segregation at the Proposed Project. Therefore, all waste streams generated onsite will be deposited into a single waste skip. The waste material will be transferred to a Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) by a fully licenced waste contractor where the waste will be sorted into individual waste stream for recycling, recovery or disposal. Please refer to Chapter 15 and Appendix 4-5 of the EIAR for further details.
Energy Infrastructure	As detailed in Chapter 3 of the EIAR, further to advice from Grid Technical Experts, it was deemed that the most viable option to connect the Proposed Wind Farm to the national grid would be through a loop-in connection into the existing Cloon-Castlebar 110kV overhead line which runs directly adjacent to the Proposed Wind Farm Site. The Proposed Development will connect the Proposed Wind Farm to the 110kV Castlebar to Cloon overhead line via a new 110kV onsite substation. The Proposed Development is the subject of this SID application for approval to the Commission. The Proposed Development will facilitate the transfer of renewable wind energy to the national electricity grid and will also stabilise the grid by transmitting the renewable energy produced by the Proposed Wind Farm at an appropriate voltage. The proposed on-site 110kV substation will form part of the national electricity grid once constructed and energised and will enhance the capacity of grid infrastructure in the County. Please refer to Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 of the EIAR for further details.
Waste Water Infrastructure	Chapter 15 of the EIAR addresses the likely significant effects of the Proposed Project on material assets which are economic assets of human origin. Chapter 15 of the EIAR considers other utilities or built services in the area such as electricity supply and transmission, water and gas. This section also considers waste management during the construction, operational and decommissioning phases of the Proposed Project. The Pollavaddy Group Water Scheme and Source Protection Area are located approximately 5km northwest of any proposed infrastructure associated with the Proposed Project. The Site does not fall within the Claremorris urban wastewater treatment catchment. Please refer to Chapter 15 of the EIAR for further details.

Mitigation Measures	Compliance
Drinking Water Infrastructure	Chapter 15 of the EIAR addresses the likely significant effects of the Proposed Project on material assets which are economic assets of human origin. Chapter 15 of the EIAR considers other utilities or built services in the area such as electricity supply and transmission, water and gas. During the scoping exercise of the EIAR, a scoping response was received from Uisce Éireann identifying that there is Uisce Éireann infrastructure within the Site. If the Proposed Project receives a grant of permission, the Applicant commits to liaise with Uisce Éireann with regards to a permit to divert the pipe, before commencement of construction work to maintain water supply during construction, in accordance with Uisce Éireann. Please refer to Chapter 15 of the EIAR for further details.
Cultural Heritage > Archaeological Heritage > Architectural Heritage	Chapter 14 of the EIAR details an archaeological, architectural, and cultural heritage assessment of the Proposed Project. The assessment is based on a desktop assessment of the available cultural heritage and archaeological data and a comprehensive field inspection of the Proposed Project. There are no recorded archaeological sites, or groups of sites, within the Proposed Wind Farm. There are 94 no. archaeological sites, or groups of sites, within the 5km study area of the Proposed Wind Farm. None are located within the 50m study areas of the Proposed Grid Connection. An assessment of the potential, indirect operational impacts on the archaeological, architectural and cultural heritage resource has been carried out in Chapter 14 of the EIAR. Negative operational impacts ranging from imperceptible to moderate are predicted, however no significant impacts have been identified. Slight indirect negative effects have been identified to AH95 (a round tower subject to Preservation Orders and recorded as a National Monument) and AH97 (a ringfort subject to Preservation Orders). These are not significant. No indirect negative effects have been identified to AH96 (a crannog subject to Preservation Orders). Following the implementation of the above mitigation measures, there will be no significant residual effects on the previously unrecorded archaeological resource. Please refer to Chapter 14 of the EIAR for further details.
Landscape	Chapter 13 of the EIAR assesses the likely significant landscape and visual impacts arising as a result of the Proposed Project. Chapter 13 also assesses the proposed onsite 110kV substation that forms part of the Proposed Grid Connection.

Mitigation Measures	Compliance
	Cumulative visual effects have greatest potential to arise with other existing developments. However, given the setting of the Proposed Project and limited visibility with the extensive flat landscape, cumulative effects are only mostly limited to elevated vantage points within the LVIA Study Area. Components of the Proposed Development, such as the proposed 110kV substation and end masts, are not deemed to be as visually prominent as the Proposed Turbines which form part of the Proposed Wind Farm, however, the proposed 110kV substation and end masts do have the potential to give rise to localised landscape and visual effects. These elements are given full consideration and assessment throughout Chapter 13 of the EIAR. Visual effects arising from the construction of the proposed 110kV substation, 2 no. new end masts, and associated temporary construction compound, as experienced by visual receptors in the immediate vicinity of the Site are considered to be localised, ‘Negative’, ‘Short Term’, ‘Not Significant’ effects. On balance, these effects are not considered significant. Visual effects of the proposed 110kV onsite substation during the operational phase are likely to be highly localised, ‘Long-term’, ‘Negative’ and will be ‘Slight’. On balance, these effects are not considered significant. Visual effects of the proposed connection to the existing 110kV overhead line of the Proposed Development are likely to be localised, ‘Long-term’, ‘Negative’ and will be ‘Not Significant’. On balance, these effects are not considered significant. The LVIA in Chapter 13 determined that no Significant landscape and visual effects were identified. Overall, the Proposed Project is effectively accommodated within the landscape without any Significant effects on the key scenic or landscape sensitivities of receptors identified in the 20km LVIA Study Area. The Proposed Project is appropriately designed and suitably scaled, and it has been demonstrated that no significant landscape and visual effects are likely to arise. Please refer to Chapter 13 of the EIAR for further details.

7.2.3

Draft Renewable Energy Strategy for County Mayo (April 2026)

On the 28th of April 2026, MCC published Proposed Draft Variation No. 2 (‘the variation’) of the MCDP (as varied), which seeks to update the Mayo RES. A new Draft Mayo RES has been published with the proposed variation documents alongside a Strategic Environmental Assessment Report and Natura Impact Report. MCC conducted consultation on the variation between Tuesday, 28th April 2026 and Tuesday, the 26th of May 2026.

The Draft Mayo RES sets out the guidance to support Mayo’s transition to a low-carbon energy County and to become a national leader in renewable energy generation. The Draft Mayo RES was developed in line with EU, national and regional climate targets, the MCDP (as varied) and the MCC Climate Action Plan 2024-2029 (Mayo LACAP). The compliance of the Proposed Development against the MCDP (as varied) and the Mayo LACAP is demonstrated in **Section 7.2.1** and **Section 7.2.4** of this Report and in **Chapter 2, Section 2.5.4** of the EIAR.

While the Mayo RES remains the relevant renewable energy strategy in force for County Mayo at the time of submission this section of the report presents an evaluation of the Proposed Development against the relevant provisions of the Draft Mayo RES for reference. This assessment demonstrates that the Proposed Development has had regard to the relevant provisions of the Draft Mayo RES.

Vision and Strategic Aims

The vision of the Draft Mayo RES is as follows:

“To provide a strategy to maximise Mayo’s renewable energy potential and become a national leader in renewable energy and make the transition to becoming a more energy secure, low carbon county in line with energy targets whilst balancing the need for new development with the protection of the environmental, cultural and heritage assets, tourism assets and the established and emerging economic sectors of the county.” (emphasis added)

The strategic aims of the Draft Mayo RES are as follows:

- *To provide an evidence-based strategy founded on understanding the local feasibility and potential for renewable and low carbon technology, predicated upon optimising the County’s natural and socio economic, advantages and key assets (including tourism sector), core skills, and nearby research institutes.*
- *To facilitate a consistent approach to renewable energy and to maximise the opportunities for renewable energy development whilst safeguarding the environment and existing residential amenities.*
- *To set out policies and objectives for the main renewable sectors subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment requirements.*
- *To promote research and development, and to foster a supportive environment for innovation and demonstration of new and emerging renewable energy systems and technologies in County Mayo.*
- *To safeguard, where appropriate, areas with potential for renewable energy projects and to guide renewable energy development to preferred locations.*

Policy Context

The Draft Mayo RES highlights County Mayo’s commitment to the achievement of national renewable energy targets and its support and promotion of renewable energy. The Draft Mayo RES notes that:

“A key aspect of the Renewable Energy Strategy for county Mayo is in achieving the renewable energy target set out under Objective REO23 of the County Development Plan 2022-2028, which is – To support and facilitate the achievement of the minimum renewable energy target of

600 MW for County Mayo over the plan, and to review/revise this target to ensure consistency with any future renewable energy strategies for the Northern and Western Region” (emphasis added)

It is important to note that the MCDP (as varied) recognises that the **minimum** 600MW renewable energy target over the period of the plan is a “*realistic deliverable*” and “*achievable*” target. Furthermore, the MCDP (as varied) recognised that the target “*may need to be revised over the lifetime of the Plan to ensure alignment with the Northern and Western Regional Assembly’s forthcoming Renewable Energy Strategy*”.

As discussed in **Section 7.13** above, the Revised NPF has introduced Regional Renewable Energy Capacity Allocations which was a key action for CAP24 and is supported by CAP25. The Northern and Western Region has been allocated a target of installing an **additional 1,389 MW of onshore wind energy, by 2030**. Under **NPO 74** of the Revised NPF, the Regional Assemblies, including the NWRA must plan for the delivery of the regional renewable electricity capacity allocations as set out in the Revised NPF and identify allocations for each Local Authority within the regions, including MCC.

Additionally, **NPO 75** of the Revised NPF requires Local Authorities to plan for the delivery of **Local Target Power Capacity** (MW) allocations consistent with the relevant RSES, through their City and County Development Plans. At the time of writing of this Report, Local Target Power Capacity allocations have not been established, however from the regional allocation, it is clear that the Northern and Western Region will be required to deliver a significant amount of additional onshore wind energy in the coming years.

Furthermore, existing operational wind farms in the County will reach the end of their operational lifetime in the coming years and this existing capacity will need to be replaced either by granting planning permission for new wind energy developments or for the extension or re-powering of existing wind farms.

This is recognised in the Draft Mayo RES which states that “*many of the current operational wind farm developments are likely to be coming towards the end of the production life in the coming years*”. The Wind Energy Ireland (WEI) Repowering Ireland report (June 2024) identified that across Ireland a total of 76 no. operational wind farms with an installed capacity of 854 MW will reach the end of their operational lifetime and will be decommissioned by 2030, unless re-powered or extended. By 2040, this figure will rise cumulatively to 201 wind farms with an installed capacity of 2,488 MW⁵. The report identified that a large proportion of operational wind farms will not be able to retain their existing installed capacity if repowered due to design, planning and environmental constraints and that only 65% of operational wind farms are located in favourably designated areas for wind energy development.

Likewise, the Draft Mayo RES recognises that “*repowering is not a simple answer as many circumstances and factors have changed since projects were originally built e.g., wind designations have changed or are in location that are no longer considered suitable for wind energy*”.

Renewable energy developments such as the Proposed Project will generate and provide renewable wind energy to the national grid, supporting County Mayo in becoming a leader in renewable energy generation which is a strategic aim of the County as set out in the MCDP (as varied). It is important to note that **Local Target Power Capacity** allocations as set out in the Revised NPF have not yet been established, and MCC will need to support the NWRA with achieving its regional renewable electricity capacity allocations. Furthermore, with many wind farms coming towards the end of their permitted operational life in County Mayo, new renewable energy developments that align with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development, such as the Proposed Project, will be required to offset the generating capacity lost due to the decommissioning or reduced repowering output of these operational wind farms. The Proposed Development will help support the achievement of Ireland’s legally binding national target of a 51% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and net-zero emissions by 2050 as set out in the Climate Act. Additionally, on a European level the Proposed Development will also help contribute to the achievement of the RED III target of a 42.5% renewable energy share.

⁵ <https://windenergyireland.com/images/files/final-repowering-ireland-report-june-2024.pdf>

Constraints and Considerations

The Draft Mayo RES identifies areas within County Mayo suitable for wind energy development within the Wind Strategy Map (Map 6.14 of the Draft Mayo RES). There are three categories of wind energy designations within the Mayo RES as shown on the Wind Strategy Map, including Open for Consideration; Repowering Potential; and Unsuitable. Map 6.14 is reproduced in **Figure 7-2** in this Report for ease of reference.

The Wind Strategy Map has been prepared following a constraints mapping exercise undertaken in accordance with the Draft Wind Energy Development Guidelines (Department of Housing, Planning, Local Government (DHPLG), 2019) ('the Draft Guidelines') and the Methodology for Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategies (SEAI, 2013) as documented in Section 6.1 of the Draft Mayo RES as follows:

- Step 1 involved identifying areas of wind potential having regard to wind speeds and the national grid.
- Step 2 involved a sieve mapping analysis of key ecological, environmental, archaeological and landscape designated areas and other technical considerations (such as resource constraints or accessibility constraints).
- Step 3 involved overlaying mapping of constructed and permitted wind farms to take account of cumulative effects.
- Step 4 involved further analysis of the identified areas not subject to constraints, including the sensitivity of the landscapes in these areas to wind energy development.
- Step 5 involved assessing the potentially suitable areas for further consideration in terms of the relationship with the wind energy designations of adjoining Counties. This stage evaluated the consistency of renewable energy mapping and critical infrastructure between adjoining counties and those of Mayo.

The results of the constraints mapping exercise are presented in the Wind Strategy Map (Map 6.14). The Draft Mayo RES identifies that generally, the '*emerging preferred location for renewable wind is to the east and southeast of the county, where there is a high degree of compatibility with the wind designations of neighbouring counties*' (p.49). The Draft Mayo RES defines areas Open for Consideration and Unsuitable for wind energy developments as follows:

- Open for Consideration: '*Applications for utility scale wind farms in these areas will be assessed on a case -by-case basis, subject to viable wind speeds, environmental resources and constraints and cumulative impacts in compliance with Article 6 of the Habitats and EIA Directives.*'
- Unsuitable: '*Areas located outside of 'Areas Open to Consideration' with the exception of the established clustered wind farm areas are not deemed suitable for commercial wind farm development because of their overall sensitivity arising from landscape, ecological, recreational and/or cultural and built heritage resources.* (*emphasis added*)

The Proposed Development which forms part of a wind energy development is located within the southern part of the County which is identified in the Draft Mayo RES as generally being one of the preferred locations for renewable wind energy development. As shown in **Figure 7-2**, the southern part of the County, including the Proposed Development site, is mainly identified as 'Open for Consideration', with small pockets of interspersing lands identified as 'Unsuitable' arising from specific landscape, ecological, recreational and/or cultural and built heritage constraints.

The layout of the Proposed Project has also been informed by a detailed constraints mapping exercise undertaken in accordance with the Wind Energy Development Guidelines (Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DEHLG), 2006) ('the Guidelines'), the Draft Guidelines and the 'Best Practice Guidelines for the Irish Wind Energy Industry' (Irish Wind Energy Association, 2012) and has been informed by multi-season site surveys and assessments. The constraints mapping exercise is detailed in **Sections 3.2.4 and 3.2.5 in Chapter 3** (Consideration of Reasonable Alternatives) of the EIAR.

Chapter 3 of the EIAR demonstrates how the design and layout of the Proposed Project incorporate appropriate setbacks from designated landscape, ecological, recreational, cultural and built heritage constraints. The Proposed Development site is not located within any Nationally Designated or

Internationally Designated Natura 2000 site. Additionally, the Proposed Project has been designed to avoid and/or mitigate any potential effects on Annex I Habitats and no Proposed Project infrastructure is sited within these areas as detailed in **Chapter 6** (Biodiversity) of the EIAR.

Chapter 6 (Biodiversity) of the EIAR concludes that significant individual or cumulative effects on biodiversity are not anticipated at international, national, county or local scales on any of the identified Key Ecological Receptors, on the basis that the Proposed Project will be constructed and operated in accordance with the design, best practice and mitigation measures described within this application.

Overall, it has been demonstrated throughout the EIAR and this Planning Report that the Proposed Development Site is suitable for the Proposed Development for the reasons detailed in **Section 5.2** of this Report and **Section 3.2.5** of **Chapter 3** of the EIAR. **Table 7-6** and **Table 7-7** below in this Report demonstrate the compliance of the Proposed Development against the policies and objectives of the Draft Mayo RES and all the constraints identified within the Draft Mayo RES, respectively.

The Proposed Development is considered to be acceptable and in accordance with the policies and objective of the MCDP (as varied) and the current Mayo RES and the proper planning and sustainable development of the Proposed Development Site as detailed throughout this Report. **Table 7-2** and **Table 7-3** in this Report demonstrate that the Proposed Development is in compliance with the policies and objectives of the MCDP (as varied) and the Development Management Standards of the MCDP (as varied) respectively. Furthermore, **Table 7-4** and **Table 7-5** demonstrate that the Proposed Development is in accordance with the policies and objectives of the Mayo RES and the mitigation measures as set out within the Mayo RES. The Proposed Development's compliance with the Guidelines and the Draft Guidelines is detailed within **Table 7-2** and **Table 7-3** above.

Grid Connection

The Draft Mayo RES recognises that supporting infrastructure is a significant consideration for renewable energy developments, particularly the national electricity grid.

As detailed in **Chapter 3** of the EIAR, further to advice from Grid Technical Experts, it was deemed that the most viable option to connect the Proposed Wind Farm to the national grid would be through a loop-in connection into the existing Cloon-Castlebar 110kV overhead line which runs directly adjacent to the Proposed Wind Farm Site. The Proposed Development will connect the Proposed Wind Farm to the 110kV Castlebar to Cloon overhead line via a new 110kV onsite substation. The Proposed Development is the subject of this SID application for approval to Commission.

The Proposed Development will facilitate the transfer of renewable wind energy to the national electricity grid and will also stabilise the grid by transmitting the renewable energy produced by the Proposed Wind Farm at an appropriate voltage. The proposed on-site 110kV substation will form part of the national electricity grid once constructed and energised and will enhance the capacity of grid infrastructure in the County

The Draft Mayo RES highlights that the “*The Castlebar – Cloon 110 kV circuit is one of the few transmission circuits in County Mayo and provides an important pathway for power supply into the area but also for transferring renewable generation out from the area to where it is needed. This uprate is planned to support the need for increased power-transfer capacity arising due to new RES generation*”. Within EirGrid’s Transmission Development Plan 2024, published in September 2024, the Castlebar – Cloon 110kV overhead line uprate (CP0848) is included among EirGrid’s projects to reinforce the transmission network within and out of County Mayo. EirGrid states that these projects will address its sustainability policy driver by “*facilitating increased renewable generation via increased transfer capacity*”.

Alternative design options for the Proposed Development were considered in **Chapter 3** (Consideration of Reasonable Alternatives) of the EIAR. The chosen Proposed Development design was considered to be the most environmentally prudent and practical option. Please refer to **Section 3.2.7** of **Chapter 3** of the EIAR for further details.

The Proposed Development supports the strategic aims of the Draft Mayo RES which seeks to ‘maximise the opportunities for renewable energy development whilst safeguarding the environment and existing residential amenities.’ Overall, it has been demonstrated throughout the EIAR and this Planning Report that the Proposed Development Site is suitable for the Proposed Development for the reasons detailed in **Section 5.2** of this Report and **Sections 3.2.4 and 3.2.5** of **Chapter 3** of the EIAR.

The Proposed Development which forms part of a wind energy development is located within the southern part of the County which is identified in the Draft Mayo RES as generally being one of the preferred locations for renewable wind energy development. The design of the Proposed Development layout has had consideration to the constraints identified within the Draft Mayo RES. **Table 7-6** and **Table 7-7** below in this Report demonstrate the compliance of the Proposed Development against the relevant policies and objectives of the Draft Mayo RES and all the constraints identified within the Draft Mayo RES, respectively.

The layout of the Proposed Project has been informed by a detailed constraints mapping exercise undertaken in accordance with the Guidelines, the Draft Guidelines and the Best Practice Guidelines for the Irish Wind Energy Industry and has been informed by multi-season site surveys and assessments. The layout of the Proposed Project generally achieves appropriate setbacks from all designated landscape, ecological, recreational, cultural, built heritage and existing infrastructure constraints and sensitive receptors as required by the Guidelines and the Draft Guidelines respectively.

The findings of the EIAR demonstrates that the Proposed Development will be capable of being constructed, operated and decommissioned without likely significant effects on the environment generally on the basis that the Proposed Development will be constructed and operated in accordance with the design, best practice and mitigation measures described within this application.

Furthermore, the NIS has objectively concluded that, following an examination, analysis and evaluation of the best available scientific knowledge and objective scientific information, including in particular the nature of predicted impacts, that the Proposed Development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will not adversely affect the integrity of any European Site in light of its conservation objectives and best scientific information, and there is no reasonable scientific doubt in relation to this conclusion.

Overall, it is submitted that the Proposed Development is in line with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area and will help contribute to the achievement of European, national, regional and local climate and renewable energy targets. Specifically, the Proposed Development will help support Ireland in achieving its legally binding emissions targets, and CAP25 9GW onshore wind energy and 80% renewable energy capacity targets.

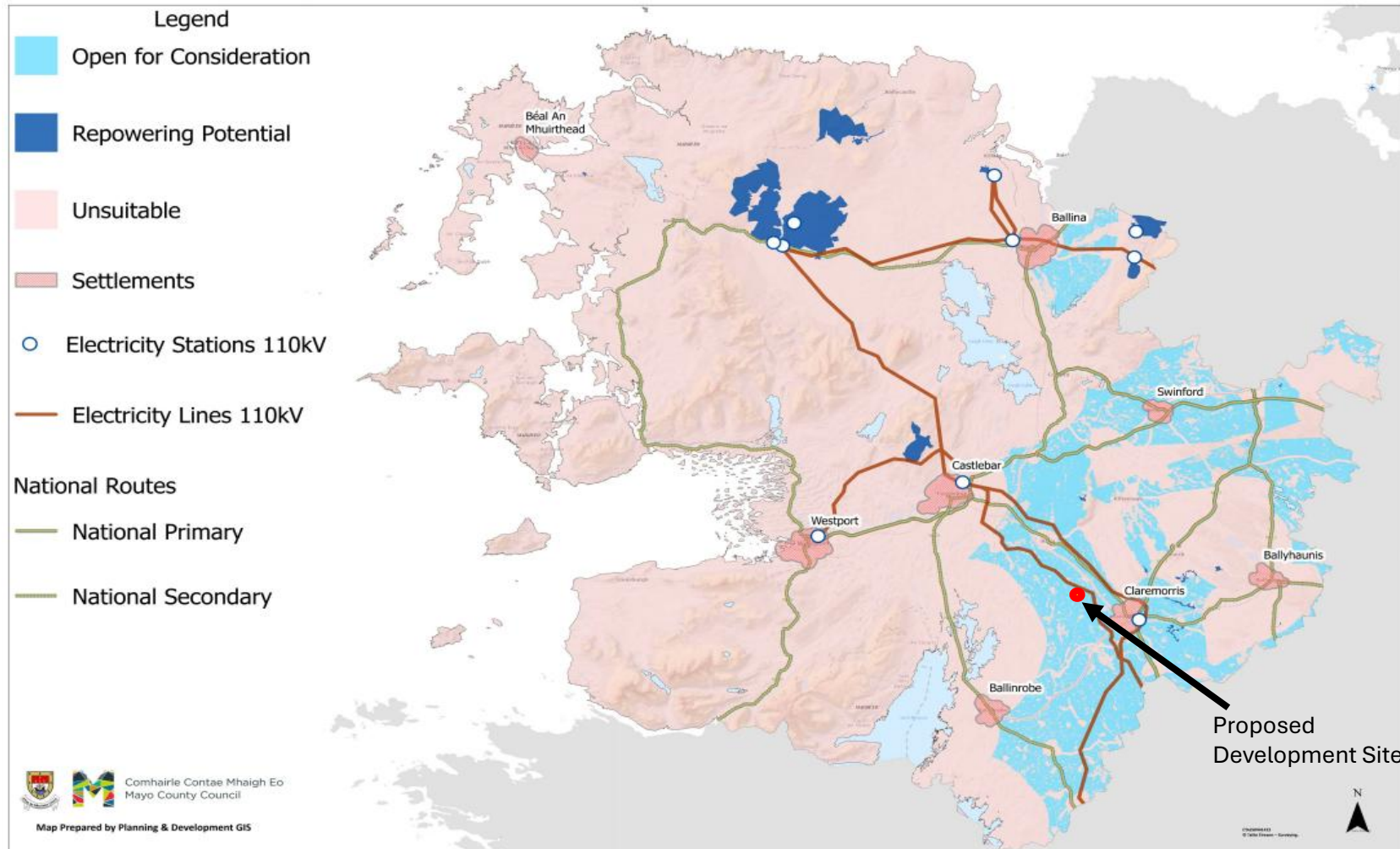


Figure 7-2 Draft Mayo RES Wind Strategy Map (Wind Potential Lands) showing indicative Proposed Development Site location

Table 7-6 Draft Mayo RES Policy Compliance Summary Table

Policy/ Objective	Compliance
To facilitate a consistent approach to renewable energy and to maximise the opportunities for renewable energy development whilst safeguarding the environment and existing residential amenities.	The Proposed Development forms part of a renewable energy development, which will generate and provide c. 31.5 MW of sustainable wind energy to the national electricity grid. The findings of the EIAR and the mitigation measures set out within the documents demonstrate the Proposed Development will be capable of being constructed, operated and decommissioned without likely significant effects on the environment generally. Provided that the Proposed Project is constructed, operated and decommissioned in accordance with the design, best practice and mitigation that is described within this EIAR, the Proposed Project will not result in any significant effects on human beings in the area surrounding the Proposed Project. Please refer to Chapter 5 of the EIAR for further details.
To safeguard, where appropriate, areas with potential for renewable energy projects and to guide renewable energy development to preferred locations.	Table 7-2 and Table 7-3 of this Report demonstrate that the Proposed Development is in compliance with the policies and objectives of the MCDP (as varied) and the Development Management Standards of the MCDP (as varied) respectively.
Consider new wind energy developments in Co. Mayo in the areas identified as open for consideration. All wind energy proposals will be subject to normal planning considerations and compliance with the policies and objectives outlined in the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028 in general.	The Proposed Development which forms part of a wind energy development is located within the southern part of the County which is identified in the Draft Mayo RES as generally being one of the preferred locations for renewable wind energy development. As shown in Figure 7-2, the southern part of the County, including the Proposed Development site, is mainly identified as ‘Open for Consideration’, with small pockets of interspersing lands identified as ‘Unsuitable’ arising from specific landscape, ecological, recreational and/or cultural and built heritage constraints. The layout of the Proposed Project has been informed by a detailed constraints mapping exercise undertaken in accordance with the Guidelines, the Draft Guidelines and the ‘Best Practice Guidelines for the Irish Wind Energy Industry’ (Irish Wind Energy Association, 2012) which has been informed by multi-season site surveys and assessments. The constraints mapping exercise is detailed in Sections 3.2.4 and 3.2.5 in Chapter 3 (Consideration of Reasonable Alternatives) of the EIAR.
Ensure that renewable energy developments is located on/in close proximity to the national grid infrastructure. Any proposals for renewable energy development, including those	As detailed in Chapter 3 of the EIAR, further to advice from Grid Technical Experts, it was deemed that the most viable option to connect the Proposed Wind Farm to the national grid would be through a loop-in connection into the existing Cloon-Castlebar 110kV overhead line which runs directly adjacent to the

Policy/ Objective	Compliance
availing of private wires, will be subject to compliance with the objectives and development management standards set out in the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028.	Proposed Wind Farm Site. The Proposed Development will connect the Proposed Wind Farm to the 110kV Castlebar to Cloon overhead line via a new 110kV onsite substation and is the subject of this SID application for approval to the Commission.
Ensure sites for new wind farm developments are near to the existing electricity grid infrastructure in Mayo thus minimising grid connection challenges whilst enhancing overall efficiency of renewable energy integration.	The Proposed Development will facilitate the transfer of renewable wind energy to the national electricity grid and will also stabilise the grid by transmitting the renewable energy produced by the Proposed Wind Farm at an appropriate voltage. The proposed on-site 110kV substation will form part of the national electricity grid once constructed and energised and will enhance the capacity of grid infrastructure in the County.
Support and facilitate the sustainable development of enhanced electricity and gas supplies, additional electricity generation capacity, and associated networks, to serve the existing and future needs of the County.	Table 7-2 and Table 7-3 of this Report demonstrate that the Proposed Development is in compliance with the policies and objectives of the MCDP (as varied) and the Development Management Standards of the MCDP (as varied) respectively.
Ensure that the siting of electricity power lines is managed in terms of the physical and visual impact on the natural and built environment, the conservation value of Natura 2000 sites and especially in sensitive landscape areas. Consideration will be given to the undergrounding or alternative routes in the siting of powerlines in both visually and environmentally sensitive area. Undergrounding will be the preferred option.	The Proposed Development forms part of a renewable energy development, which will generate and provide c. 31.5 MW of sustainable wind energy to the national electricity grid. The findings of the EIAR and the mitigation measures set out within the documents demonstrate the Proposed Development will be capable of being constructed, operated and decommissioned without likely significant effects on the environment generally. Please refer to the EIAR for further details. Chapter 13 of the EIAR assesses the likely significant landscape and visual impacts arising as a result of the Proposed Project. Chapter 13 also assesses the proposed onsite 110kV substation that forms part of the Proposed Grid Connection. Cumulative visual effects have greatest potential to arise with other existing developments. However, given the setting of the Proposed Project and limited visibility with the extensive flat landscape, cumulative effects are only mostly limited to elevated vantage points within the LVIA Study Area. The LVIA in Chapter 13 determined that no Significant landscape and visual effects were identified. Overall, the Proposed Project is effectively accommodated within the landscape without any Significant effects on the key scenic or landscape sensitivities of receptors identified in the 20km LVIA Study Area.

Policy/ Objective	Compliance
	The Proposed Project is appropriately designed and suitably scaled, and it has been demonstrated that no significant landscape and visual effects are likely to arise. Please refer to Chapter 13 of the EIAR for further details. The Proposed Project is not located within any European Sites or nationally designated sites. The River Moy SAC, Balla Turlough SAC and Lough Mask SPA have been fully assessed within the Appropriate Assessment Screening and NIS that accompanies this planning application. This report has been prepared to provide the competent authorities with the information necessary to complete an Appropriate Assessment screening and an Appropriate Assessment for the Proposed Project in compliance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive. The NIS concludes that the Proposed Project, individually or in-combination with other plans or projects, will not adversely affect the integrity of any European Site. Please refer to the AASR and NIS for further details. Each of the proposed turbines and the meteorological mast (part of the Proposed Wind Farm) will be connected to the onsite 110kV electricity substation (part of the Proposed Development) via underground 20/33 kilovolt (‘kV’) electricity cabling. The 110kV electricity cabling from the substation to the 2 no. end masts will also be underground. Please refer to Chapter 4 of the EIAR for further details.
Facilitate the expansion or upgrading of existing infrastructure and provision of new essential infrastructure, including roads, ports, piers, power lines and substations etc., to support the development of appropriately located renewable energy projects, in accordance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive and proper planning and sustainable development.	The Proposed Project as defined encompasses the entirety of the project (the Proposed Wind Farm and the Proposed Grid Connection). The Proposed Development will connect the Proposed Wind Farm to the 110kV Castlebar to Cloon overhead line via a new 110kV onsite substation and is the subject of this SID application for approval to the Commission. The Proposed Development will facilitate the transfer of renewable wind energy to the national electricity grid and will also stabilise the grid by transmitting the renewable energy produced by the Proposed Development at an appropriate voltage. The proposed on-site 110kV substation will form part of the national electricity grid infrastructure once constructed and energised and will enhance the capacity of grid infrastructure in the County. The NIS, which accompanies this Planning Application has been prepared to provide the competent authorities with the information necessary to complete an Appropriate Assessment screening and an

Policy/ Objective	Compliance
	Appropriate Assessment for the Proposed Project in compliance with the Habitats Directive. The NIS concludes that the Proposed Project, individually or in-combination with other plans or projects, will not adversely affect the integrity of any European Site.
Protect the integrity and authenticity of the unique unspoilt coastal landscapes, scenic routes and designated view of the County that form the essential context and backdrop for the Wild Atlantic Way which has become major tourism and economic asset for the county.	The Proposed Project is not located within or adjacent to any coastal landscapes or Wild Atlantic Way routes or discovery points. The Proposed Project is not located within or adjacent to any National Parks.
Ensure that the unique heritage & tourism assets of County Mayo, including the Wild Atlantic Way (Route & Discovery points), Mayo Dark Sky Park, Wild Nephin Ballycroy National Park, Spiritual Trails are protected from development that would negatively impact the integrity of their setting.	In relation to spiritual trails, Chapter 13 of the EIAR considers sites such as Knock Shrine, Croagh Patrick, and Mayo Abbey Church and Ruins. These are discussed in greater detail in Table 7-7 of this Report. Residual effects on these sites in relation to landscape and visual impacts are not considered significant. The Proposed Project is not located within or adjacent to the Céide Fields or to the Joyce Country and Western Lakes Geopark.
Ensure that the integrity of landscapes at the Céide Fields which holds potential as a UNESCO sites, and the landscapes of the UNESCO Joyce County and Western Geopark are safeguarded and protected from inappropriate development particularly large-scale wind energy development and related infrastructure.	The LVIA in Chapter 13 determined that no Significant landscape and visual effects are likely. Overall, the Proposed Project is effectively accommodated within the landscape without any Significant effects on the key scenic or landscape sensitivities of receptors identified in the 20km LVIA Study Area. The Proposed Project is appropriately designed and suitably scaled, and it has been demonstrated that no significant landscape and visual effects are likely to arise. Please refer to Chapter 13 of the EIAR for further details.
Ensure applicants/developers engaged in wind farm developments in Mayo go through a formal pre planning consultations under section 90. Of the Planning and Development Act 2024 (as amended). Such consultations will identify potential constraints, community concerns and advise on the likelihood or not of securing timely planning approval (Reds III).	The Draft Mayo RES clarifies that applicants/developers of renewable energy developments shall engage in the formal pre-planning consultations under the provisions of Section 247 of the Planning Act, or Section 90 of the New Planning Act, once enacted. Two pre-application consultation meetings were held with MCC under the provisions of Section 247 of the Planning Act in relation to the Proposed Development. At the time of pre-planning consultation and the writing of this Report, Section 90 of the New Planning Act has not yet been commenced. The Applicant also engaged with the Commission, then An Bord Pleanála, under the provisions of Section 182E of the Planning Act, as to whether the Proposed Development would meet the thresholds of the

Policy/ Objective	Compliance
	Seventh Schedule of the Planning Act. The Applicant opened consultations with the Commission in February 2024 in relation to the Proposed Development which comprises an onsite 110kV electrical substation which will connect into the existing Castlebar to Cloon 110kV overhead line that traverses the site, via a loop in loop out connection. An SID meeting under the provisions of Section 182E of the Planning Act was held with the Commission on the 9th of May 2024. A letter received from the Commission dated the 4th of July 2024 stated that under Section 182E, it is the opinion of the Commission that the Proposed Development falls within the scope of the Section 182A of the Planning Act. This confirmed that the Proposed Development constitutes SID and therefore the planning application should be made directly to the Commission. The ACP SID Status Confirmation is included in Addendum 4 of the SID Planning Application Form. Details of the pre-application consultation meetings are summarised in Table 4-1 and Table 4-2 of this Report. Further detail is provided in relation to each meeting in Section 2.7.3.1.1 and Section 2.7.3.1.2 of Chapter 2 of the EIAR.
Ensure that all proposals for wind energy development can demonstrate that there is sufficient grid capacity available to accommodate its connection.	As detailed in Chapter 3 of the EIAR, further to advice from Grid Technical Experts, it was deemed that the most viable option to connect the Proposed Wind Farm to the national grid would be through a loop-in connection into the existing Cloon-Castlebar 110kV overhead line which runs directly adjacent to the Proposed Wind Farm Site. The Proposed Development will connect the Proposed Wind Farm to the 110kV Castlebar to Cloon overhead line via a new 110kV onsite substation and is the subject of this SID application for approval to the Commission. The Proposed Development will facilitate the transfer of renewable wind energy to the national electricity grid and will also stabilise the grid by transmitting the renewable energy produced by the Proposed Wind Farm at an appropriate voltage. The proposed on-site 110kV substation will form part of the national electricity grid once constructed and energised and will enhance the capacity of grid infrastructure in the County.

Table 7-7 Draft Mayo RES Wind Energy Constraint Consideration Summary Table

Wind Energy Constraint Theme	Wind Energy Constraint	Consideration
Site Selection and Consideration of Reasonable Alternatives	Wind Speeds	Wind speeds are considered in Chapter 3 of the EIAR. Average wind speeds for the Site were considered, with the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) Wind Atlas being consulted. An acceptable wind resource was also considered as a facilitator at the Site. The 160m tip height of the Proposed Turbines of the Proposed Wind Farm are considered appropriate for the Site to ensure that the most efficient use of the wind resource is achieved whilst having due regards to the character of the Site. Please refer to Chapter 3 of the EIAR for further details.
	Connection to the National Electricity Grid	The Proposed Development will connect the Proposed Wind Farm to the national electricity grid via the 110kV Castlebar to Cloon overhead line, enabling the transfer of renewable wind energy to the national electricity grid. Alternative design options for the Proposed Development were considered in Chapter 3 of the EIAR. The chosen Proposed Development design was considered to be the most environmentally prudent and practical option for a grid connection. Please refer to Chapter 3 of the EIAR for further details.
	Settlements	Settlements and sensitive receptors are considered in Chapter 3 of the EIAR. The Applicant sought to identify an area with a relatively low population density. Having reviewed the settlement patterns in the vicinity, the study area emerged as suitable to accommodate the Proposed Project. The population density of the Population Study Area in 2022 as described in Chapter 5 of the EIAR is 14.87 persons per square kilometre. This is considerably lower than the national population densities of 71.47 persons per square kilometre and lower than the population density of County Mayo, recorded at 24.69 persons per square kilometre. Chapter 5 found that the residual effects of the Proposed Project are not significant and will not lead to significant effects on any environmental media with the potential to lead to health effects for humans. Please refer to Chapter 3 and Chapter 5 of the EIAR for further details.
	Lakes	Lakes and watercourses were considered in the constraints mapping for the Site, as detailed in Chapter 3 of the EIAR. Watercourses plus a 50-metre buffer and lakes plus a 100-metre buffer were considered in the constraints mapping. The potential likely effects of the Proposed Project on hydrology and hydrogeology are

Wind Energy Constraint Theme	Wind Energy Constraint	Consideration
		assessed in Chapter 9 of the EIAR. Chapter 9 finds that no significant effects on the water environment will occur during the construction, operation or decommissioning of the Proposed Project. Please refer to Chapter 3 and Chapter 9 of the EIAR for further details.
	Elevated Areas (over 500 metres)	The Site scale and typography was considered in Chapter 3 of the EIAR. The Site is located in a rural setting, covering a total of 165 hectares. The Site description and typography of the site is discussed in Chapter 8 of the EIAR. Ground elevations within the Site are relatively flat and low-lying, ranging from approximately 60mOD (metres above Ordnance Datum) to 70mOD. The topography slopes very gently in an easterly direction towards Drumady Lough. Please refer to Chapter 3 and Chapter 8 of the EIAR for further details.
Cumulative Impacts	Cumulative Impact of Wind Energy Developments	The cumulative impact assessments carried out in each of the impact assessment Chapters of the EIAR consider all potential significant cumulative effects arising from relevant projects and land uses within the cumulative study area. Existing land uses within the cumulative study area include ongoing agricultural and forestry practices. Overall, the Proposed Project has been designed to avoid and mitigate impacts on the environment, and a suite of mitigation measures is set out within the EIAR. The mitigation measures set out in the EIAR will ensure that significant cumulative effects do not arise during the construction, operational or decommissioning phases of the Proposed Project. Additional detail in relation to the potential significant cumulative effects arising and, where appropriate, the specific suite of relevant mitigation measures proposed are set out within each of the relevant chapters of the EIAR. Please refer to Chapter 2 and each of the relevant sections of the relevant Chapters of the EIAR for further details.
Population and Human Health	Economic Assets  Tourism Assets	Chapter 5 of the EIAR considers employment and economic activity, and tourism and amenity. In relation to economic assets, cumulative projects within 20 kilometres of the Proposed Project which may be proposed, permitted or operational/existing contribute to short-term employment during the construction stages and provide the potential for long-term employment resulting from maintenance operations. This results in a long-term slight positive effect.

Wind Energy Constraint Theme	Wind Energy Constraint	Consideration
		In relation to tourism assets, there are no key identified tourist attractions pertaining specifically to the Site. It is not considered that the Proposed Project together with other projects in the area will cumulatively affect any tourism infrastructure in the wider area. The conclusions from available research indicate there is a generally positive disposition among tourists towards wind development in Ireland. Given the Proposed Project's relative isolation and remoteness, it is considered that the Proposed Project will support the development of the wider area, attracting local and new visitors to the area which could be uncovered as part of a wider regional strategy. It is on this basis that it can be concluded that there would be a long-term imperceptible cumulative effect from the Proposed Project and other wind farm developments in the area. Please refer to Chapter 5 of the EIAR for further details.
Biodiversity	Nature Reserves	The Proposed Project is not located within or adjacent to any Nature Reserves.
	National Parks > Wild Nephin National Park – Dark Skies Park	The Proposed Project is not located within or adjacent to any National Parks.
	Designated Sites > Special Areas of Conservation > Special Protection Areas > Natural Heritage Areas > Proposed National Heritage Areas	Chapter 6 of the EIAR considers designated sites. The Proposed Project is not located within any European Sites or nationally designated sites. The River Moy SAC, Balla Turlough SAC and Lough Mask SPA have been fully assessed within the AASR and NIS that accompanies this planning application. The AASR and NIS have been prepared to provide the competent authorities with the information necessary to complete an Appropriate Assessment screening and an Appropriate Assessment for the Proposed Project in compliance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive. The NIS concludes that the Proposed Project, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will not adversely affect the integrity of any European Site. It is concluded that, provided the Proposed Project will be constructed and operated in accordance with the design, best practice and mitigation measures described within the EIAR, significant individual or cumulative effects on biodiversity are not anticipated at international, national, county or local scales on any of the identified Key Ecological Receptors.

Wind Energy Constraint Theme	Wind Energy Constraint	Consideration
		Please refer to Chapter 6 of the EIAR and the NIS for further details.
	Ramsar Sites	Ramsar Sites are considered in Chapter 6 of the EIAR. There are no Ramsar Sites located within the likely Zone of Influence of the Proposed Project. The nearest Ramsar Site to the Proposed Project is the Lough Corrib SAC, located over 15km to the south of the Site. No connectivity or potential pathways for significant effects on this or any other Ramsar Sites were identified. Please refer to Chapter 6 of the EIAR for further details.
	Freshwater Pearl Mussel Catchments	The NPWS <i>Margaritifera</i> Sensitive Area map (Version 10, 2020) was consulted during the desk study. The Proposed Project is located outside of any <i>Margaritifera</i> catchments or sensitive areas. There are no records of freshwater pearl mussel in any watercourses downstream of the Site. Please refer to Chapter 6 of the EIAR for further details.
Land, Soils and Geology	Soils and Geology	Land, soils and geology are considered in Chapter 3 and Chapter 8 of the EIAR. The Proposed Project has a very small development footprint when compared to the overall area of the Site. Therefore, no significant effects on land will occur during the construction, operation or decommissioning phases of the Proposed Project. An assessment of potential cumulative effects associated with the Proposed Project and other developments on land, soils and geology has been completed in Chapter 8. The land, soils and geology assessment confirms that there will be no significant cumulative effects on land, soil and geology as a result of the Proposed Project. Please refer to Chapter 3 and Chapter 8 of the EIAR for further details.
	Landslide Susceptibility	Chapter 8 of the EIAR considers landslide susceptibility. The Geological Survey Ireland (GSI) Landslide database (www.gsi.ie) does not record any historic landslides in the vicinity of the Site or in the surrounding lands. The GSI Landslide Susceptibility Map (www.gsi.ie) classifies the probability of a landslide occurring at a given location. The probability of a landslide occurring at the Site is mapped as being Low.

Wind Energy Constraint Theme	Wind Energy Constraint	Consideration
		Fehily Timoney and Company (‘FT’) have prepared a geotechnical and peat stability assessment of the Proposed Project. A Geotechnical & Peat Stability Assessment (GPSA) (FT, 2026) is included as Appendix 8-1 of the EIAR. Hydrological, hydrogeological and ecological factors were also assessed in the GPSA (FT, 2026), and interaction between FT, Hydro-Environmental Services (HES) and MKO was undertaken throughout the iterative design process. The GPSA was prepared in accordance with Peat Landslide Hazard and Risk Assessments: Best Practice Guide for Proposed Electricity Generation Developments (PLHRAG, Scottish Government, 2017). A constraints study was initially undertaken by the Environmental (MKO), Hydrological (HES) and Ecological (MKO) members of the project design team to determine the developable area at the Site, prior to the site reconnaissance by engineering geologists/geotechnical engineers from FT. A comprehensive GPSA (FT, 2026) has been undertaken for all key infrastructure locations, and it concludes that with the implementation of the proposed control (mitigation) measures the residual effect of a landslide occurring is determined to be imperceptible. Refer to Appendix 8-1 of the EIAR for the detailed GPSA (FT, 2026) and Chapter 16 of the EIAR for a full assessment on risks relating to the Proposed Project. Please refer to Chapter 8, Chapter 16 and Appendix 8-1 of the EIAR for further details.
	Peat Soils	Chapter 3 and Chapter 8 of the EIAR considers peat. FT was engaged to undertake a geotechnical and peat stability assessment of the Proposed Project. A GPSA (FT, 2026) is included in Appendix 8-1 of the EIAR. The findings of the peat stability assessment showed that the Site has an acceptable margin of safety, is suitable for the Proposed Project and is considered to be at low risk of peat failure. The findings include recommendations and control measures for construction work in peat lands to ensure that all works adhere to an acceptable standard of safety. Based on site investigations, peat is present at the Site and ranges in depth from 0 to 6.1m, with an average peat depth of 1.2m. Approximately 91% of the peat depth probes recorded peat depths of less than 3.0m. A number of localised readings recorded peat depths were between 3.5 and 6.1m. The layout of the Proposed Project was designed to avoid the areas of deepest peat.

Wind Energy Constraint Theme	Wind Energy Constraint	Consideration
		The residual risk of significant peat slide/failure occurring is determined to be negligible to low following the implementation of the proposed control (mitigation) measures. Please refer to Chapter 8 and Appendix 8-1 of the EIAR for further details.
	Geological Heritage Sites	Chapter 8 of the EIAR considers geological heritage sites. There are no recorded geological heritage sites within the Site or in the surrounding lands. The closest mapped geological heritage site is the Knock – Ballyhaunis Area County Geological Site (CGS) located more than 10 km to the northeast of the Site. All geological heritage sites have been screened out of the impact assessment due to their distal location from the Proposed Project. There is no potential for effects to occur in terms of land, soils and geology characteristics of any geological heritage site. Please refer to Chapter 8 of the EIAR for further details.
	Karst Landforms	Karst features are considered in Chapter 8 of the EIAR. The GSI karst features database (www.gsi.ie) does not record the presence of any karst features within the Site. The closest mapped karst features are a turlough and 2 no. swallow holes mapped ~2.5 km southwest of T2. Although, the GSI have recorded numerous karstic features in the wider area. Large clusters of enclosed depressions are mapped approximately 1 km to the north, approximately 2.7 km to the east and approximately 4.2 km west of the Site. Other than enclosed depressions, which seem to be the dominant karst feature in this area, a turlough is situated approximately 3.8 km northwest of the Site and a borehole with karst is mapped approximately 2.7 km to the west. No karst features were recorded during the walkover surveys of the Site or during the intrusive site investigations. Please refer to Chapter 8 of the EIAR for further details.
Hydrology and Hydrogeology	Flood Risk Areas	Flood risk is considered in Chapter 9 of the EIAR. A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) has been undertaken for the Proposed Project and is included in Appendix 9-1 of the EIAR. The FRA concluded that the Site is located in Flood Zone C and is at low risk of flooding. The Proposed Project drainage system will ensure

Wind Energy Constraint Theme	Wind Energy Constraint	Consideration
		that all surface water runoff at the Site is attenuated and there will be no increase in the downstream flood risk as a result of the Proposed Project. Please refer to Chapter 9 and Appendix 9-1 of the EIAR for further details.
	Water Framework Directive Blue Dot Programme	The WFD is considered in Chapter 9 of the EIAR. A WFD Compliance Assessment has been completed for all water bodies (surface water and groundwater bodies) with the potential to be impacted by the Proposed Project and is included in Appendix 9-4 of the EIAR. With the implementation of the mitigation measures detailed in this EIAR there will be no change in the WFD status of the underlying groundwater body or downstream surface water bodies as a result of the Proposed Project. The Proposed Project has been found to be fully compliant with the WFD and will not prevent any waterbody from achieving its WFD objectives. Please refer to Chapter 9 and Appendix 9-4 of the EIAR for further details.
Landscape and Visual	Sensitive Landscape Areas ➤ Policy Areas 1-3	Chapter 3 and Chapter 13 of the EIAR consider landscape and visual.
	Scenic Routes and Designated Views	Overall, the LVIA in Chapter 13 determined that no Significant landscape and visual effects were identified. Overall, the Proposed Project is effectively accommodated within the landscape without any Significant effects on the key scenic or landscape sensitivities of receptors identified in the 20km LVIA Study Area. The Proposed Project is appropriately designed and suitably scaled, and it has been demonstrated that no significant landscape and visual effects are likely to arise. Please refer to Chapter 3 and Chapter 13 of the EIAR for further details.
	Spiritual Trails	In relation to spiritual trails, Chapter 13 of the EIAR considers sites such as Knock Shrine, Croagh Patrick, and Mayo Abbey Church and Ruins. Knock Shrine and Knock town were scoped out for further assessment as a visual receptor as there is no theoretical visibility of the Proposed Turbines of the Proposed Wind Farm.

Wind Energy Constraint Theme	Wind Energy Constraint	Consideration
		Croagh Patrick Heritage Trail (and its adjoining loops) is located approximately 6.2 km north-west of the nearest Proposed Turbine of the Proposed Wind Farm at its closest point. The route primarily traverses relatively low-lying landscapes enclosed by localised landforms and dense vegetation, which limits visibility towards the proposed turbines. Large sections of the trail within the LVIA Study Area experience no theoretical visibility, as shown on the ZTV map (Figure 13-14 of Chapter 13 of the EIAR). Overall, visibility of the Proposed Turbines along this walking trail will be intermittent, with views generally brief and limited while travelling along the route. Where visibility does occur, the visibility of the proposed turbines will be further mitigated by distance and vegetative screening within the surrounding landscape. Residual visual effects are not considered significant. Mayo Abbey Church and Ruins is located 2km northwest from the nearest Proposed Turbine of the Wind Farm, however, as discussed throughout Chapter 13 and its accompanying appendices, the Proposed Project will not alter the physical fabric or key features of the monuments, and any change will be limited to the wider landscape setting, where the proposed turbines will be seen beyond the immediate visual context of the Mayo Abbey Church and Ruins. These effects are not considered significant. Components of the Proposed Development, such as the proposed 110kV substation and end masts, are not deemed to be as visually prominent as the Proposed Turbines which form part of the Proposed Wind Farm, however, the proposed 110kV substation and end masts do have the potential to give rise to localised landscape and visual effects. These elements are given full consideration and assessment throughout Chapter 13 of the EIAR. Visual effects arising from the construction of the proposed 110kV substation, 2 no. new end masts, and associated temporary construction compound, as experienced by visual receptors in the immediate vicinity of the Site are considered to be localised, 'Negative', 'Short Term', 'Not Significant' effects. On balance, these effects are not considered significant. Visual effects of the proposed 110kV onsite substation during the operational phase are likely to be highly localised, 'Long-term', 'Negative' and will be 'Slight'. On balance, these effects are not considered significant. Visual effects of the proposed connection to the existing 110kV overhead line of the Proposed Development are likely to be localised, 'Long-term', 'Negative' and will be 'Not Significant'. On balance, these effects are not considered significant. Please refer to Chapter 13 of the EIAR for further details.
Cultural Heritage	Archaeological Heritage	

Wind Energy Constraint Theme	Wind Energy Constraint	Consideration
	Built Heritage - Record of Protected Structures - National Inventory of Architectural Heritage	Chapter 3 and Chapter 14 of the EIAR consider archaeological, architectural and cultural heritage. Within Chapter 14, an assessment of the potential, indirect operational impacts on the archaeological, architectural and cultural heritage resource has been carried out. Negative operational impacts ranging from imperceptible to moderate are predicted, however no significant impacts have been identified. Slight indirect negative effects have been identified to AH95 (a round tower subject to Preservation Orders and recorded as a National Monument) and AH97 (a ringfort subject to Preservation Orders). These are not significant. No indirect negative effects have been identified to AH96 (a crannog subject to Preservation Orders). Following the implementation of the above mitigation measures, there will be no significant residual effects on the previously unrecorded archaeological resource. No significant negative operational effects have been predicted to archaeological heritage, built heritage, cultural heritage or designed landscape sites, including recorded archaeological monuments, National Monuments, monuments subject to Preservation Orders, Protected Structures, and structures recorded on the NIAH. Please refer to Chapter 3 and Chapter 14 of the EIAR for further details.
Material Assets – Traffic and Transport	Transport Routes - Primary - Secondary - Regional - N17 Knock-Colloney Corridor	Traffic and transport were considered in Chapter 3 and Chapter 15 of the EIAR. Once the Proposed Project is operational the traffic impact created by maintenance staff will be imperceptible. There will be no significant traffic related impacts during the construction, operational and decommissioning phases of the Proposed Project. Please refer to Chapter 3 and Chapter 15 of the EIAR for further details.
	Rail Networks - Used - Disused - Western Rail Corridor	Rail Networks were considered in Chapter 3 and Chapter 15 of the EIAR. The Westport-Dublin Irish Rail line runs to the northwest of the Proposed Project, approximately 1.4km at its closest point (T4). The Proposed Project will not directly interact with the railway line outside of crossing the railway bridge in Claremorris town during the proposed turbine and abnormal load delivery. Therefore, there is no potential for the construction phase of the Proposed Project to impact railway services.

Wind Energy Constraint Theme	Wind Energy Constraint	Consideration
		Following scoping with Irish Rail, a 5km exclusion zone was identified; in response, Ai Bridges was engaged on behalf of the Applicant to carry out a Telecommunications Impact Assessment (Appendix 15-4 of the EIAR). The Telecommunications Impact Assessment concluded that the Proposed Project will have no impact on the Irish Rail communications network. Please refer to Chapter 3, Chapter 15 and Appendix 15-4 of the EIAR for further details.
	Ireland West Airport	Chapter 3 considers material assets including aviation and Ireland West Airport is considered in Chapter 15 of the EIAR. An Aviation Review Statement was produced by Ai Bridges (Appendix 15-6 of the EIAR) to investigate any potential significant effects that the Proposed Project may have on the aeronautical resource in the wider area following feedback received from Ireland West Airport through the scoping exercise. An Aviation Review Statement was undertaken for the Proposed Project following feedback received during the scoping exercise which concluded that the Proposed Project will have no residual impact on aviation. Please refer to Chapter 3, Chapter 15 and Appendix 15-6 of the EIAR for further details.
Other	Céide Fields	The Proposed Project is not located within or adjacent to the Céide Fields.
	Atlantic Coastal Landscapes	The Proposed Project is not located within or adjacent to the any Atlantic Coastal Landscapes.
	Wild Atlantic Way > Routes > Discovery Points	The Proposed Project is not located within or adjacent to the any Wild Atlantic Way routes or discovery points.
	Joyce Country and Western Lakes Geopark	The Proposed Project is not located within or adjacent to the Joyce Country and Western Lakes Geopark.

7.2.4

Mayo County Council Climate Action Plan 2024 - 2029

The Mayo LACAP, published in February 2024, sets out MCC's intentions to create a low carbon and climate resilient County. It also aligns itself with international and national policy regarding climate action, highlighting the Climate Act and Ireland's legally binding target of a 51% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030. The vision and mission of the Mayo LACAP are defined as follows:

"To be a climate resilient and low carbon organisation that inspires, leads, and facilitates just and ambitious climate action across the county.

To transition County Mayo to a Climate Resilient, Biodiversity Rich, Environmentally Sustainable and Climate Neutral Economy and to thereby promote climate justice, and just transition by:

- 1. Reducing Mayo County Council's emissions by 51% by 2030*
- 2. Implementing the actions within this Mayo County Council Climate Action Plan*
- 3. Advocating, co-ordinating and facilitating climate action with communities and the various sectors within our County, to aid them in reaching their own emissions reduction targets."*

MCC are committed to climate action and climate mitigation through the implementation of the Mayo LACAP. The Mayo LACAP builds on the climate objectives set out in the MCDP (as varied) and the Mayo RES and is supportive of national policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reach carbon neutrality. The Proposed Project is capable of transmitting clean, renewable energy to the national grid, thus contributing to the decarbonisation of the electricity sector and as such, it is in alignment with the Mayo LACAP.

8. PLANNING ASSESSMENT

The Proposed Development has been subject to a rigorous design process informed by comprehensive planning and environmental assessments and surveys, which have collectively concluded that the proposal is in line with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. There are no significant environmental impacts associated with the Proposed Development. The NIS concludes that, following an examination, evaluation and analysis, in light of best scientific knowledge and the conservation objectives of the site, and, on the basis of objective information, having taken into account the relevant mitigation measures, it can be concluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt that the Proposed Project will not adversely affect the integrity of any European Sites, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

8.1 Strategic Need for the Proposed Project

The global climate is breaking down as a result of greenhouse gas emissions from the burning of fossil fuels. News stories of climate change-related extreme weather events are now a constant in the daily news cycle. According to the World Meteorological Organisation's 'State of the Global Climate 2025' published in March 2026⁶, atmospheric concentration of CO₂ in 2024 reached the highest levels in the last 2,000,000 years, and methane and nitrous oxide reached their highest levels in the last 800,000 years. The annual carbon dioxide concentration increase in 2024 was the largest increase since 1957, when modern measurements began. The report also states that the year 2024 was the warmest year on observational record, with temperatures at $1.55^{\circ}\text{C} \pm 0.13^{\circ}\text{C}$ above the 1850–1900 average.⁷ The year 2025 was the second or third warmest year (depending on the datasets used) in the 176-year record⁸.

The European State of the Climate Report 2025 produced by World Meteorological Organisation and European Union⁹ reported that:

- *Almost the entire continent saw above-average annual temperatures and several northern European countries recorded their warmest or second-warmest year.*
- *The continent saw its second most severe heatwave on record, while sub-Arctic Fennoscandia experienced its longest heatwave on record.*
- *A record 86% of the region experienced at least 'strong' marine heatwave conditions.*
- *Glaciers in all regions saw a net mass loss.*
- *The Greenland Ice Sheet lost around 139 gigatonnes of ice.*
- *End-of-season snow cover extent and mass were both the third lowest on record.*

The impacts of climate change are currently being felt, and the severity of impacts are expected to increase with further greenhouse gas emissions. Ireland's Climate 2024 Provisional Summary Report produced by Met Éireann¹⁰, reflects clear and distinct impacts arising from climate change in Ireland:

- 2024 was noted to be the fourth warmest year on record in Ireland with an average temperature of 10.72°C .
- Further precipitation changes are expected, with a 9% potential decrease in the summer, causing water shortages and impacting agriculture, and a 24% potential increase in winter, elevating the risk of flooding in various regions.
- Seven named storms impacted Ireland in 2024, with Storms Isha and Darragh both producing particularly violent storm-force winds.

Met Éireann's Annual Climate Statement for 2025¹¹ reports that 2025 was the second warmest year on record and that:

⁶ State of the Global Climate 2025 (World Meteorological Organisation, March 2026)

⁷ State of the Global Climate 2025 (World Meteorological Organisation, March 2026)

⁸ State of the Global Climate 2025 (World Meteorological Organisation, March 2026)

⁹ The European State of the Climate Report 2025 (World Meteorological Organization and European Union, April 2026)

¹⁰ Ireland's Climate 2024 Provisional Summary Report (Met Éireann, March 2025)

¹¹ Annual Climate Statement for 2025 (Met Éireann, January 2026)

- *The average annual air temperature for Ireland in 2025 (using the Island of Ireland dataset *) was 11.14 °C, which is 1.59°C above the 1961-1990 long-term average (LTA) or 0.97°C above the most recent 1991-2020 LTA.*
- *This makes 2025 the second warmest year on record, which is only slightly behind the warmest year in 2023 (11.21 °C) and only the second time with a mean over 11 °C.*
- *The last 4 years (2022-2025) are now the 4 warmest years on record with 2024 tying 2007 for 4th warmest, and seven of the top ten warmest years have occurred since 2005.*
- *The coldest year on record was in 1919 with 8.73 °C, of the top ten coldest years – none have occurred since 2000.*
- *Provisionally rainfall data suggests 2025 was the 15th wettest year since 1941, 104% of the 1991-2020 LTA, with observed average of 1,338.7 mm.*

To mitigate climate change, Ireland must decarbonise its economy by 2050. There is an urgency to ensure that real changes occur without delay, which means that a gradual shift towards increasing Ireland's use of renewable energy generation is no longer viable. Over the last 25 years, Ireland has become a world leader in onshore wind energy, with a total of 41.8% of Ireland's gross electricity supply coming from onshore wind in 2024¹². As a country, Ireland only became a world leader by consenting and building one wind farm at a time.

Since 1992, Ireland has installed 5,000 MW of onshore wind. Now, with CAP25 requiring the amount of onshore wind energy to increase from 5,000 MW to 9,000 MW by 2030, Ireland must install almost double its existing capacity in just under 5 years. To reach this target, hundreds of additional wind farms will have to be connected to the national grid over the rest of this decade. The scale of Ireland's challenge was quantified in CAP24, which states that *‘To achieve the necessary emissions abatement, an approximately **eight times increase** of renewable energy deployment to **2.3 GW** annually would be needed between **2024 and 2030**. (emphasis added)*

The latest climate and energy reports all make one message abundantly clear; Ireland is not acting fast enough. If a major step up in renewable energy deployment levels does not occur, Ireland will fail to reach its renewable energy target and will exceed its carbon budgets. The EPA report *Ireland's Greenhouse Gas Emissions Projections 2024-2055* (May 2025) highlights that Ireland is not on track to meet its national target of 51% emissions reduction target by 2030 compared to 2018 as required under the Climate Act, nor is the country projected to meet its EU target of 42% emissions reduction compared to 2005 under the Effort Sharing Regulations. Similarly, the Climate Change Advisory Council make clear that *‘progress to reduce emissions is not sufficient for Ireland to meet its national and EU climate obligations’¹³.*

As a nation, Ireland is legally bound to its climate targets. The Climate Act legally binds Ireland to achieve net-zero emissions no later than 2050, and to a 51% reduction in emissions by the end of this decade. Section 15(1) of the Climate Act requires public bodies (including the planning authorities) to carry out its functions consistently, insofar as practicable, with specified climate plans and objectives, including the latest, which includes CAP25.

Ireland is also legally bound by renewable energy targets at a European level. The latest revision of the Renewable Energy Directive (RED III) introduced a binding EU-wide target for overall Renewable Energy Share (RES) of at least 42.5% by 2030 and requires Member States to set their national contributions to the EU-wide target. In accordance with RED III and the revised RES target, the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications have published an updated National Energy and Climate Plan 2021-2030 in July 2024. The updated NECP committed to achieving a 43% share of renewable energy in total energy consumption by 2030. The updated NECP states that Ireland's proposed trajectory will not be in line with the desired trajectory set out in the Governance Regulation (Regulation 2018/1999).

Every viable renewable energy project plays a crucial role in meeting Ireland's climate targets. The approval of well-planned, appropriately located renewable energy projects, such as the Proposed Project is not just beneficial, it is imperative. Without decisive action to facilitate renewable energy deployment, Ireland risks missing national and EU commitments, incurring financial penalties, and undermining energy security.

¹² <https://www.seai.ie/sites/default/files/publications/Energy-in-Ireland-2025.pdf>

¹³ <https://www.climatecouncil.ie/councilpublications/annualreviewandreport/CCAC-AR-2024-SfA-final.pdf>

8.2

Compliance with Planning Policy

The provision of transmission infrastructure for renewable energy developments such as the Proposed Development is strongly supported by European, national, regional and local policies and guidelines aimed at achieving the transition to a low carbon and climate resilient economy, increasing renewable energy generation, and enhancing energy security. Specifically, the Proposed Development will help contribute to achieving the target of generating 9GW of electricity from onshore wind and 80% renewable energy share by 2030 as set out in CAP25. The comprehensive suite of European, national, regional and local policy support for wind energy, demonstrates that the principle of the Proposed Development is acceptable.

At a European level, the Proposed Development will help support Ireland in reaching its legally binding obligations as an EU Member State of achieving at least 42.5% renewable energy by 2030, as set out in REDIII. Furthermore, the RePowerEU plan aims to increase energy security within the EU and increase the share of renewable energy onto the EU electricity grid by *‘Speeding up renewables permitting to minimise the time for roll-out of renewable projects and grid infrastructure improvements’*.

The Proposed Development aligns with National Strategic Outcome 8 and Objectives outlined in the Revised NPF, particularly Objective 70, which seeks to promote renewable energy use and generation at appropriate locations within the built and natural environment to meet national objectives towards achieving a low carbon economy by 2050. The Proposed Development by integrating an estimated 31.5 MW of renewable energy to the national grid, will help contribute to the substantial Regional Renewable Electricity Capacity Allocation for the Northern and Western Region (1,389 MW) under the Revised NPF.

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

Locally, the MCDP (as varied) is supportive of the Proposed Development as it sets out the need for Mayo to transition to a low carbon and climate resilient County with a focus on renewable energy to reduce the County’s greenhouse gas emissions and increase the County’s environmental sustainability. Specifically, a strategic aim of the MCDP (as varied) is to transition Mayo into a low carbon and climate resilient County, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and become a national leader in renewable energy generation. The Proposed Development will help support Mayo with this strategic aim. Compliance with all relevant policies within the MCDP (as varied) and the Mayo RES is demonstrated in **Table 7-2** and **Table 7-4** above respectively.

The principle of development at this location is supported by the Mayo RES. The Proposed Turbines of the Proposed Wind Farm are all located in a preferred area for wind energy development in the Mayo RES. The Proposed Turbines of the Proposed Wind Farm are all located in an area designated as *‘Tier 1 - Preferred (Cluster of Turbines)’* which is identified as *“areas identified as being most suitable for smaller clusters of wind turbines (clusters of up to three to five turbines depending on site conditions and visual amenity)”*. The Proposed Development forms part of the Proposed Project which is a wind energy development and will facilitate the connection of the Proposed Wind Farm to the national electricity grid. Considering the suitability of the Proposed Development Site for wind energy development (as detailed in **Section 5.2** of this Planning Report), it is submitted that the principle of development at this location is consistent with the Mayo RES, the MCDP and the proper planning and sustainable development of the site.

In summary, the Proposed Development provides the opportunity to significantly contribute to energy and climate targets in a manner which is in accordance with planning policy at all levels.

8.3

Compliance with Legislation

This planning application for the Proposed Development has been prepared in accordance with Section 182A of the Planning Act. Pre-application consultation with MCC was undertaken under the provisions of Section 247 of the Planning Act. The Applicant also engaged with the Commission, then An Bord

Pleanála, under the provisions of Section 182E of the Planning Act, as to whether the Proposed Development would meet the thresholds of the Seventh Schedule of the Planning Act.

A letter received from the Commission dated the 4th of July 2024 stated that under Section 182E, it is the opinion of the Commission that the Proposed Development falls within the scope of the Section 182A of the Planning Act. This confirmed that the Proposed Development constitutes SID and therefore the planning application should be made directly to the Commission. The ACP SID Status Confirmation is included in Addendum 4 of the SID Planning Application Form.

The legally binding greenhouse gas emissions reduction target and the obligation of public bodies to perform their functions in a manner consistent with the objective of mitigating greenhouse gas emissions under the Climate Act present key considerations in the assessment of this application. The Proposed Development is wholly consistent with the Climate Act, the plans, policies and objectives listed in section 15 of the Climate Act and will assist the State in achieving the legally binding target of a 51% reduction in emissions by 2030 by transferring renewable wind energy to the grid, reducing reliance on GHG emitting fossil fuels for energy generation.

This planning application for the Proposed Development is accompanied by an EIAR and NIS in accordance with the requirements of the Planning Act and the Planning Regulations.

8.4 EIAR Findings

The purpose of the EIAR is to document the current state of the environment on and in the vicinity of the Site and to determine the likely significant effects of the Proposed Development on the environment and where mitigation measures may be required.

The findings of the EIAR and the mitigation measures set out within the documents demonstrates the Proposed Development will be capable of being constructed, operated and decommissioned without likely significant effects on the environment generally.

8.5 NIS Findings

This NIS has provided an assessment of all potential direct or indirect adverse effects on European Sites, taking into account all relevant guidance including the European Commission's Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites - Methodological guidance on Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (EC, 2021).

Where the potential for any adverse effect on any European Site has been identified, the pathway by which any such effect may occur has been robustly blocked through the use of avoidance, appropriate design and mitigation measures as set out within this report and its appendices. The measures ensure that the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Proposed Project will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of any European sites in light of their conservation objectives.

Following an examination, evaluation and analysis, in light of best scientific knowledge and the conservation objectives of the site, and, on the basis of objective information, having taken into account the relevant mitigation measures, it can be concluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt that the Proposed Project will not adversely affect the integrity of any European Sites, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

8.6 Principle of Development

There exists a comprehensive framework of policy support for renewable wind energy at a European, national, regional and local level that supports the principle that renewable energy development at the site is acceptable at this location.

The Proposed Development is in accordance with and has the support of European, national, regional policies pertaining to achieving the transition to a low carbon economy, climate resiliency, increasing renewable energy generation, and enhancing energy security.

At a local level, the Proposed Development is in line with the MCDP (as varied), as it identifies the need for Mayo to transition into a low carbon and climate resilient County. The Proposed Development will help contribute to a strategic aim of the MCDP (as varied) to transition to a low carbon, climate resilient and national leader in renewable energy generation. The 7 no. proposed turbines of the Proposed Wind Farm are all located entirely within an area designated in the Mayo RES as ‘*Tier 1-Preferred (Cluster of Turbines)*’ for wind energy development. The Proposed Development forms part of the Proposed Project which is a wind energy development and will facilitate the connection of the Proposed Wind Farm to the national electricity grid.

Moreover, the design of the Proposed Development, takes account of identified site constraints, and the EIAR, NIS and this Planning Report demonstrate that the Proposed Development will not result in any likely significant effects on the environment.

As concluded in the EIAR and outlined in **Section 8.4** above, the Proposed Development has been thoroughly assessed and with the mitigation measures outlined in the EIAR in place, the Proposed Development will be capable of being constructed, operated and decommissioned without likely significant effects on the environment.

Similarly, as concluded in the NIS and outlined in **Section 8.5** above, all potential effects arising from the Proposed Development have been mitigated to the extent that there is no potential for adverse effects on the integrity of any European Site, as a result of the Proposed Development.

As such the principle of development for transmission infrastructure for wind energy development at the Proposed Development Site is considered to be acceptable and in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development.

9.

CONCLUSION

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

The Proposed Development aligns with National Strategic Outcome 8 and Objectives outlined in the Revised NPF, particularly Objective 70, which seeks to promote renewable energy use and generation at appropriate locations within the built and natural environment to meet national objectives towards achieving a low carbon economy by 2050.

CAP25 highlights that “a renewables-led system is at the core of Ireland’s plan to radically reduce emissions in the electricity sector, protect our energy security, and ensure our economic competitiveness”. To achieve this, greater alignment between local plans and national and regional renewable energy policy and targets is urgently required. If permitted, the Proposed Development will transfer approximately 31.5 MW of renewable, clean energy to Ireland’s national electricity grid. This will not only contribute to the decarbonisation of the electricity sector but will play a role in the decarbonisation of other sectors and the transition to a low carbon, climate resilient economy. By providing renewable onshore wind energy to the national electricity grid, the Proposed Development will enhance Ireland’s energy security by reducing reliance on imported fossil fuels.

It is acknowledged that the Proposed Development will have an impact on the receiving environment in which it is proposed. The planning application for the Proposed Development recognises the parallel interests of tackling climate change while aiming to safeguard residential amenity and to protect species and habitats. Consideration of this fact has been central to the design of the Proposed Development and in the preparation of the EIAR, NIS, and mitigation measures proposed. The EIAR demonstrates that, if consented, the Proposed Development will be capable of being constructed, operated and decommissioned without giving rise to any significant impacts on the environment.

Ultimately, it is considered that this Proposed Development is in accordance with the provisions of proper planning and sustainable development and due to the suitability of the site and the urgent need for renewable energy development. National climate and renewable energy objectives, and the decarbonisation of Irish society as a whole is dependent on the rapid expansion of wind energy in Ireland. The scale of the challenge Ireland faces in decarbonising its economy is enormous, but the climate change implications of not doing so are even greater. The Proposed Development will help support the decarbonisation of the electricity sector and the decarbonisation of other sectors, reducing reliance on imported fossil fuels for energy generation and enhancing Ireland’s energy security.

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

