



Forward Planning, Mayo County Council,
Aras an Chontae,
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Email: office@WindEnergyIreland.com

26th April 2022

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Material Alterations to Draft Mayo Development Plan 2021-2027

Introduction

Wind Energy Ireland (WEI) (formerly Irish Wind energy Association) welcomes the opportunity to make this submission on the Material Alterations to Draft Mayo Development Plan 2021-2027 (draft Plan).

WEI would like to make a few brief comments on the proposed Material Amendments in relation to wind energy. WEI is the representative body for the Irish wind industry, working to promote wind energy as an essential, economical, and environmentally friendly part of the country's low-carbon energy future. We are Ireland's largest renewable energy organisation with more than 150 members who have come together to plan, build, operate and support the development of the country's chief renewable energy resource.

The criticality of onshore wind in Ireland's energy mix is apparent when the near-term trajectories in the Clean Energy Package Governance Regulation (2018) are considered. This requires all member states to submit National Energy and Climate Plans (NECP) setting out how each member state will contribute to the decarbonisation objectives of the European Union.

Following on from the 2019 Climate Action Plan, the Government published the National Development Plan 2021 – 2030 (NDP) on the 4th of October 2021 which increases Ireland's renewable electricity target to 80% by 2030 from the previous target of 70%. To achieve this **new 80% target**, the NDP earmarks a target of 5GW offshore wind and **a doubling of existing onshore wind from circa 4GW (today) to 8GW by 2030, signalling onshore wind as crucial in the roadmap to decarbonization. This increase to 80% should serve as a key policy indicator for onshore wind development going forward.**

1 Material Amendment CH 11.9

“REO: To support and facilitate the achievement of the minimum renewable energy target of 600MW for County Mayo over the plan, and to review/revise this target to ensure

consistency with any future renewable energy strategies for the Northern and Western Region.”

The proposed material CH 11.9 details a new Renewable Energy Target of 600 MW in Section 11.7.12. WEI is supportive of the objective that the county council has put forward within the lifetime of the next draft plan. Also as noted in the introduction the Government has set a new target of 80% renewable electricity by 2030. For us to reach these targets we need more counties to make such clear commitments to increasing their installed wind energy capacities.

2 Material Amendment CH 11 and 11.5

“**REO 7** To commence the review/~~amend~~ of the Mayo County Renewable Energy Strategy 2011-2022 within one year of adopting this plan and update as required in accordance with future legislative guidelines.”

“**REO 7:** To review/amend the Mayo County Renewable Energy Strategy 2011-2022 within one year of plan adoption in accordance with future legislative guidelines and consistency with the provisions of RPO 4.16 and RPO 5.2(b) of the RSES, 2020-2032.”

The proposed material CH 11 and 11.5 details the aim to review Mayo’s Renewable Energy Strategy. WEI is supportive of the county council’s decision to commit to commence the review of their renewable energy strategy within 12 months of the new plan’s adoption, rather than over the life of the next plan. The urgency to secure Ireland’s energy generation has been starkly amplified with the ongoing energy supply risks throughout Europe because of the continued conflict in Ukraine. WEI believe this amendment the right decision given how energy policy can shift dramatically in short time periods. Every county development plan should have review flexibility such as this built into them as a best practice standard.

Conclusion

The need to increase our renewable generation is clear. Onshore wind farm development is a proven technology that can deliver at pace and scale and is critical to achieving national targets and particularly targets over the six-year lifetime of the draft Plan. It is vital that we increase Ireland’s renewable energy capacity and decarbonize the energy sector. Thank you for providing an opportunity to consult on the proposed amendments.

Yours sincerely,

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Senior Policy Analyst



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