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CH 11.9, Section 11.7.12, Renewable Energy Objectives (pg.217)

Chapter: Volume One - Written Statement» 11. Climate Action & Renewable
Energy

SSE welcomes this amendment. Mayo's wind energy potential is well documented as a key strength in regional and local development strategies. SSE strongly welcomes the increase of this target from the 100MW minimum specified in the Draft CDP to 600MW, which better reflects the county's potential as a producer of renewable energy. It is also very welcome that the 600MW target is specified as 'the minimum' to be achieved. As it currently stands, SSE views it as quite probable that this 600MW target could be achieved in the earlier years of the CDP's period of applicability given the range of wind farm proposals in development for the county. It is therefore important that reaching this target continues to be seen as the very basic threshold of acceptable renewable energy production for the lifetime of the CDP rather than an aspirational goal given the ever-greater efficiencies resulting from continued improvements in renewable energy generation technologies.

The continuing evolution of renewable energy technology, particularly wind energy infrastructure, has meant that modern commercial turbines can now be installed in fewer numbers, albeit more spaced out, due to improved technological efficiencies in generating wind energy while also minimising environmental impacts. For example, two Strategic Infrastructural Development scale wind farms would easily generate and exceed the proposed 100MW target. Those turbines currently on the market can have a generating capacity above 5MW with most new turbines currently providing capacity within the 5 – 7MW range.

Eliminating current barriers to more efficient generation and transmission of renewable generated electricity, e.g., constraints on the transmission network, in combination with on-going technological advances will ultimately raise the hypothetical ceiling for wind-generated electricity generation even further. Therefore, it is important that the CDP accounts for that and incorporates a sufficient level of ambition to promote the achievement of the county's full potential as a leading producer of wind energy into the future.

As set out within the context of our response on page 5 above to proposed amendment *CH 7.1, Section 7.1, Strategic Aim (pg.131)*, network development could help to further unlock renewables potential across the county should a sufficiently ambitious approach be taken to grid development at local, regional and national level.

With such positive indicators of Mayo's potential to significantly increase its renewable energy output, it is positive to see the local authority adopt a more ambitious stance than set out in the original draft CDP. SSE therefore welcomes this amendment, particularly its acknowledgement that this target is to be seen as a *minimum* threshold to be reached rather than a top-level target to be aspired to.

Documents Attached: No