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Pat Gallagher
Chief Executive
Áras An Chontae
Mount St
Mullingar
Co. Westmeath

05 October 2021

Our Ref: BRK001

Your Ref: --/--

Dear Sir/Madam,

Location: Ballagh (Mullingar Rural E.D.), Billistown, Ballynacor, and Bracklin, County Westmeath; and Coolronan, Co. Meath.

Re: (i) 9 no. wind turbines with hub height of 104 metres, a rotor diameter of 162 metres and an overall tip height of 185 metres; (ii) all associated foundations and crane hardstanding areas; (iii) all associated underground electrical and communications cabling; (iv) construction of internal wind farm access tracks and use of, and upgrades to, existing on-site agricultural/forestry tracks and existing site entrance from the L5508 local public road; (v) 1 no. site control building with a Gross Floor Area of 131 square metres; (vi) 1 no. free-standing meteorological mast with an overall height of 104 metres; (vii) 1 no. temporary construction compound; (viii) felling of 28 hectares of commercial forestry plantation to facilitate the construction of wind farm infrastructure; (ix) the storage of excavated material at 2 no. spoil deposition areas; (x) a 110 kilovolt (kV) 'loop-in/loop-out' Air-Insulated Switchgear (AIS) electrical substation, including 2 no. single-storey control buildings (with a Gross Floor Area of 622 square metres) and all associated electrical equipment, services, lighting, and an electricity storage system within a fenced compound (with a total footprint of 15,400 square metres); (xi) 6.3 kilometres of 110kV underground electricity lines accompanied by 2.5km of associated access track, 1 no. site entrance from the L5508 public road and 2 no. site entrances from the L80122 public road; (xii) 2 no. lattice-type end masts with a height of 16 metres to facilitate connection of the proposed electrical substation to the existing 110kV Mullingar-Corduff overhead electricity transmission line; (xiii) all associated and ancillary site development, excavation, construction, landscaping and reinstatement works, upgrade works to public roads along the turbine component haul route, the provision of site drainage infrastructure and environmental mitigation measures; and (xiv) A 30-year operational life from the date of commissioning of the entire proposed development.

An Environmental Impact Assessment Report and Natura Impact Statement have been prepared in respect of the proposed development and accompany this planning application.

1.0 Introduction

On behalf of our client, Bracklyn Wind Farm Limited ('the Applicant'), please find enclosed a Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) planning application for the abovementioned proposed development in accordance with Section 37E of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) ('the Act').

2.0 Pre-Application Consultation

The Applicant entered into pre-application consultations with An Bord Pleanála (Reference ABP-306261-19), pursuant to Section 37B. On 04 August 2021, An Bord Pleanála served notice of its determination that the proposed development constitutes SID and that a planning application for same must be made directly to it.

3.0 Description of the Proposed Development

The planning application seeks permission for a 10-year planning permission for a proposed development generally described as follows:-

- i. 9 no. wind turbines with hub height of 104 metres, a rotor diameter of 162 metres and an overall tip height of 185 metres;
- ii. All associated foundations and crane hardstanding areas;
- iii. All associated underground electrical and communications cabling;
- iv. Construction of internal wind farm access tracks and use of, and upgrades to, existing on-site agricultural/forestry tracks and existing site entrance from the L5508 local public road;
- v. 1 no. site control building with a Gross Floor Area of 131 square metres;
- vi. 1 no. free-standing meteorological mast with an overall height of 104 metres;
- vii. 1 no. temporary construction compound;
- viii. Felling of 28 hectares of commercial forestry plantation to facilitate the construction of wind farm infrastructure;
- ix. The storage of excavated material at 2 no. spoil deposition areas;
- x. A 110 kilovolt (kV) 'loop-in/loop-out' Air-Insulated Switchgear (AIS) electrical substation, including 2 no. single-storey control buildings (with a Gross Floor Area of 622 square metres) and all associated electrical equipment, services, lighting, and an electricity storage system within a fenced compound (with a total footprint of 15,400 square metres);
- xi. 6.3 kilometres of 110kV underground electricity lines accompanied by 2.5km of associated access track, 1 no. site entrance from the L5508 public road and 2 no. site entrances from the L80122 public road;
- xii. 2 no. lattice-type end masts with a height of 16 metres to facilitate connection of the proposed electrical substation to the existing 110kV Mullingar-Corduff overhead electricity transmission line;
- xiii. All associated and ancillary site development, excavation, construction, landscaping and reinstatement works, upgrade works to public roads along the turbine component haul route, the provision of site drainage infrastructure and environmental mitigation measures; and

xiv. A 30-year operational life from the date of commissioning of the entire proposed development.

4.0 Environmental Impact Assessment

A full Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) has been submitted with this planning application to inform the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) to be carried out by An Bord Pleanála.

The EIAR is presented as 2 no. volumes, which should be read in conjunction with each other, as follows:-

- **Volume I** comprises the main EIAR text and follows a 'grouped format' structure where each environmental factor is assessed and presented as a separate chapter. The EIA Directive prescribes the range of environmental factors which should be used to organise descriptions of the environment and likely environmental effects. These have been supplemented with additional environmental factors owing to the characteristics of the project under assessments, as follows:-
 - Chapter 1: Introduction;
 - Chapter 2: Assessment of Project Alternatives;
 - Chapter 3: Description of the Proposed Development;
 - Chapter 4: Population & Human Health;
 - Chapter 5: Biodiversity;
 - Chapter 6: Land & Soils;
 - Chapter 7: Water;
 - Chapter 8: Air Quality & Climate;
 - Chapter 9: Landscape;
 - Chapter 10: Cultural Heritage;
 - Chapter 11: Noise & Vibration;
 - Chapter 12: Shadow Flicker;
 - Chapter 13: Material Assets; and
 - Chapter 14: Interactions of the Foregoing;
- **Volume II** comprises a range of annexes, including technical data and reports, which informed the impact assessment provided in **Volume I** so as to ensure the EIAR is transparently supported by evidence; and

A Non-Technical Summary of the EIAR is provided as a separate standalone volume in order to facilitate the wider public concerned in their involvement in the statutory consultation during the planning application determination stage.

5.0 Appropriate Assessment

A Natura Impact Statement (NIS) has been prepared by Woodrow Sustainable Solutions Limited and submitted with this planning application. The NIS is presented as a separate document and submitted to inform a Habitats Directive Appropriate Assessment to be carried out by An Bord Pleanála (Council Directive 92/43/EC & Council Directive 2009/147/EC). The NIS addresses the entirety of the project, including relevant off-site and secondary developments.

The NIS concludes that the proposed development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will not have a direct, indirect or cumulative adverse effect on the conservation status or integrity of any European (Natura 2000) sites.

6.0 Planning Application Documentation

This planning application is being made directly to An Bord Pleanála under the provisions of Section 37E the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). An Bord Pleanála has instructed the Applicant to notify Westmeath County Council, as a prescribed body, of the lodgement of the planning application and to furnish you with a copy (or copies) of the planning application documentation. As agreed with the Planning Authority, 3 no. hard copies and 1 no. digital copy of the following has been provided:-

- Completed planning application form;
- Site notice;
- Copy of each newspaper notice (2 no.);
- EIA Portal Confirmation Notice;
- Planning Application Notification Letters issued to Westmeath County Council and Meath County Council;
- Planning Application Notification Letter issued to each Prescribed Body;
- Planning Application Drawings (see Schedule of Drawings attached to Planning Application Form);
- Environmental Impact Assessment Report;
 - Volume I – Assessment of Proposed Development;
 - Volume II – Technical Annexes in support of Volume I;
 - Non-Technical Summary;
- Natura Impact Statement; and
- Schedule of Mitigation Measures.

All planning application and associated documentation is also available to view at the dedicated project website www.bracklynwindfarmplanning.ie.

7.0 Planning Application Procedure

You are advised that An Bord Pleanála may, in respect of an application for permission, decide to:-

- (a) (i) grant the permission/approval; or
 - (ii) make such modifications to the proposed development as it specifies in its decision and grant permission/approval in respect of the proposed development as so modified; or
 - (iii) grant permission/approval in respect of part of the proposed development (with or without specified modifications of the foregoing kind), and any of the above decisions may be subject to or without conditions; or
- (b) Refuse to grant the permission/approval.

Submissions or observations may be made only to An Bord Pleanála, 64 Marlborough Street, Dublin 1 relating to:-

- (i) The implications of the proposed development for proper planning and



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- sustainable development;
- (ii) The likely effects on the environment of the proposed development; and
 - (iii) The likely significant effects of the proposed development on a European site, if carried out.

Any submissions or observations from Westmeath County Council must be received by An Bord Pleanála no later than 5.30p.m. on 29 November 2021.

8.0 Conclusion

This planning application is being lodged with An Bord Pleanála following a determination that the proposed development constitutes a SID. Government policy recognises that onshore wind energy, as a proven and cost effective technology in the context of Ireland's abundant wind resource, will continue to be the major contributor to Ireland's renewable electricity generation to 2030 and the generation of electricity from the proposed development will make a substantial contribution to the reduction of fossil fuel generated electricity and the abatement of greenhouse gas emissions.

The EIAR and NIS submitted with this planning application provide a comprehensive assessment of the likelihood of significant adverse environmental effects to arise as a result of the proposed development individually and in combination with other existing, permitted and proposed developments. Overall, the EIAR and NIS have demonstrated that any likely adverse environmental effects resulting from the proposed development can be managed and mitigated and that there are lasting social and environmental benefits as a result of the proposed development.

We trust that the documentation provided is in order and is sufficient for your consideration of this proposed development. Should you have any queries in relation to any of the information enclosed, please do not hesitate to contact this office.

Yours sincerely,

Galetech Energy Services

Galetech Energy Services Ltd

