



Cush Wind Farm
Phase II

Environmental Impact Assessment Report

Annex 1.2: Record of Pre- Planning Meeting

Cush Wind Limited

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Cush Wind Farm
Meeting with Offaly County Council
Meeting Minutes

Project	Cush Wind Farm – 3 Turbine Extension		
Client	Cush Wind Limited		
Meeting No.	1		
Location	Microsoft Teams		
Date	16 February 2026	Time	11:40am – 12:40pm
Attendees	James Carville (JCA)		Cush Wind Limited
	Declan Owens (DO)		GES
	James Condron (JCO)		Offaly County Council
Prepared by	Declan Owens		
Agenda Item	Minutes		
1.0	Introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none">DO introduced himself and JCA.DO shared brief GES presentation on the proposed development.		
2.0	Proposed Development <ul style="list-style-type: none">DO introduced the proposed development, set out its general location and the characteristics of the site, including land cover.DO identified the various elements of the proposed development including 3 no. turbines, foundations, hardstands, cabling, spoil deposition, and drainage and rehabilitation works. DO set out intended turbine component haul route.DO advised that the proposed development would comprise an extension to the 8 turbine wind farm (Cush Wind Farm Phase I) permitted under ABP-318816-24.JCO advised that any comments received during scoping should be considered in the assessments carried out for the proposed development, including where they relate to roads (TII).DO outlined that the applicant would be seeking design flexibility in turbine dimensions, from OCC.		
3.0	Site Selection Process <ul style="list-style-type: none">DO outlined the rationale for the selection of the site for development		

	<p>including local planning policy ('Open for Consideration') and the general absence of fundamental environmental constraints.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally achievable visual-amenity setback (<i>Draft Revised Wind Energy Development Guidelines 2019</i>) of 4-times tip for 'non-involved' dwellings. • The availability of generous setbacks reduces likelihood of significant noise/shadow/visual amenity effects. • General ease of access. • Sufficient wind speeds. • DO advised that GES and the wider EIAR team of consultants had extensive experience of the site and had developed a robust analysis of site constraints.
4.0	<p>Proposed Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DO advised that whilst the proposed development, which will be submitted to OCC, will comprise 3 x turbines, the wider 'project' will include a proposed 110kv substation and grid connection (currently subject to a Pre-App Consultation request to the Commission). • DO set out that the project in its entirety would be assessed in the EIAR. • JCO noted that this approach should be acceptable, provided the 8 turbine permitted wind farm is considered fully in a cumulative sense. JCO noted the other wind energy developments in close proximity. • DO outlined that the developer intends on applying to alter the terms of the permitted Cush Wind Farm (Phase I) to allow for the same design flexibility in turbine dimensions.
5.0	<p>Environmental Scoping</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation with Government Departments, relevant bodies, authorities, and service providers. • Environmental Constraints Analysis by specialist environmental consultants (biodiversity, land and soils, water, landscape, cultural heritage, noise, vibration and shadow flicker, and material assets).
6.0	<p>Emerging Design</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DO noted no fundamental constraints identified to date and that the project design has been adapted/evolved to account for any localised constraints. • A number of suitable turbine models would be suitable for the subject site – hence the requirement to obtain design flexibility. Electrical output to remain within 6.1mw – 7.2mw per turbine and thus outside of SID thresholds. • DO outlined that it is the intention of the applicant to request a formal scoping opinion from OCC in order to satisfactorily discharge the duty imposed by new RED III requirements, as of May 01st.
7.0	<p>Proposed Next Steps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DO advanced that the applicant intends to continue with evaluation of environmental constraints as well as public consultation – remote, door to door, and project website updated. • JCO outlined that the applicant should look at how neighbouring developers are initiating/aiding schemes to allow for solar panels to be installed in neighbouring dwelling houses. JCA agreed to discuss with Cush Liaison Officer. • DO identified that there were two key factors for discussion, including: • 1) The request for design flexibility, and

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2) the request for formal scoping opinion from OCC.
8.0	<p>Open Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> JCO advised that the scoping request should be made to OCC and that could occur at any time. DO agreed to submit a request for formal scoping in the coming days and clarified its importance with respect to the incoming RED III requirements on mandatory scoping to have occurred. JCO advised that where design flexibility was concerned, the applicant would need to first pay the required fee. JCO directed the applicant to review PL11.2023 Circular letter. DO asked about the process of design flexibility and JCO advanced that the first step was the submission of a Form No. 20, along with any associated information, and that a meeting would be held after that. An opinion would issue after that had taken place and OCC were happy they had sufficient information to make a decision. JCO outlined that RED III should be an important consideration and to ensure the PA had sufficient information to consider the application. JCO advised that some applicants, recently, had fallen foul of RED III requirements particularly around validation issues and the notices in particular. JCO advised on issues to consider when preparing the proposed development description and how it is set out on the site notice and newspaper notices (RED III key differences). JCO also noted that the 52 week decision period under RED III did not include the 4 week appeal period. JCO enquired about the provision of amenity trail/s within the site and noted that the topic had previously been discussed with colleagues (Andrew Murray) in OCC. JCA outlined that permission from the landowner had not been forthcoming for the inclusion of amenity trails, but that it was not completely restricted/prevented either. JCA outlined that continued engagement would take place between the land owner and CWL in order to try and advance this. JCA outlined that it unfortunately could not be included within the proposed development. JCO noted JCA comments and advised he would reach out to Andrew Murray to discuss. JCO noted that consideration should be given to any/all development which has occurred on the site which requires planning permission. JCO advised that planning permission should be obtained for anything which does not constitute exempted development. JCA noted the advice but advised that this should not be an issue on the proposed development site. JCO noted a bond would be required roads and reinstatement works. JCO noted the presence of the ILOFAR station to the proposed development site and acknowledged that ILOFAR had recently been added to a tentative list for UNESCO World Heritage Site inclusion. JCO advised that all assessments should be cognisant of the ILOFAR station at Birr Castle. JCO noted that TII comments on the previously permitted Cush Wind Farm Phase I should be considered when assessing the proposed development. With respect to landscape and visual impact JCO noted that key heritage views from Birr should be considered, as well as view from the

	<p>Roscrea Road coming into Birr, with the Church Spires etc visible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• JCO noted that the mapping used for housing should be updated in line with all available resources, in order to ensure that all receptors are satisfactorily considered in key assessments, including shadow flicker and noise in particular. A post construction Noise Monitoring Programme should also be prepared.
9.0	<p>Closing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• JCA and DO once again thanked JCO for facilitating the meeting and the meeting was brought to a close.