

Strategic Infrastructure Development Section
An Bord Pleanála
64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1 D01 V902

12th March 2025

**Direct Application to An Bord Pleanála in respect of a Strategic Infrastructure
Development
Proposed Ballynalacken Windfarm Project, County Kilkenny.**

A chara,

On behalf of our client Rowanmere Limited, please find enclosed a Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) planning application for the proposed Ballynalacken Windfarm Project in County Kilkenny, submitted in accordance with Section 37E of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

This planning application is being made directly to An Bord Pleanála ('the Board') following the Board's determination of 4th April 2023 that the proposed development constitutes SID and that the application must be made directly to the Board (ABP ref. 312016-21).

1. SCHEDULE OF SUBMITTED DOCUMENTS TO AN BORD PLEANÁLA

Paper Copies of the complete Planning Application comprising;

1 No. paper copy of Volume A - Application Documents comprising

- Completed Application Form
- Cover Letter to An Bord Pleanála
- Newspaper Notice Kilkenny People dated 07.03.2025
- Newspaper Notice Irish Independent dated 07.03.2025
- Site Notice and Site Notices placement location Map (12 No. locations)
- Copy of Notification to Kilkenny County Council
- Schedule of prescribed bodies to whom notification of the making of the application has been sent and Sample Notice



- Letters of Consent from the Landowners
- EIA Portal Confirmation Notice. EIA Portal Identification Number 2025034

2 No. paper copies of Volume B Planning Drawings

2 No. paper copies of Volume C Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) comprising

- EIAR for Ballynalacken Windfarm Project comprising twenty chapters with relevant Figures and Appendices at the end of each Chapter
- Non-Technical Summary of the EIAR

2 No. paper copies of Volume D Environmental Management Plan

2 No. paper copies of Volume E Appropriate Assessment Report including Figures and Appendices

Electronic copies on CD of the complete Planning Application (8 No. copies)

Note: Number of copies as instructed by An Bord Pleanála.

Electronic copy on CD of Site Boundary DWG file (1 No. copy)

1.1 Site Notices

Twelve site notices have been erected in respect of this proposed development at appropriate locations, including at the main entrances to the development sites and at all relevant access points to the subject lands, ensuring they are easily visible and legible by persons using the public road. The Applicant will regularly monitor these notices to ensure they remain in place and are not defaced or rendered illegible. Should any notices be removed or damaged, the Applicant will promptly replace them to maintain visibility and compliance.

1.2 Notification to Kilkenny County Council and Prescribed Bodies

As instructed by the Board, a letter serving notice of the Planning Application to Kilkenny County Council, along with the necessary copies of the Application has been issued. The letter alerts Kilkenny County Council to the Board's requirement that the application documentation be made available for public inspection/purchase at their offices in accordance with the terms of the newspaper notice, which was provided with the letter. It was also stated in the letter that it is the Board's intention that all of the application documentation will remain available for public inspection during the currency of the application (copy Notification to Kilkenny County Council attached in Volume A).

Notification was also sent to the Prescribed Bodies as instructed by An Bord Pleanála. (Schedule of Prescribed Bodies and Sample Notice attached in Volume A).



2. SUMMARY OF THE PROPOSED BALLYNALACKEN WINDFARM DEVELOPMENT

The Ballynalacken Windfarm Project is a proposal for a twelve-turbine windfarm on the Castlecomer Plateau, between the towns of Ballyragget and Castlecomer in north Kilkenny and just south of the County Laois border at Ballinakill. The entire Ballynalacken Windfarm Project is located in County Kilkenny.

The wind turbines and associated works are proposed for a linear layout (north to south) to the west of Cromwell's Road, at locations in Byrnesgrove; Commons; Ballymartin; Ballynalacken; Ballyoskill and Loughill townlands. The proposed twelve wind turbines have a rotor diameter of 117m. Regarding hub heights, two hub heights are proposed – 84m for one of the turbines and 96.5m for all other eleven turbines, thus giving an uppermost tip height of 142.5m for one turbine and 155m for all other turbines. There will also be wind turbine associated works including foundations and hardstanding areas, windfarm roads, underground cabling within the site and eleven (11) site entrances from the public road, eight being existing entrances to farms/forestry.

An electrical control building is proposed for Ballymartin townland within the windfarm site. An 110kV windfarm substation and associated access road is proposed for a location at a lower elevation to the windfarm site, in Tinnalintan townland (Tinnalintan Substation). There will be underground cabling (4km in length) to connect the windfarm control building to the Tinnalintan Substation. It is proposed to connect Ballynalacken Windfarm to the National Grid at the existing EirGrid Ballyragget Substation on the Ballinakill Road, by 2km of underground grid connection cabling from the Tinnalintan Substation to the Ballyragget Substation.

Ancillary works to facilitate the development will include a 30m meteorological mast; an 18m telecoms relay pole; felling of circa 21 hectares of commercial forestry plantation; site drainage network and sediment control systems; three (3) temporary construction compounds; two (2) temporary borrow pits; long-term and temporary deposition areas for overburden and landscaping and reinstatement work. A new viewing/picnic area with parking for three (3) cars, is proposed for a location off Cromwell's Road, looking west to the Slieve Bloom mountains. This will be created just off the road at Site Entrance #7 and will be provided with cultural, ecological and windfarm information boards and a pedestrian entrance onto the windfarm.

There will be road widening works required in the vicinity of the windfarm site – temporary widening at two junctions in Ballymartin townland and permanent road widening by circa. 1 meter on the L5845, L5840 and the L5846 roads - adjacent to the windfarm site. Also, a temporary hardcore Turbine Blade Transfer area, adjacent to the Kilkenny/Castlecomer road (N78) in Damerstown West townland is proposed. This area will be used to transfer turbine blades onto a specialist blade lifter trailer which will facilitate transporting the turbine blades through Castlecomer, to the site.

A 10-year planning permission is being applied for in respect of this proposed development. A 10-year planning permission is considered appropriate for a development of this nature and scale so as to



ensure all required supplementary statutory consents and grid connections can be put in place. The operational lifetime of the proposed development is 35-years from the date of commissioning.

The Ballynalacken turbines are predicted to generate 140million kilowatt hours of renewable electricity every year, which will be transported to the electricity grid in the area. The generation of this amount of electricity will offset 35,700 tonnes of CO₂e per annum that would otherwise be emitted if the electricity generated by the Ballynalacken turbines, was instead generated by gas, coal and oil. There will be enough renewable electricity generated to supply circa 31,000 homes. The local area will benefit through the Community Benefit Fund which is predicted to be €280,000 per annum to be distributed locally through near neighbour payments and support of local clubs, tourism and renewable energy initiatives. County Kilkenny will also benefit - the expected contribution of commercial rates to the local authority area of County Kilkenny is circa €800,000 per annum.

3. POLICY CONTEXT OVERVIEW

Kilkenny City and County Development Plan 2021-2027 is supportive of climate action and development of renewable resources including wind energy, in suitable locations in the County. The proposed development location is identified as a suitable location for wind energy development in the Wind Energy Development Strategy for the County. The developer has also identified the site as suitable for the development of a windfarm due to elevation and scale, absence of EU Designated Sites, prospect of achieving an adequate separation distance from the nearest houses and national grid connection possibilities.

The Proposed Ballynalacken Windfarm Project of over 50MW installed capacity, will contribute positively to the increasing imperative to ameliorate climate change by generating electricity without polluting greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The proposed development is compatible with European and National Policy on the de-carbonisation of the electricity sector as part of Climate Action imperatives. The proposal is also compatible with European and National policy to develop indigenous, renewable sources of electricity generation in the context of security of supply independent of gas supply, particularly from Russia and other fossil fuel suppliers outside of the EU area.

4. CONCLUSION

I trust that the documentation provided is in order and is sufficient for your consideration of the proposed Ballynalacken Windfarm development. Should you have any queries in relation to any of the information enclosed, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned at pk@ecopower.ie.

Yours sincerely

Philomena Kenealy, Director Rowanmere Limited
Ballynalacken Windfarm Project Manager Ecopower Developments Limited

*Cover Letter to An Bord Pleanála on submission of SID Planning Application for Ballynalacken Windfarm
County Kilkenny*