



Uimhir Thagarta Uathúil: KCC-C55-421

Údar: Bord na Móna

Stádas: Submitted

Aighneacht:

Bord na Móna submission_Future Use of the Peatlands

Comhairliúchán:

Draft Kildare County Development Plan 2023 - 2029

7 - Energy & Communications

Caibidil: Volume 1 - chapters » 7 - Energy & Communications

Ábhair: communication

7.13.1 Data Centres & Energy Supply – Comments on EC P18

Bord na Móna welcomes this Policy and as part of the land transition programme, Bord na Móna is continually reviewing its property strategy to determine future industrial uses for the holdings. Whilst buildings such as workshops and stores comprise a small portion of the holding, these buildings present opportunities for the re-purposing of these facilities for new sustainable industries. The company has repurposed its former briquette production facility in Littleton in County Tipperary as a plastics recycling facility supporting 40 new jobs. More opportunities will exist for more of our facilities and in this regard.

Appendix 2 Wind Energy Strategy

Following review of the Draft Wind Energy Strategy (WES) it is noted Bord na Móna lands in the west of County Kildare have been designated as “Open to Consideration” as opposed to “Acceptable in Principle” for wind energy development. While we welcome the inclusion of our lands in the strategy, it is not entirely clear from the document how particular features (i.e. high amenity areas, ecological and landscape sensitivities, proximity to settlements and other technical considerations) have been considered, and whether any buffers/setbacks are being applied, in order to designate lands into the three zones outlined in the WES.

It is our view that the Wind Energy Strategy should be consistent with the aforementioned National Planning Framework (Project Ireland 2040) and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midland Region which exclusively calls out the suitability of “the extensive tracts of publicly owned peat extraction areas” for renewable energy by stating the following:

“Harnessing the potential of the region in renewable energy terms across the technological spectrum from wind and solar to biomass and, where applicable, wave energy, focusing in particular on the extensive tracts of publicly owned peat extraction areas in order to enable a managed transition of the local economies of such areas in gaining the economic benefits of greener energy.” [National Planning Framework, Section 3.2, pg. 35]

And

“Local authorities should harness the potential of renewable energy in the Region across the technological spectrum from wind and solar to biomass and, where applicable, wave energy, focusing in particular on the extensive tracts of publicly owned peat extraction areas in order to enable a managed transition of the local economies of such areas in gaining the economic benefits of greener energy”. [RSES, Section 7.9, pg 179]

We therefore encourage Kildare County Council to recognise and support the importance that cutaway bogs have in terms of renewable energy generation specifically in Chapter 7 of the Draft Plan and in the WES.

The WES is a strategic document and at that level it is appropriate to apply high level assumptions. However, from our experience with developing wind energy projects on our bogs and the associated detailed environmental reports and assessments that are required, it is evident that often areas that have been identified at a high level as not being suitable/or being less suitable for wind energy development which would, at a site-specific level, be considered suitable. This is also evident in the reverse. In this context, careful consideration needs to be given to the zoning of areas for renewable energy development going forward, so as not to constrain out any areas which may have renewable energy potential, particularly for wind generation. Such an approach will assist developers in bringing projects forward to contribute towards the 80% target for renewable energy production out to 2030.

Documents Attached: Níl