

1.0 INTRODUCTION

TOBIN Consulting Engineers (hereafter referred to as TOBIN) has prepared this Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) on behalf of Cloghercor Wind Farm Limited, who intend to apply to An Bord Pleanála for planning permission to construct the proposed Cloghercor Wind Farm in County Donegal. The proposed wind farm is located approximately 2 km south of Doochary in west County Donegal. The proposed wind farm will have an electrical output of between 95-136.8 MW.

The proposed project comprises a wind farm of 19 no. wind turbines and all associated infrastructure including turbine foundations, hardstanding areas, borrow pits, access tracks, an on-site 110kV electrical substation, works to facilitate delivery of equipment to site and a grid connection comprising a loop-in connection into the Ardnagappary to Tievebrack 110 kV line. The proposed project will also comprise facilitating works on the public road network and at private properties to accommodate the delivery of turbine components (which includes a temporary turbine component transfer area). The proposed development refers only to the elements for which planning permission is being sought as part of this application, however this EIAR accounts for the overall proposed project.

A full description of the proposed development and indeed the overall proposed project are provided in Chapter 2 (Description of the Proposed Project). A full set of planning drawings are available as Appendix 1-1 of this EIAR.

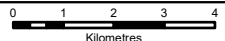
Each chapter of this EIAR may define a different study area to which its own assessment refers, but the overall location of the proposed project and general EIAR study area is shown in Figure 1-1 and incorporates an area of approximately 2,198 hectares (ha), including 252 ha of Biodiversity Enhancement Lands.



Legend *

- Proposed Wind Farm Site Boundary
- Turbine Delivery Route works
- Biodiversity Enhancement lands

*all land identified is within Boundary of the Proposed Project



NOTES
 1 FIGURED DIMENSIONS ONLY TO BE TAKEN FROM THIS DRAWING
 2 ALL DRAWINGS TO BE CHECKED BY THE CONTRACTOR ON SITE
 3 DIMENSIONS TO BE INCREASED BY ANY DISCREPANCIES BEFORE ANY WORK COMMENCES
 4 ALL LEVELS RELATE TO ORDNANCE SURVEY DATUM AT MALIN HEAD

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Client: Cloghercor Wind Farm Ltd.

Project: Cloghercor Wind Farm

Title: Figure 1-1: Proposed Project Extent

Scale @ A4: 1:150,000

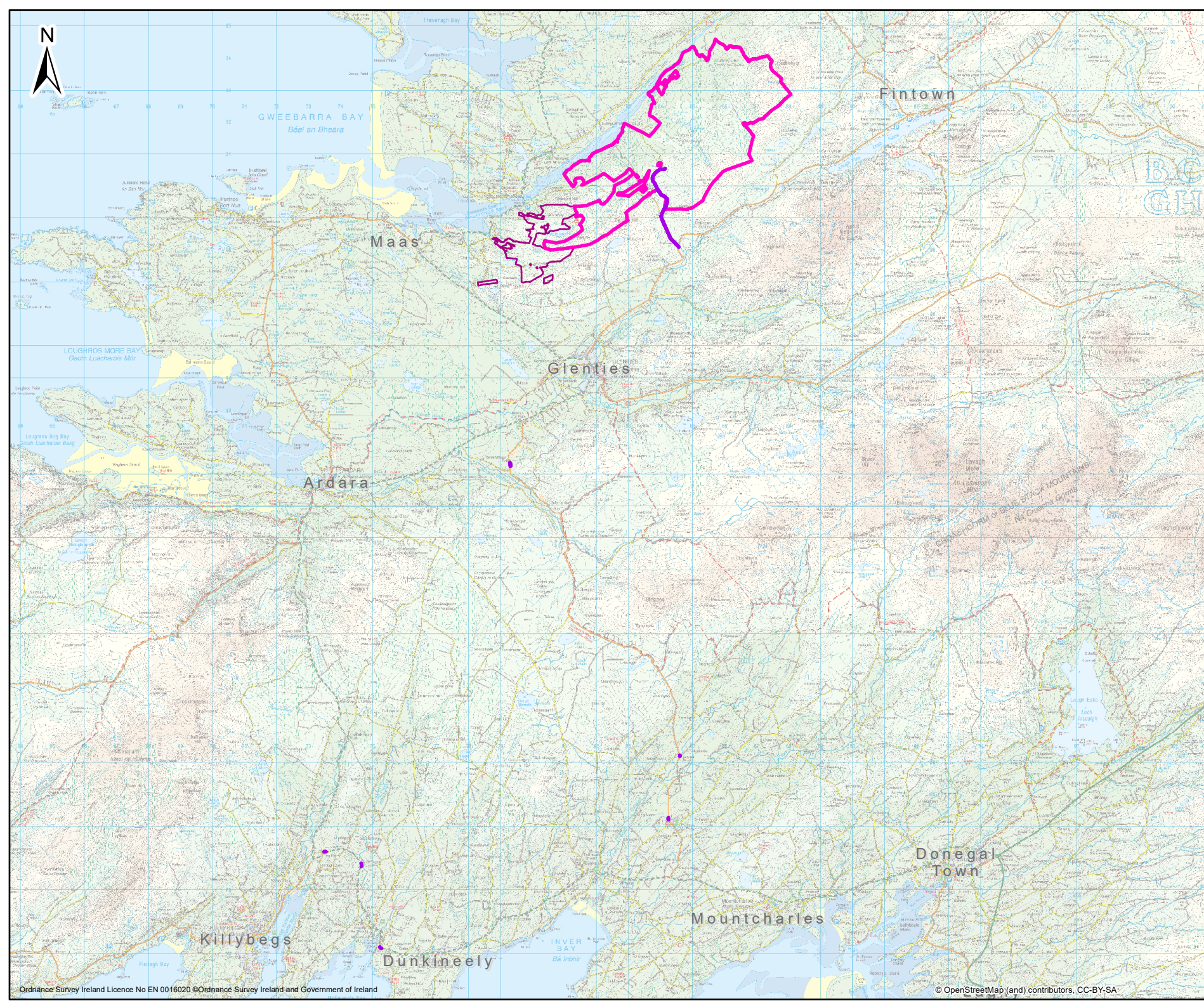
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1.1 BACKGROUND TO ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is the process that examines the potential environmental effects of a proposed project. Where potential significant effects are identified, appropriate measures for the prevention and/or mitigation of impacts are prescribed. The EIA process consists of the preparation of an EIAR, the carrying out of consultations, the examination by the competent authority of the information presented in the EIAR and any supplementary information provided, followed by the reasoned conclusion by the competent authority on the significant effects of the project on the environment arising from the examination of the information presented. The EIAR is a statement of the effects, if any, that the proposed project would have on the environment and is used to inform the EIA process. This EIAR has been prepared by TOBIN Consulting Engineers on behalf of the Applicant.

The proposed project is subject to the EIA process as it falls within the project class definitions specified in Schedule 5 of the *Planning and Development Regulations, 2001* (S.I. No. 600 of 2001), as amended. Schedule 5 sets out a comprehensive list of project types and development thresholds which are subject to EIA. Specifically, Part 2 Category 3(i) states that EIA is required for the following project type:

“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”.

EIA is an increasingly important element of European Union (EU) environmental policy. The first EIA Directive was adopted in 1985 (*Directive 85/337/EEC*) and, following the adoption of amending Directives in 1997, 2003 and 2009, a codified Directive was adopted in 2011 (*Directive 2011/92/EU*). *Directive 2014/52/EU* amends the 2011 codified Directive but does not replace it. This EIAR has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the codified *Directive 2011/92/EU* as amended by *Directive 2014/52/EU* (hereafter referred to as the ‘amended Directive’).

Further information on the legislative context for EIA is provided in Chapter 4 (Policy, Planning and Development Context).

1.2 THE APPLICANT

The applicant for permission (Cloghercor Wind Farm Limited) is a joint venture company between Ørsted and FuturEnergy Ireland. Both Ørsted and FuturEnergy Ireland are large companies in the renewable energy market, who provide a significant proportion of the renewable energy required to achieve the government targets thus far, with ambitions to grow this contribution in the future.

Ørsted develops, constructs, and operates offshore and onshore wind farms, solar farms, energy storage facilities, and bioenergy plants, and provides energy products to its customers. In Ireland, Ørsted owns and operates a portfolio of onshore wind farms with a combined capacity of more than 300 MW. Their ambition is to increase this by more than 600 MW in the coming decade. FuturEnergy Ireland is a joint venture company owned on a 50:50 basis by Coillte and ESB that is actively looking to drive Ireland’s transition to a low carbon economy. The company’s ambition is to develop more than 1GW of renewable energy capacity by 2030 and make a significant contribution to Ireland’s commitment to produce 80% of electricity from renewable sources by the end of the decade.

Social Responsibility

The transition to green energy can achieve even more than reducing emissions. If we work together to build it in the right way, green energy can help create a more just and prosperous world, generating benefits for nature, society, and the economy.

Addressing climate change by leaving fossil fuels in the ground is one of the biggest things we can do to halt biodiversity loss. But we should also find ways to restore and enhance biodiversity when building renewable energy assets, leaving nature as a whole in a better shape than when we found it.

Renewable energy is, or will become, a new industry in most parts of the world. It needs to be built up in a way that generates local jobs, training and education opportunities, a supply chain made up of local businesses, and renewable assets that local people co-own.

As we expand the renewable energy industry around the world, it provides an opportunity to redress inequalities across societies, sharing the benefits of the green transformation fairly with those who have been marginalised and disproportionately affected by the impact of fossil fuels.

1.3 THE NEED FOR THE PROPOSED PROJECT

In terms of setting out the need for the proposed project, and renewable wind energy in general, it is important to place this proposed project in an international, national, and local policy context from the perspectives of environment, energy and planning. The overarching European and National Policy in terms of decarbonising our economy and reducing our reliance on fossil fuels to generate electricity are set out comprehensively in Chapter 4 (Policy, Planning and Development Context).

Some of the key national policy targets and objectives described in Chapter 4 are summarised here as are some brief statistics and research on renewable energy use, which gives context to the current dependency on imported fossil fuels in Ireland, and therefore which demonstrate the need for the proposed project both in general and at this particular location.

From a National perspective, the Government's *Climate Action Plan* (December 2023) is the key document which provides a roadmap for Ireland to meet its European Union (EU) target to halve our emissions by 2030 and reach net zero no later than 2050. The action plan maintains the target from previous plans of 80% of electricity to be produced by renewable energy sources by 2030 with an indicative contribution of up to 9.0 Gigawatts (GW) (i.e. 9,000 MW) to be provided from increased onshore wind capacity. In Ireland (as of May 2022), there is an installed wind capacity of 4,333 MW¹ which leaves a gap of 4,667 MW of wind energy capacity to be installed in order to meet the 2030 targets. In essence, a more than doubling of current wind capacity is needed.

The Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) *Renewable Energy in Ireland - 2020 Update* (SEAI, April 2020)² states that 33% of electricity generated in 2018 was from renewable sources and that 28% of all electricity generated was from wind alone. The latest Monthly Energy Data³ from the SEAI for the period January-July 2022 indicates that wind contributed

¹ <https://windenergyireland.com/about-wind/the-basics/facts-stats> (Accessed 18th January 2023)

² <https://www.seai.ie/data-and-insights/seai-statistics/key-publications/renewable-energy-in-ireland/>

³ <https://www.seai.ie/data-and-insights/seai-statistics/monthly-energy-data/electricity/> (Accessed on 23 Sept. 2022)

6,350 gigawatt hours (GWh) to the overall indigenous generation total of 18,321 GWh for the period which represents a contribution of approximately 35% of total domestic energy generation in GWh.

Energy security comprises many diverse factors, including import dependency, fuel diversity, the capacity and integrity of the supply and distribution infrastructure, energy prices, physical risks, supply disruptions and emergencies. According to information published by the SEAI in 2022⁴, indigenous production accounted for 32% of Ireland's energy requirements in 1990, and only ever reached a peak of 34% since then. Ireland's dependency on imported energy has grown steadily since the 1990's, with a sharp fall in 2016 following the opening of the Corrib gas field. Since 2016 as the Corrib gas field production capacity has declined, Ireland's import dependency has increased to approximately 78% in 2021.

This dependence on fuel imports makes Ireland highly susceptible to price fluctuations in the international supply market and vulnerable to volatile international trade wars and political decisions. This is very apparent in the current energy price situation. The Government White Paper entitled *Ireland's Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Future 2015-2030* sets out a framework to guide Ireland's energy policy development. The White Paper states "*Renewable energy will also play a central role in the transition to low carbon energy. No single renewable energy technology – existing or emerging – will alone enable Ireland to overcome the low carbon challenge. Rather, a diverse range of technologies will be required along the supply chains for electricity, heat and transport*". In this context, the addition of between 95-136.8 MW of installed wind energy capacity from the proposed project will improve our security of supply and reduce our reliance on energy imports.

Carbon pricing also plays a role in establishing a need for the proposed project. The Government has committed to progressively raise the carbon tax rate to reach EUR 100 per tonne of carbon dioxide by 2030, while recycling revenue to prevent fuel poverty, finance climate-related investment and ensure a just transition⁵.

It should be noted that there is a considerable economic benefit to the development of wind farms nationally and specifically at this location. In the National context, a Pöyry report published in March 2014 entitled *The Value of Wind Energy to Ireland* stated that the sector could support 22,510 jobs in the construction stage and double the amount of existing jobs in the operational phase by 2030. It also projected an investment of €4.8 billion in the time period from 2020 to 2030. The potential local economic impact in the Donegal area will also be positive by bringing employment to the area during the construction works. Further information on the local economic impacts of the proposed project are discussed in Chapter 5 (Population and Human Health). A 2021 report by KPMG for Wind Energy Ireland estimated that jobs in the wind industry in Ireland could grow to over 7,000 by 2030. A 2018 report by Baringa⁶ discusses the potential financial costs and savings of the use of renewable electricity for the end customer when compared to a fossil fuel use scenario. The report found that although there were some additional costs in certain areas associated with the use of renewable energy, there were also savings that could be made, and overall, there was a potential to make significant cost savings to the end customer by 2030 when compared to a purely fossil fuel scenario.

⁴ <https://www.seai.ie/publications/Energy-in-Ireland-2022.pdf> Energy In Ireland – 2022 Report.

⁵ <https://www.oecd.org/climate-action/ipac/practices/a-credible-carbon-tax-trajectory-for-ireland-a39128a3/> (Accessed on 23 Sept. 2022)

⁶ <https://www.iwea.com/images/files/70by30-report-final.pdf>

The development of renewable energy is a natural step in the evolution of locally generated electricity. Electricity generation has brought significant economic gain to many areas in Ireland over the years. Ireland is now on a path of decarbonisation and the energy that we are use is changing from fossil fuels to renewables, such as wind. The potential to extract local, economic and societal gains is a major benefit associated with the development of renewable energy projects. All renewable projects that are developed over the coming years will attract a significant community benefit fund for the local area which will bring significant opportunities for local communities.

Additional information on the community benefit proposals for the proposed project are discussed in Chapter 2 (Description of the Proposed Project) of this EIAR.

1.4 SITE LOCATION AND BACKGROUND

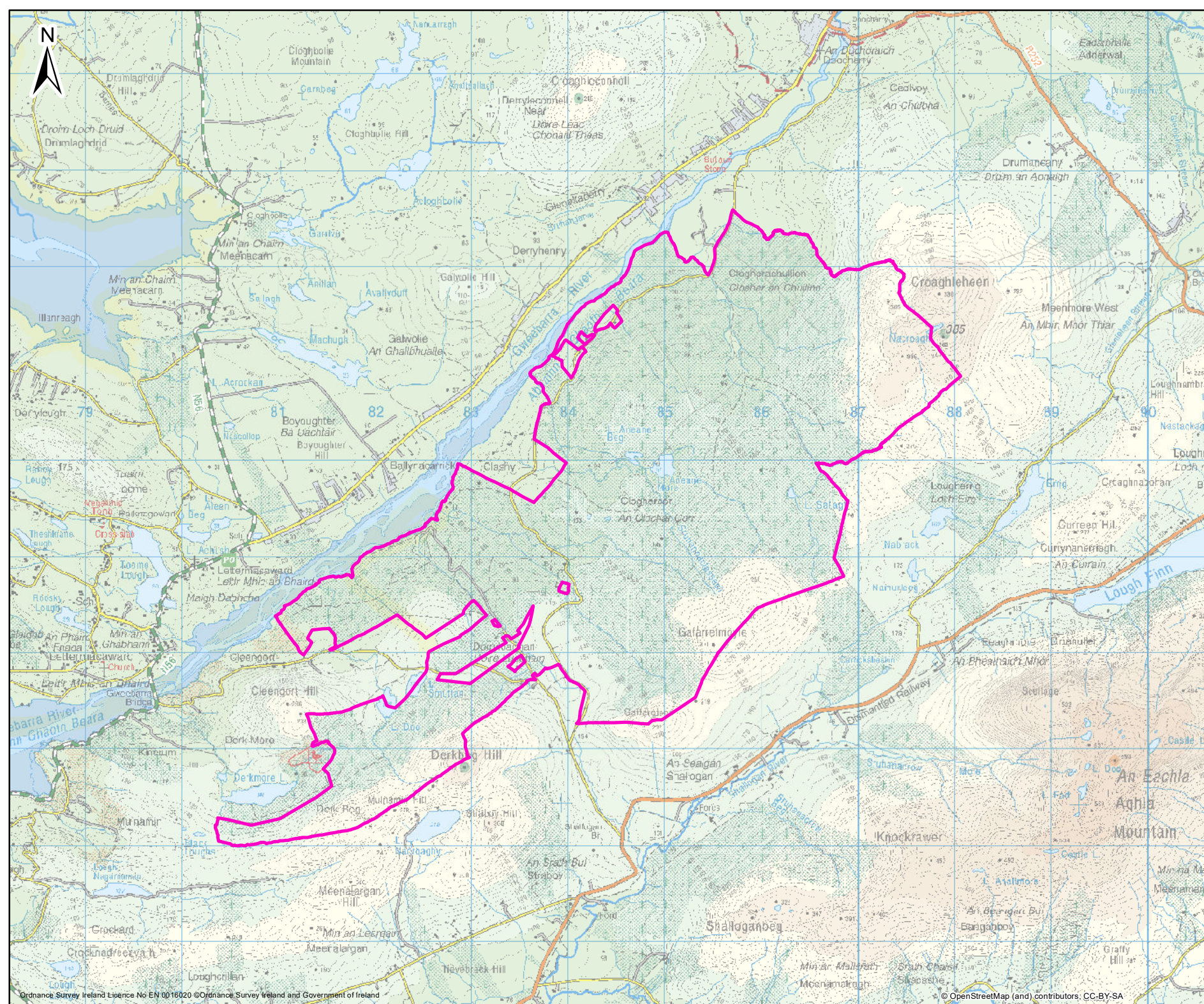
The main wind farm site (Figure 1-2) which extends to approximately 1,945 ha, of which approximately 1,027 ha is owned by Coillte and the remaining area is third party property, is located 2km south of Doochary in northwest County Donegal. The planning application site boundary is 256 ha (See Drawing 10798-2003 in Appendix 1-1 of this EIAR).

The elevation of the wind farm site ranges from sea level along the Gweebarra Estuary to the north rising to over 360m above ordnance datum (AOD) in the east of the site. The Clochar an Chuilinn flows through the site as well as several small watercourses and all flow into the Gweebarra /Owenwee [Doochary] river adjacent to the proposed wind farm site. Two lakes, the Aneane More and Aneane Beg are within the proposed wind farm site boundary.

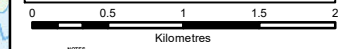
Current land cover within the proposed wind farm site, based on the available Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) CORINE land cover maps and examination of aerial imagery, comprises predominantly of 'Coniferous Forest', with some small areas classified as 'Peat Bogs' or 'Transitional Woodland-Shrub'. Within the wider landscape, peatland and commercial forestry comprises the primary land-uses in the area with some small areas of agricultural grassland also present. Access to the site is via a local access road which connects the site to the R252 to the northeast. The site can also be accessed via the southwest from the R250, L6363 and L6483.

In general terms, the area surrounding the proposed wind farm site can be described as rural with dispersed settlement type. Wind energy developments are an existing part of the wider landscape of the region.

Further information on the proposed site is provided in Chapter 2 (Description of the Proposed Project) of this EIAR.



Legend
 Proposed Wind Farm Site Boundary



NOTES
 1. DIMENSIONS ONLY TO BE TAKEN FROM THIS DRAWING
 2. ALL DRAWINGS TO BE CHECKED BY THE CONTRACTOR ON SITE
 3. DIMENSIONS TO BE PROVIDED BY ANY CONCERNED AGENCIES BEFORE ANY WORK COMMENCES
 4. ALL LEVELS RELATE TO ORDNANCE SURVEY DATUM AT MSL UNLESS STATED

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Client: Cloghercor Wind Farm Ltd.

Project: Cloghercor Wind Farm

Title: Figure 1-2:
Proposed Wind Farm Site Boundary

Scale @ A4: 1:50,000

Prepared by: S. Peazzotta **Checked:** J. Staunton **Date:** January 2023

Project Director: O. Fitzpatrick

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1.5 SUMMARY OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

A summary of the proposed project is as follows:

- Erection of 19 no. wind turbines with an overall blade tip height range from 185m to 200 m, a rotor diameter range from 149 m to 164 m, a hub height range from 112 m to 125 m, and all associated foundations and hard-standing areas in respect of each turbine;
- Construction of new site entrance with access onto the L6483 local road for the construction phase (operational phase maintenance traffic only), and utilisation of a permitted forest entrance (Pl. Ref. 1951040) to the L6483 as a second construction phase site access point. A third site entrance on the L6483 will form the operational phase public entrance to the wind farm;
- Improvements and temporary modifications to 5 no. locations adjacent to the public road to facilitate delivery of abnormal loads and turbine delivery on the R262 and N56 in the townlands of Tullycumber, Drumard, Darney, Cashelreagh Glebe and Aghayeevoige;
- Construction of an area of temporary hard standing to function as a blade transfer area to facilitate turbine delivery on the R262 in the townland of Drumnacross;
- Widening of sections of the L6363 and L6483 within the road corridor (up to 4.5 m running width) to facilitate delivery of abnormal loads/turbines in the townlands of Cloghercor, Shallogan More, Derryloaghan and Straboy;
- Construction of 2 no. temporary construction compounds with associated temporary site offices, parking areas and security fencing;
- Installation of 1 no. permanent meteorological mast with a height of 100 m;
- 4 no. borrow pits;
- Construction of new internal site access roads and upgrade of existing site roads, to include passing bays and all associated drainage;
- Construction of drainage and sediment control systems;
- Construction of 1 no. permanent 110kV electrical substation including:
 - 1 no. EirGrid control building containing worker welfare facilities and equipment store;
 - 1 no. Independent Power Producer (IPP) control building containing HV switch room, site offices, kitchen facilities, storeroom and toilet amenities.
 - All electrical plant and infrastructure and grid ancillary services equipment;
 - Parking;
 - Lighting;
 - Security Fencing;
 - Wastewater holding tank;
 - Rainwater harvesting equipment;
 - All associated infrastructure and services including site works and signage;
- All associated underground electrical and communications cabling connecting the wind turbines to the proposed wind farm substation;
- All works associated with the connection of the proposed wind farm to the national electricity grid, which will be via a loop-in 110 kV underground cable connection (approximately 4.1km cable length within trenches on approximately 3.36 km of internal access roads) to the existing 110 kV overhead line in the townland of Cloghercor, Co. Donegal, with two new 16m and 21m high steel lattice end masts at each interface;
- Removal of 13 no. existing wooden polesets and 1 no. steel lattice angle mast between the two new interface end masts;
- 2 no. watercourse (stream) crossings on the grid connection route;

- All related site works and ancillary development including berms, landscaping, and soil excavation;
- Forestry felling to facilitate construction and operation of the proposed project and any onsite forestry replanting;
- Development of a permanent public car park with seating/picnic tables at the end of the construction phase of the development at the location where the proposed grid connection intersects the L6483;
- Permanent recreational facilities including marked walking trails along the site access roads and paths, and associated recreation and amenity signage; and
- Approximately 252 ha of biodiversity enhancement lands located over 3km from the proposed wind turbines.

Given the recent advances in turbine technology, and the anticipated lifespan of wind turbines, 35-years is considered to be the optimal operational life for the proposed project. The duration of this operational life allows the proposed turbines to be used to generate clean renewable energy until they have reached the end of their life, rather than being removed prematurely.

All elements of the proposed project including the elements which form part of the overall project but are not part of the current planning application such as all works required on public roads to accommodate turbine delivery, have been considered and are addressed as part of this EIAR.

Further information on the overall proposed project is provided in Chapter 2 (Description of the Proposed Project).

1.6 LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT AND DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

The proposed wind farm project will comprise 19 no. wind turbines and will have an electrical output of between 95-136.8 MW and is a project meeting the criteria for Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) as set out in the 7th Schedule of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. As such, the planning application is submitted to An Bord Pleanála in accordance with Section 37E of the Planning Act. Correspondence from the Bord confirming the SID status of the application is included in Appendix 1-2.

The electrical infrastructure proposed, including the grid connection to the existing 110 kV line, is an integral component of the Section 37E wind farm development application. The loop-in grid connection infrastructure proposed serves no other purpose other than to export renewable electricity generated from the project to the national grid and is part of the installation for the harnessing of wind power for energy production.

The proposed project is subject to EIA and to the requirements inter alia set out in the following legislative provisions:

- Part X of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended; and
- The European Union (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018.

The above legislative provisions are detailed further in Chapter 4 (Policy, Planning and Development Context).

A Natura Impact Statement (NIS) has also been prepared for the proposed project. The purpose of the NIS is to inform the planning authority in its undertaking of an Appropriate Assessment (AA) of the proposed project, as required under Article 6(3) of the *Habitats Directive* (92/43/EC).

An AA is required of the implications for the European site concerned of any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of that site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with any other plans or projects prior to its approval, and to take into account the cumulative effects which result from the combination of that plan or project with other plans or projects (in-combination effects) in view of the European site's conservation objectives. The NIS, which is accompanied by an Appropriate Assessment Screening Report, is provided separately with the planning application.

1.6.1 Information to be Contained in an EIAR

The minimum information that must be contained in an EIAR is set out in Part X of the *Planning and Development Act, 2000*, as amended, and Schedule 6 of the *Planning and Development Regulations, 2001*, as amended. They are also set out in the European Union Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (the 'EIA Directive') as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU. The structure and content of this EIAR fully complies with these legislative requirements. This EIAR has also been prepared in accordance with the *Guidelines on the Information to be Contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports*, published by the EPA in May 2022 as well as the *Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment* published by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (DoHPLG) in August 2018 and all others listed in Section 1.6 above.

This EIAR contains information on the scale and nature of the proposed project, a description of the existing environment, impact assessment of the proposed project, mitigation measures to reduce or negate potential effects on the receiving environment and residual effects (if relevant).

This EIAR is arranged in four volumes, as follows:

- Volume I: Non-Technical Summary (NTS);
- Volume II: Main Environmental Impact Assessment Report;
- Volume III: Appendices; and
- Volume IV: Photomontages.

Volume I: Non-Technical Summary

This document provides an overview and summary of the EIAR using non-technical terminology. It is a standalone document and is intended to offer a clear and concise summary of the existing environment, characteristics of the project and mitigation measures for the project.

Volume II: Environmental Impact Assessment Report

To allow for ease of presentation and consistency when considering the various elements of the environment, a systematic structure will be adopted for the main body EIAR. This structure is known as a '*Grouped Format*'. The structure is used for each particular environmental aspect, as provided below.

Chapter 1 - Introduction: this chapter of the EIAR provides an introduction and a brief background to the project and the legislative requirements under which the document is prepared. It describes the EIA consultation and scoping procedures, the structure of the EIAR, the study team and contributors to the EIAR.

Chapter 2 – Description of the Proposed Project: provides a detailed description of the proposed project, which includes details of the site layout and infrastructure. It details the construction procedures and the materials required, the operational and maintenance phases, in addition to the decommissioning and rehabilitation procedures.

Chapter 3 – Reasonable Alternatives: provides a description of the reasonable alternatives, in terms of project design, technology, location, size and scale, which were considered by the Applicant and the Project Team in the preparation of the EIAR.

Chapter 4 – Policy, Planning and Development Context: considers the proposed project works in terms of legislative context and in relation to strategic, national, regional and local planning policies and objectives, in order to ascertain whether it is consistent with the relevant legislation and with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

The remaining chapters in the EIAR are as follows:

- Chapter 5: Population and Human Health
- Chapter 6: Biodiversity: Flora & Fauna
- Chapter 7: Biodiversity: Ornithology
- Chapter 8: Land, Soils and Geology
- Chapter 9: Hydrology and Hydrogeology
- Chapter 10: Shadow Flicker
- Chapter 11: Material Assets
- Chapter 12: Noise and Vibration
- Chapter 13: Landscape and Visual Impact
- Chapter 14: Air Quality & Climate
- Chapter 15: Cultural Heritage
- Chapter 16: Traffic and Transportation
- Chapter 17: Interactions of the Foregoing
- Chapter 18: Schedule of Mitigation Measures

Each of the chapters (Chapters 5 – 16) provides an examination of specific environmental aspects and uses the following standard approach and headings:

Introduction – this section specifies the content and background of the subsequent assessment.

Methodology – this section describes the study methodology employed in carrying out the assessment.

Existing Environment – this section provides a description of the existing environment (without the proposed project) into which the proposed project will be located, specifically in the context of the relevant environmental aspects under consideration. This section will also identify any other proposed developments (with decisions pending from the relevant planning authority) or existing and approved projects in the vicinity which are relevant to the assessment.

Potential Effects – this section provides a description of the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects, which the proposed project may have on the environment. This is carried out with reference to the existing environment and characteristics of the proposed project, while also referring to the magnitude, duration, consequences, and significance of the proposed project during the construction, operational and decommissioning phases.

Mitigation Measures – this section includes a description of any remedial, or mitigation measures that are either practicable or reasonable having regard to the potential effects. It will also outline, where relevant, monitoring proposals to be carried out should consent be granted in order to demonstrate that the project in practice conforms to the predictions made.

Residual Effects – this section describes the degree of environmental impact that will occur after the proposed mitigation measures have been put in place.

Volume III: Appendices

Supporting documentation and references, referred to in the Main EIAR (Volume II) are included in this volume (with the exception of photomontages).

Volume IV: Photomontages

This volume consists of a set of photomontages identifying the visibility from a variety of locations towards the Cloghercor Wind Farm site as described in Chapter 13 (Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment).

The following EIA Guidelines have been taken into consideration in the preparation of this EIAR:

- Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (DoHPLG), Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment (August 2018);
- European Commission (EC), Guidance on Scoping (2017);
- European Commission (EC), Guidance on Screening (2017);
- EPA, Advice Notes on Current Practice in the Preparation of Environmental Impact Statements (2003); and
- EPA, Guidelines on the Information to be Contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (May 2022).

In the context of wind energy development, the following guideline documents have been consulted:

- Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DoEHLG), Wind Energy Development Guidelines (2006);
- DoHPLG, Draft Revised Wind Energy Development Guidelines (December 2019);
- Irish Wind Energy Association, Best Practice Guidelines for the Irish Wind Energy Industry 2012;
- Irish Wind Energy Association, Community Engagement Strategy March 2018; and
- European Commission, Guidance document on wind energy development and EU nature legislation (November 2020).

It is relevant to note that the DoHPLG and the Department of Communications, Climate Action & Environment (DoCCA) launched a public consultation on the proposed revisions to the Wind Energy Development Guidelines (Draft 2019 WEDGs) on 12 December 2019. The final date for receipt of submissions under the public consultation was 19 February 2020. As set out on the Department website⁷, “To enable focused input into the technical aspects of the revised Guidelines, the Department is interested in your views prior to finalisation”.

⁷ <https://www.housing.gov.ie/guidelines/wind-energy/public-consultation-revised-wind-energy-development-guidelines> (Accessed on 12 May 2020)

As such, the proposed Draft 2019 WEDGs are still under review and may be subject to change before finalisation.

Nonetheless, the provisions set out in the Draft 2019 WEDGs have been considered in the design of the proposed project in terms of noise, shadow flicker, visual amenity setback, environmental assessment, consultation obligations, community dividend and grid connections. Application of the Draft Guidelines is discussed in more detail in each of the individual Chapters in this EIAR. At the time of writing, the relevant guidelines remain those published in 2006. It is possible that a version of the draft guidelines may be finalised during the consideration period for the current proposed project. Towards this end, it is anticipated that the design of the proposed wind farm will be capable of adhering to the new guidelines as required.

1.6.2 Description of Likely Significant Effects

As per the *Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports* (May 2022), the main purpose of an EIAR is to identify, describe and present an assessment of the likely significant impacts of a project on the environment. The description of the likely significant effects on the environmental factors should cover the direct effects and any indirect, secondary, cumulative, transboundary, short-term, medium-term and long-term, permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects of the project.

Annex III of the amended EIA Directive uses the following criteria to consider such impacts:

- the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);
- the nature of the impact;
- the transboundary nature of the impact;
- the intensity and complexity of the impact;
- the probability of the impact;
- the expected onset, duration, frequency, and reversibility of the impact;
- the cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or approved projects; and
- the possibility of effectively reducing the impact.

The classification and description of effects in this EIAR follows the terms provided in Table 3-4 of the 2022 EPA Guidelines and are duplicated in Table 1-1 below for reference. As per the Guidelines, the terms listed in Table 1-1 can be used to consistently describe specific effects, but all categories of terms do not need to be used for every effect.

The use of standardised terms for the classification of effects ensures that the EIAR employs a systematic approach, which can be replicated across all disciplines covered in the EIAR. The consistent application of terminology throughout the EIAR facilitates the assessment of the proposed project on the receiving environment.

Table 1-1: Description of Effects (extract from EPA Guidelines (May 2022))

| | |
|---|--|
| Quality of Effects It is important to inform the non-specialist reader whether an effect is positive, negative or neutral | Positive Effects A change which improves the quality of the environment (for example, by increasing species diversity; or the improving reproductive capacity of an ecosystem, or by removing nuisances or improving amenities). |
| | Neutral Effects No effects or effects that are imperceptible, within normal bounds of variation or within the margin of forecasting error. |

| | |
|--|--|
| | <p>Negative/adverse Effects A change which reduces the quality of the environment (for example, lessening species diversity or diminishing the reproductive capacity of an ecosystem, or damaging health or property or by causing nuisance).</p> |
| <p>Describing the Significance of Effects 'Significance' is a concept that can have different meanings for different topics – in the absence of specific definitions for different topics the following definitions may be useful (also see <i>Determining Significance</i>).</p> | <p>Imperceptible An effect capable of measurement but without significant consequences.</p> |
| | <p>Not significant An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment but without significant consequences.</p> |
| | <p>Slight Effects An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment without affecting its sensitivities.</p> |
| | <p>Moderate Effects An effect that alters the character of the environment in a manner that is consistent with existing and emerging baseline trends.</p> |
| | <p>Significant Effects An effect which, by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity alters a sensitive aspect of the environment.</p> |
| | <p>Very Significant An effect which, by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity significantly alters most of a sensitive aspect of the environment.</p> |
| | <p>Profound Effects An effect which obliterates sensitive characteristics.</p> |
| | <p>Extent Describe the size of the area, the number of sites, and the proportion of a population affected by an effect.</p> |
| <p>Describing the Extent and Context of Effects Context can affect the perception of significance. It is important to establish if the effect is unique or, perhaps, commonly or increasingly experienced.</p> | <p>Context Describe whether the extent, duration, or frequency will conform or contrast with established (baseline) conditions (is it the biggest, longest effect ever?)</p> |
| | <p>Likely Effects The effects that can reasonably be expected to occur because of the planned project if all mitigation measures are properly implemented.</p> |
| <p>Describing the Probability of Effects Descriptions of effects should establish how likely it is that the predicted effects will occur – so that the CA can take a view of the balance of risk over advantage when making a decision.</p> | <p>Unlikely Effects The effects that can reasonably be expected not to occur because of the planned project if all mitigation measures are properly implemented.</p> |
| | <p>Momentary Effects Effects lasting from seconds to minutes</p> |
| <p>Describing the Duration and Frequency of Effects 'Duration' is a concept that can have different meanings for different topics – in the absence of specific definitions for different topics the following definitions may be useful.</p> | <p>Brief Effects Effects lasting less than a day</p> |
| | <p>Temporary Effects Effects lasting less than a year</p> |
| | <p>Short-term Effects Effects lasting one to seven years</p> |
| | <p>Medium-term Effects Effects lasting seven to fifteen years</p> |
| | <p>Long-term Effects Effects lasting fifteen to sixty years</p> |
| | <p>Permanent Effects Effects lasting over sixty years</p> |
| | <p>Reversible Effects Effects that can be undone, for example through remediation or restoration</p> |

| | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| | <p>Frequency of Effects Describe how often the effect will occur. (once, rarely, occasionally, frequently, constantly – or hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, annually)</p> |
| Describing the Types of Effects | <p>Indirect Effects (a.k.a. Secondary or Off-site Effects) Impacts on the environment, which are not a direct result of the project, often produced away from the project site or because of a complex pathway.</p> |
| | <p>Cumulative Effects The addition of many minor or significant effects, including effects of other projects, to create larger, more significant effects.</p> |
| | <p>'Do-Nothing Effects' The environment as it would be in the future should the subject project not be carried out.</p> |
| | <p>'Worst case' Effects The effects arising from a project in the case where mitigation measures substantially fail.</p> |
| | <p>Indeterminable Effects When the full consequences of a change in the environment cannot be described.</p> |
| | <p>Irreversible Effects When the character, distinctiveness, diversity or reproductive capacity of an environment is permanently lost.</p> |
| | <p>Residual Effects The degree of environmental change that will occur after the proposed mitigation measures have taken effect.</p> |
| | <p>Synergistic Effects Where the resultant effect is of greater significance than the sum of its constituents, (e.g. combination of SO_x and NO_x to produce smog).</p> |

1.7 STUDY TEAM AND CONTRIBUTORS TO THE EIAR

TOBIN have been engaged by Cloghercor Wind Farm Limited to coordinate and prepare this EIAR and to submit it to An Bord Pleanála as part of the planning application for statutory consent. The relevant inputs of the various contributors and competent experts of the Project Team are provided in Tables 1-2 and 1-3.

Table 1-2: List of Contributors to the EIAR

| Company | Name | Contribution to the EIAR |
|----------------------------|--|--|
| TOBIN Consulting Engineers | (EIAR Chapter number for which primary author) | Project Direction and Management, Scoping and Consultation, Co-Ordination, Preparation of Figures, and the following Chapters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction • Description of the Proposed Project • Reasonable Alternatives • Policy, Planning and Development Context • Population and Human Health • Land, Soils and Geology • Hydrology and Hydrogeology • Shadow Flicker • Material Assets • Air Quality & Climate • Traffic and Transportation • Interactions of the Foregoing |
| | John Staunton (1, 2, 11, 17) | |
| | Siobhán Tinnelly | |
| | Orla Fitzpatrick | |
| | Louise Byrne (3, 4) | |
| | Serena Byrne (5, 14, 18) | |
| | Robert Hunt | |
| | John Dillon (8, 9) | |
| | Laura McGrath | |
| | Mistaya Langridge | |
| | Michael Nolan (10) | |
| | Samuele Pezzetta | |
| | Donncha Kehone (16) | |
| Maria Rooney | | |
| Theo Ingham | | |
| John O'Flaherty | | |

| | | |
|-------------------------------|--|---|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schedule of Mitigation Measures <p>TOBIN has also prepared the planning application and planning drawings</p> |
| AWN Consulting | Mike Simms Dermot Blunnie | Noise and Vibration |
| Macroworks | Richard Barker Cian Doughan | Landscape and Visual Impact (incl. design review of the site) |
| Moore Group | Declan Moore William Anderson Nigel Malcom | Cultural Heritage |
| Independent Consultant | Dr. Tom Gittings | Biodiversity: Flora & Fauna / Appropriate Assessment Screening and Natura Impact Statement; Ornithology / Collision Risk Model |
| Ground Investigations Ireland | Diarmuid MagLochlainn Conor Finnerty | Site Investigation Report |
| Ciaran Reilly & Associates | Dr Ciaran Reilly | Peat Stability Risk Assessment |
| Bat Eco Services Ltd. | Dr Tina Aughney | Bat Report |
| Independent Consultant | Dr. Ewan Weston | Golden Eagle Report and Ornithology Chapter |
| Independent Consultant | Daniel Moloney | Golden Eagle Report |
| Western Forestry Co-op | Marina Conway Joseph McManus Kenneth Moore | Forestry Report |

Table 1-3: List of Competent Experts Contributing to the EIAR

| Company/Individual | Competent Experts | Qualifications | No. of Years' Experience |
|----------------------------|-------------------|--|--------------------------|
| TOBIN Consulting Engineers | Dr John Staunton | BSc. Environmental Science (2008), National University of Ireland Galway (NUIG) PhD. Environmental Science (2014), NUIG | 14 |
| TOBIN Consulting Engineers | Siobhán Tinnelly | B.A. (Mod) Natural Sciences (Env. Science) (2000), Trinity College Dublin (TCD) Post Graduate Diploma in Environmental Engineering (2004), TCD MSc. Applied Hydrogeology (2013), University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne Postgraduate Diploma in Management (2017), Irish Management Institute (IMI) Professional Geologist, P.Geo. Institute of Geologists of Ireland (IGI) | 22 |
| TOBIN Consulting Engineers | Orla Fitzpatrick | B.Sc. (Hons) Geophysical Science (1999), University College Dublin (UCD) M.Sc. Environmental Consultancy (2003), University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne Chartered Environmentalist (2012) | 22 |
| TOBIN Consulting Engineers | Serena Byrne | B.Sc. (Hons) Psychology Applied to Information Technology (2010), IADT Dún Laoghaire M.Sc. Environmental Sustainability (2022), UCD | 12 |
| TOBIN Consulting Engineers | Robert Hunt | BEng (Hons) in Civil Engineering (2008), University of Dundee MSc. in Environmental Engineering (2011), QUB Associate Certificate in Environmental Management (2013), Institute of Environmental Management (IEMA) Chartered Engineer, Member of Chartered Institute of Wastes Management (MCIWM) | 13 |
| TOBIN Consulting Engineers | Louise Byrne | BA Hons International Geography & German (2004) UCD Masters in Regional & Urban Planning (MRUP) (2006), UCD Chartered Member of Royal Town Planning Institute (2010) PG Certificate GIS (2016), University of Leeds | 8 |
| TOBIN Consulting Engineers | John Dillon | BSc. Environmental Science (2000), NUIG MSc. and Diploma in Environmental Engineering (2003), Imperial College London Chartered Engineer, MCIWM Professional Geologist (PGeo) Member of the International Association of Hydrogeologists (Irish Group) | 18 |
| TOBIN Consulting Engineers | Laura McGrath | B.Sc. in Earth & Ocean Sciences (2013), NUI Galway Level 8 Certificate Energy and Environmental Engineering (2014), Cork Institute of Technology (CIT) M.Sc. Hydrogeology (2015), University of Strathclyde PGeo - Professional Member of the Institute of Geologists Ireland IAH Member of the International Association of Hydrogeologists (Irish Group) | 6 |
| TOBIN Consulting Engineers | Michael Nolan | City & Guilds in Computer Aided Design (2001), Griffith College Dublin | 16 |

| | | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------|---|----|
| TOBIN Consulting Engineers | Samuele Pezzetta | MSc. Environmental Science and Geohazards (2019), UPEM, MARNE-LA-VALLE (Paris) | 3 |
| TOBIN Consulting Engineers | Donncha Kehone | B.Eng Civil & Transportation Engineering (2009), Edinburgh Napier University B.Eng Civil Engineering (2007), GMIT | 12 |
| TOBIN Consulting Engineers | Maria Rooney | BEng (Hons) Civil Engineering (2013), IT Carlow BEng (Ord.) Civil Engineering (2010), Dundalk Institute of Technology (DKIT) MIEI Member of Engineers Ireland | 6 |
| TOBIN Consulting Engineers | Mistaya Langridge | MASc Engineering (2020), University of Guelph BEng (Water Resources) (2019), University of Guelph CertEnvSc (2018) University of Guelph MIEI Member of Engineers Ireland | 4 |
| TOBIN Consulting Engineers | Theo Ingham | BSc (Hons) (2013), GMIT BSc (Ord) (2012), GMIT Construction Management in Refurbishment and Maintenance MIEI Member of Engineers Ireland | 11 |
| TOBIN Consulting Engineers | John O'Flaherty | Nat. Dip in Water Engineering (1993), Institute of Technology Sligo BEng Civil Engineering (1994), Queens University Belfast Certificate Roads Safety Audit (2013), University College Dublin MEng Roads & Transport Engineering (2019), Institute of Technology Sligo | 22 |
| Western Forestry Co-Op | Marina Conway | B(Agr)Sc. Forestry (1996), UCD M(Agr)Sc. (2006), UCD HETAC Postgraduate Cert. Water Pollution Control, Institute of Technology Sligo Native Woodland Scheme (Forest Service, Ireland) Cert. Upland Forest Design (Forestry Commission UK) | 26 |
| Western Forestry Co-Op | Joseph McManus | BSc in Forestry Professional Member of the Society of Irish Foresters | 8 |
| Western Forestry Co-Op | Kenneth Moore | B Agr Sc in Forestry Professional Member of the Society of Irish Foresters | 2 |
| AWN Consulting | Mike Simms | BE and MEngSc in Mechanical Engineering Member of the Institute of Acoustics (MIOA) and of the Institution of Engineering and Technology (MIET) | 20 |
| AWN Consulting | Dermot Blunnie | BEng (Hons) in Sound Engineering (2007), University of South Wales PG Diploma in Acoustics and Noise Control (2010) Institute of Acoustics MSc. in Applied Acoustics (2013) University of Derby | 13 |
| Macroworks | Cian Doughan | BSc Landscape Architecture (2015) UCD Corporate Member of the Irish Landscape Institute | 6 |
| Macroworks | Richard Barker | PG Diploma in Forestry (1996) BA Environmental Studies (1995) Master's Degree in Landscape Architecture (2003) Corporate Member of the Irish Landscape Institute | 18 |

| | | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|---|----|
| Moore Group | Declan Moore | BA in Archaeology and English (1991) NUIG Certificate in Management Studies (1994) | 32 |
| Moore Group | Nigel Malcom | B.Sc. Biological Sciences (1992), Murdoch University, Perth, Western Australia | 20 |
| Moore Group | William Anderson | BA Hons (2001) Art History/Archaeology, University of East Anglia MA (2004) Archaeology, Leiden University PhD (2011) Archaeology, University of Melbourne | 19 |
| Independent Consultant | Dr. Tom Gittings | BSc. in Ecology (1988), University of East Anglia PhD. in Zoology (1994), UCC | 26 |
| Independent Consultant | Daniel Moloney | BSc Hons Countryside Management | 16 |
| Independent Consultant | Dr. Ewan Weston | B.Sc. Zoology PhD Ecology | 24 |
| Ciaran Reilly & Associates | Dr Ciaran Reilly | BEng in Civil, Structural and Environmental Engineering (2006), NUIG Postgraduate Diploma, Fire Safety Practice (Buildings & Other Structures) (2013), TCD PhD, Geotechnical Engineering (2014), TCD Chartered Engineer, Engineers Ireland | 16 |
| Ground Investigations Ireland | Diarmuid MagLochlainn | B.SC. (Hons) Geology (2014), UCD | 8 |
| Ground Investigations Ireland | Conor Finnerty | Civil, Structural and Environmental Engineering, TCD. Chartered Engineer, Member of the Institute of Engineers of Ireland and Geotechnical Society of Ireland | 18 |
| Irish Leisure Consultants | Humphrey Murphy | BA Communications Dublin City University, MBS Business Limerick University, MSC Exercise and Nutrition University of Chester, PgDip Research Methods Atlantic Technological University. Mountain Leader Award, Mountaineering Ireland. | 30 |

1.8 SCOPING AND CONSULTATION

The EIAR Scoping and consultation activities were carried out in accordance with all relevant guidance documents as set out in Section 1.6.

Scoping is a process of deciding what information should be contained in an EIAR and what methods should be used to gather and assess that information. The purpose of scoping for the EIAR is to provide a framework for the approach to be taken by the individual specialists in carrying out their evaluations, identifying environmental aspects for which potential significant environmental impacts may arise. It also provides a framework for the consultation process and sets out the intended structure of the EIAR.

1.8.1 Consultation with An Bord Pleanála

The first pre-application consultation meeting was held with An Bord Pleanála on 8th Dec. 2021, with the second held on 13th Sept. 2022. The purpose of the first meeting was to introduce the proposed Cloghercor Wind Farm project to the Bord in order to provide the Bord with the necessary information to enable it to decide on the strategic infrastructure development status of the project. The first meeting was attended by Cloghercor Wind Farm Limited and TOBIN representatives. The meeting discussion was centred around the following key points:

- Background to and overview of the Proposed Project
- EIAR Scoping carried out

- Public Consultation
- Surveys carried out already and those still planned
- Assessment of turbine dimensions
- Forestry
- Location within the Gaeltacht
- Importance of cumulative impact assessment
- Next Steps

At the meeting, the Bord detailed the pre-application consultation process. A presentation was given providing information on the site and the proposed project. The Bord provided some guidance on key considerations for the EIAR and some points that they wanted to see addressed therein. A discussion followed about specific details of the proposed project, as well as a number of other topics as listed above.

The second meeting was held via web conference on 13th Sept. 2022, with representatives of the Bord, Cloghercor Wind Farm Limited and TOBIN in attendance. The main points discussed were as follows:

- Current situation regarding the Wind Energy Strategy of the Donegal County Development Plan.
- Consultation with stakeholders
- Biodiversity and bird findings at the site
- Grid connection
- Irish language document availability

A presentation was provided by TOBIN which provided a background to the project as well as an update to the proposed project since the first meeting. In addition, some topics discussed during the first meeting were revisited. The bord noted that the full range of proposed turbine dimensions should be assessed in the EIAR and NIS. The Bord advised the following would be required in Irish as well as English: the planning application form, site notice, newspaper notice and non-technical summary of the EIAR.

The Bord confirmed on 2nd Nov. 2022 that the proposed project constitutes strategic infrastructure development and that a planning application should be made directly to the Bord (copy of this response is provided in Appendix 1-2).

1.8.2 Consultation with Statutory and Non-Statutory Bodies

An EIAR Scoping Report was prepared and submitted to relevant statutory and non-statutory bodies in June 2021 (either by email or post) for review and comment. The EIAR Scoping Report was accompanied by a cover letter introducing the proposed project and inviting comments or observations within a period of six weeks from the date of the letter. A copy of the Scoping Report, with a standard cover letter is provided in Appendix 1-3 and all responses received from consultees are provided in Appendix 1-4.

The list of consultees and record of consultation is provided in Table 1-4.

Table 1-4: List of Consultees and Record of Consultation

| Consultee | Consultation Date | Date of Response | Summary of Comments Received | Project Team Response to Comments Received |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--|---|
| Birdwatch Ireland | 21/06/21 | 25/06/21 | Requested a detailed map of the site infrastructure to view | Map was sent on 25 th June 2021. No further response. |
| Development Applications Unit | 22/06/21 | 24/08/21 | <p>Notes that the department welcomes the early consultation. They have some concern regarding sensitive ecological receptors in the area. There were three main areas of concern:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Potential impacts to Golden Plover and Merlin populations, a qualifying interest of the Derryveagh and Glendowan Mountains Special Protection Area (SPA) (site code 004039) located <3km distant. 2. Potential impacts to a significant proportion of the national population of breeding Golden Eagle (Annex I Birds Directive species). 3. Potential impacts to Salmon and potentially Fresh Water Pearl Mussel, a qualifying interest for the West of Ardara/Mass Road SAC <p>These are discussed in further detail in Chapter 6 (Biodiversity) and Chapter 7 (Ornithology).</p> | A meeting was held with an NPWS official, followed by further phone calls/emails. All comments in the response have been considered in the EIAR – See Chapter 6 (Biodiversity) and 7 (Ornithology). |
| Department of Defence | 21/06/21 and 26/10/22 | 23/06/21 and 15/11/22 | <p>First response stated that the Department of Defence does not provide observations or advice in the preplanning stage of projects (unless directed to by a planning authority) but has the right to do so during the planning stage.</p> <p>Second response made observations on the lighting delineating the wind farm, including type, intensity and direction.</p> | <p>No response required</p> <p>All comments in the second response have been considered in the EIAR – See Chapter 13 Landscape and Visual.</p> |
| Department of Transport | 21/06/21 and 26/10/22 | 07/10/21 and 15/11/22 | <p>First response stated that they were unable to provide a response.</p> <p>Second response stated they had no comments to make at that time.</p> | <p>No response required</p> <p>No response required</p> |
| Donegal Airport | 21/06/21 | 30/06/21 | As the proposed wind farm is located within 15NM of the airport, an assessment of any impacts on current and future Flight Instrument | Specialist assessment commissioned. See Chapter 11 (Material |

| Consultee | Consultation Date | Date of Response | Summary of Comments Received | Project Team Response to Comments Received |
|---|--|------------------|--|--|
| | | | Procedures should be carried out by an IAA approved company. | Assets) for further details. |
| Donegal County Council – Local Roads Department | 24/08/2022 (email) 12/01/2023 (meeting) | None | An email was issued requesting feedback on traffic count survey locations and elements of the proposed project, including the Turbine Delivery Route. A subsequent meeting was held to discuss the proposed project, particularly construction haul routes and the proposed Turbine Delivery Route. | Chapter 16 (Traffic and Transportation) Appendix 2-1 Turbine Delivery Route Assessment Drawings |
| Donegal County Council (DCC) – Community Development and Planning Service | 09/11/22 | 16/11/22 | The response sets out the context of the 29 August 2022 ‘Notice of Intention to Issue a Direction’ by the Minister for Local Government and Planning, in terms of the variation to a Wind Energy Policy Framework to the Donegal County Development Plan (DCDP) 2018 – 2024 (as varied). A period of consultation took place in September 2022 on the Minister’s Intention to Issue a Direction and a Chief Executive’s report has been prepared and issued to the Office of the Planning Regulator for further consideration. On 20 th December 2022 the Minister issue a final Direction in relation to Variation no. 2. | All comments have been considered in the EIAR, particularly in Chapter 4 (Policy, Planning and Development Context) and Chapter 13 (Landscape and Visual Impact) |
| Geological Survey Ireland | 21/06/21 | 23/07/21 | Letter encouraging the use of their datasets. Confirmation that there are no County Geological Sites near the proposed wind farm site. Also provided information on groundwater, geological mapping, geotechnical database resources, geohazards (noting presence of moderately high and high landslide susceptibility in the area of the proposed wind farm), natural resources, geochemistry (of soils, surface waters and sediments). They also requested that a copy of any reports detailing site investigations be sent to them to add to their data. | All comments have been considered in the EIAR - See Chapter 8 (Land Soils and Geology) and Chapter 9 (Hydrology and Hydrogeology). |
| Irish Aviation Authority | 21/06/21 | 28/06/21 | They state that they do not get involved in the planning process. They provide information regarding | This data will be sent to IAA before construction. |

| Consultee | Consultation Date | Date of Response | Summary of Comments Received | Project Team Response to Comments Received |
|--|-------------------|-----------------------|--|--|
| | | | notifications of erection of tall structures, as well as the information that they need for each tall object built, and lighting requirements for them. | |
| Inland Fisheries Ireland | 21/06/21 | 23/06/21 and 06/10/22 | <p>First response (2021) was generic and would be provided to any such developer rather than a detailed site specific response. This provided information on fuel storage, site drainage, erosion control, site management to minimise sedimentation, potential impacts to runoff rates should be considered, construction phase monitoring and ensuring a suitably qualified person is on site during construction to ensure mitigation is used correctly, continual assessment is carried out, works stop should any issue arise, peat reinstatement is carried out correctly and arrangements are in place to contact statutory bodies on works progression.</p> <p>The second response (2022) was site specific, discussing the watercourses and designations in the area. It did not highlight any concerns with the proposed project. It provided some guidance for the proposed project including fuel storage details, site drainage, site management to reduce sediment, and consideration of potential alterations to the site runoff.</p> | These points have been considered in the EIAR preparation. This is discussed in Chapter 6 (Biodiversity) and Chapter 9 (Hydrology and Hydrogeology). |
| Irish Water | 21/06/21 | 12/08/21 | Response states they do not have the capacity to provide individual responses, but they include information to consider in EIAR preparation. | These points have been considered in the EIAR preparation. This is discussed in Chapter 9 (Hydrology and Hydrogeology). |
| Northern and Western Regional Assembly | 21/06/21 | 24/06/21 | Advised that the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Northern and Western Region should be given due consideration. Requested a PDF version of the scoping document | PDF sent by email. |
| Met Eireann | 21/06/21 | 23/06/21 | Response which indicated a misunderstanding that they thought we were looking to purchase a | Email sent with PDF and clarifying that we are just inviting |

| Consultee | Consultation Date | Date of Response | Summary of Comments Received | Project Team Response to Comments Received |
|--|-------------------|------------------|--|--|
| | | | service from them. They requested we email a digital document. | comment rather than seeking a service. |
| Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) | 21/06/21 | 24/06/21 | Provided a response detailing best practice for EIAR preparations. | These points have been considered in the EIAR preparation. This is discussed in Chapter 16 (Traffic & Transportation). |

The following groups did not provide a response to the scoping exercise:

- An Taisce
- The Arts Council
- Bat Conservation Ireland
- CIE
- Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine
- Department of Tourism Culture Arts Gaeltacht, Sports and Media
- Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications
- Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Fáilte Ireland
- Forest Service
- The Heritage Council
- Health and Safety Authority
- Health Service Executive West
- Ireland West Airport Knock
- Irish Raptor Study Group
- Irish Trails, Sport Ireland
- Irish Wildlife Trust
- Mountaineering Ireland
- Northwest Regional Assembly
- Office of Public Works
- Sustainable Energy Authority Ireland
- Teagasc
- Údarás na Gaeltachta
- Waterways Ireland

1.8.3 Consultation with Telecommunications Providers

An extensive consultation exercise was also carried out with telecommunications providers that may have services in the area which could have the potential to be impacted by the proposed project. The list of telecommunications consultees, feedback received, and design implications are discussed in Chapter 11 (Material Assets).

1.8.4 Public Consultation

The Applicant commenced engagement with the local community during the early stages of project design with the objective of ensuring that the views and concerns of all members of the local community were considered as part of the project design and the Environmental Impact Assessment process. This engagement continued throughout the design development stage and has ultimately shaped the proposed project. Two community liaison officers (CLO) were appointed during this process to provide consistent and on-the-ground engagement with the local community. The CLO's role is to ensure project communications are distributed to the local community and to be the main point of contact for the community to discuss any queries or concerns that they might have. Contact details for the CLO (phone number and email address) were included in all project communications with the community. A Community Engagement Report has been prepared as an account of the pre-planning consultation undertaken by the Applicant (see Appendix 1-5).

The Applicant has committed to active engagement, consultation and dialogue with the local community from an early stage and is committed to continuing with this throughout the planning, construction and operational process for the proposed project.

1.9 TRANSBOUNDARY

The proposed project has been reviewed in terms of its potential to give rise to likely significant transboundary effects within another State⁸, i.e. Northern Ireland. Due to the location of the proposed project, extent of works (all works including turbine delivery routes within Donegal) and likely occurrence of significant effects (as assessed in Chapter 5 to 16 of this EIAR) no significant transboundary effects are expected.

1.10 ASSUMPTIONS AND LIMITATIONS OF ASSESSMENT

Specific assumptions relevant to environmental aspects are set out in the corresponding EIAR chapters. Some general assumptions that have been made during preparation of this EIAR are set out below:

- In undertaking cumulative assessments, consented, but as yet un-built, developments have been assumed to be built in accordance with and within the duration permitted by the associated grant of permission; and
- Information provided by third parties, including publicly available information and databases, is correct at the time of publication.

Specific limitations relevant to certain environmental aspects are set out in the corresponding EIAR Chapter. Some general limitations associated with the preparation of this EIAR are set out below:

- Baseline conditions and assessments are assumed to be accurate at the time of the physical surveys but may be subject to change, due to the nature of the surrounding environment and surrounding activities; and
- The assessment of cumulative effects from built or consented developments is partially reliant on the availability of information provided by relevant third parties. Local

⁸ Annex IV(5) of <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32014L0052&rid=1>

Authority and An Bord Pleanála public planning registers were reviewed and relied upon as part of the assessment process.

The activities carried out in researching, surveying and preparing this EIAR were carried out, in the main, between June 2021 and October 2022. COVID-19 was reported in Ireland at the end of February 2020 and measures required in accordance with the public health guidance were introduced shortly thereafter. Varying levels of restrictions were in place for approximately two years. It is noted that, while these restrictions in movement coincided with the carrying out of some surveys for this project, there are no limitations associated with the content of this EIAR as a result of COVID-19 and the associated public health measures.

1.11 LIST OF PLANNING DRAWINGS

Table 1-5 provides a list of the drawings submitted with the planning application which are referenced throughout this EIAR.

Table 1-5: List of Planning Drawings

| Drawing No. | Drawing Title |
|---------------|--|
| Site Drawings | |
| 10798-2000 | Regional Site Location Map |
| 10798-2001 | Site Location Map – Sheet 1 of 2 |
| 10798-2002 | Site Location Map – Sheet 2 of 2 |
| 10798-2003 | Site Master Plan |
| 10798-2004 | Site Location Plan – Sheet 1 of 3 |
| 10798-2005 | Site Location Plan – Sheet 2 of 3 |
| 10798-2006 | Site Location Plan – Sheet 3 of 3 |
| 10798-2025 | Proposed Temporary Site Compound & Elevations |
| 10798-2026 | Turbine Hardstand Layout |
| 10798-2027 | Turbine Details |
| 10798-2028 | Road Construction Details |
| 10798-2029 | Road Swales & Settlement Pond Details |
| 10798-2030 | Culvert Details |
| 10798-2031 | Met Mast Details |
| 10798-2032 | Proposed Self-contained Temporary Wheelwash System Details |
| 10798-2040 | Road Construction Type Locations |
| 10798-2041 | Amenity Car Park Locations and Layout |
| 10798-2042 | Vehicular Traffic Entrance details & Visibility Sightlines |
| 10798-2043 | Amenity Traffic Entrance details & Visibility Sightlines |
| 10798-2050 | Borrow Pit Plan & Sections |
| 10798-2051 | TDR Areas Master Location Plan |
| 10798-2052 | TDR Area 1 Layout Plan |
| 10798-2053 | TDR Area 2 Layout Plan |
| 10798-2054 | TDR Area 3 Layout Plan |
| 10798-2055 | TDR Area 4 Layout Plan |
| 10798-2056 | TDR Area 5 Layout Plan |
| 10798-2060 | Drainage Layout – Sheet 1 of 6 |
| 10798-2061 | Drainage Layout – Sheet 2 of 6 |
| 10798-2062 | Drainage Layout – Sheet 3 of 6 |
| 10798-2063 | Drainage Layout – Sheet 4 of 6 |

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| 10798-2064 | Drainage Layout – Sheet 5 of 6 |
| 10798-2065 | Drainage Layout – Sheet 6 of 6 |
| 10798-2070 | Site Amenity / Recreation Plan |
| Electrical Detail Drawings | |
| 05725-DR-100 | Overall Site Location Map |
| 05725-DR-101 | Site Layout (Sheet 1 of 2) |
| 05725-DR-102 | Site Layout (Sheet 2 of 2) |
| 05725-DR-107 | SW End Mast Detail |
| 05725-DR-108 | 147A – 162A Sectional Views |
| 05725-DR-109 | Tower 1491ET Earth Ring |
| 05725-DR-110 | Cloghercor SS Site Layout |
| 05725-DR-111 | Cut and Fill Area Layout Plan |
| 05725-DR-112 | Compound Sections Cut & Fill Areas |
| 05725-DR-113 | Substation Compound Elevations & Sections |
| 05725-DR-114 | Gate & Fencing Details |
| 05725-DR-115 | Site Compound Details & Access Road |
| 05725-DR-116 | 18m Lightning Monopole |
| 05725-DR-117 | 23m Telecom Pole |
| 05725-DR-118 | EirGrid Control Building – Plan/Elevations/Sections |
| 05725-DR-119 | IPP Building – Plan/Elevations/Sections |
| 05725-DR-120 | Typical Ducting Through Regional/Local Roads |
| 05725-DR-121 | Ducting Through Existing Floating Road in Peat |
| 05725-DR-124 | Ditch/Drain Crossing Detail |
| 05725-DR-125 | Typical Comms Chamber Detail |
| 05725-DR-126 | Typical Link Box Chamber Detail |
| 05725-DR-127 | Joint Bay Section Detail |
| 05725-DR-128 | Joint Bay Arrangement Detail |
| 05725-DR-129 | Culvert/Service Crossing Detail |
| 05725-DR-130 | Watermain Crossing Detail |
| 05725-DR-131 | HDD Detail – Stream Crossing No.1 |
| 05725-DR-132 | HDD Detail – Stream Crossing No.2 |
| 05725-DR-133 | Typical Transition chamber Detail |
| 05725-DR-134 | Substation Drainage Details |
| 05725-DR-135 | Rainwater Harvesting Tank |
| 05725-DR-136 | Substation Layout Plan with Vehicle Tracking |

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