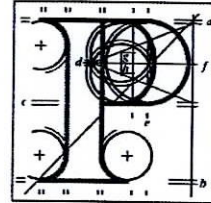


**Our Case Number:** ABP-316051-23

**Planning Authority Reference Number:**



**An  
Bord  
Pleanála**

Colm Geraghty and Suzanne Carter  
Baskin Low  
Drumraney  
Athlone  
Co. Westmeath

**Date:** 09 May 2023

**Re:** Renewable energy development comprising 9 no. wind turbines and associated infrastructure.  
Umma More and adjacent townlands, County Westmeath.

Dear Sir / Madam,

An Bord Pleanála has received your observation or submission in relation to the case mentioned above and will take it into consideration in its determination of the matter. Please accept this letter as a receipt for the fee of €50 that you have paid.

Please be advised that copies of all submissions / observations received in relation to the application will be made available for public inspection at the offices of the Local Authority and at the offices of An Bord Pleanála when they have been processed by the Board.

For further information on this case please access our website at [www.pleanala.ie](http://www.pleanala.ie) and input the 6-digit case number into the search box. This number is shown on the top of this letter (for example: 303000).

Yours faithfully,

Niamh Thornton  
Executive Officer  
Direct Line: 01-8737247

BL50A

**Teil**  
**Glaao Áitiúil**  
**Facs**  
**Láithreán Gréasáin**  
**Ríomhphost**

**Tel**  
**LoCall**  
**Fax**  
**Website**  
**Email**

(01) 858 8100  
1890 275 175  
(01) 872 2684  
[www.pleanala.ie](http://www.pleanala.ie)  
[bord@pleanala.ie](mailto:bord@pleanala.ie)

64 Sráid Maoilbhríde 64 Marlborough Street  
Baile Átha Cliath 1 Dublin 1  
D01 V902 D01 V902

**Observation to An Bord Pleanála : ABP Case Reference: 316051**

**Proposed development name: Ummamore Renewable Energy Development / Ummamore Wind Farm**

**Observation From:**

**Colm Geraghty & Suzanne Carter**

**Baskin Low, Drumraney, Athlone, Co Westmeath.**



Our family home is located within the 1km-2km Setback area per the maps submitted as part of this planning permission application. Our home is labelled as dwelling no. 121 in the 'Proposed Development Layout' contained in EIA Report Appendix 2-2 Community Report (pg20).

We wish to raise concerns on a number of different aspects of the proposed development of such a large scale windfarm in this rural agricultural setting.

This development will have an adverse impact on the use, enjoyment and residential amenity of our home due to the proximity to the proposed large scale development.

### **Visual disturbance**

The proposal to construct 9 x 185m high wind turbines is a proposal for industrial scale infrastructure development.

These turbines, at such a large scale, will completely dominate the local landscape and skyline. The visual impact will be severe and intrusive.

We regularly walk from our home in Baskin Low on the L5363 towards Baskin High and Ardboro. We enjoy the scenic panoramic views from the top of the hill on L5363 and down the hill towards Baskin High. At this location we see all the way across a wide expanse of flat agricultural landscape towards Rosemount Hill at Coolatore (east and south east direction). The proposed development of the 9 turbines would dominate this landscape, with all 9 turbines visible from this location. The proposed development would be out of character with the geographical features of the area, i.e. low lying, relatively flat, agricultural land. The development would result in a prominent, obtrusive feature on the horizon at this location, permanently physically scarring the landscape.

The EIA Report accompanying the planning application, specifically in Volume 2 Photo Montage Booklet, illustrates the visual disturbance that will occur in a large number of diverse locations. However, the EIA Report does not contain a photo montage from the visually sensitive location we have referred to in the previous paragraph, from the L5363 in Baskin Low and down the hill towards Baskin High.

The EIA Report does not contain a photo montage from the historically significant location of the Hill of Uisneach. This is a significant omission. The wire frame images produced, in the absence of a photo montage, produce images that are not clear like a photo montage would be. The proposed turbines will be visible from the Hill of Uisneach. It is inappropriate and unacceptable to significantly alter the view from this landmark historic monument site with industrial scale wind turbines as proposed.

### **Construction nuisance**

Our home is located on the proposed route for use during the construction of the development if the development is approved and goes ahead. The proposal includes excavation of an agricultural field at the junction of the R390 and L5363 in Baskin Low. The field in question is located within 100m of our property. The excavation would be required to build a temporary road for the construction phase. The land in question is in an elevated position above our property. During the construction phase, there will inevitably be significant construction noise, construction traffic noise, vibration, dirt and dust. As our house is close



to this junction (R390/L5363) both this excavation and the construction traffic that would follow will have an adverse impact on our home. During this construction phase we will lose the amenity of daily walks and walking our pet dog on the previously quiet and safe L5363.

There are existing flooding issues around the R390/L5363 junction (Baskin Low) in wet weather, where excess rain water drains down the hill on the L5363 towards the R390. There is existing drainage infrastructure underground on the L5363, which then crosses under the R390 and drains through an underground pipe on our property. We are concerned that the proposed development of a new temporary road will negatively impact on the existing drainage infrastructure on the R390 and L5363. This could lead to an overload of the existing underground drainage infrastructure and consequently flooding on the R390 and in our property.

### **Noise**

The development will produce new, unnatural and ongoing noise in an otherwise quiet, rural agricultural setting where there are no such levels of noise at the current time. Some intermittent low level noise is currently encountered during the day time from road traffic and standard agricultural machinery. We are concerned with the health impact this may have on our family including sleep disturbance and the health consequences thereof. The current Irish planning guidelines for wind turbine developments refer to an outdated UK noise assessment model, dating from 1996. This model is not fit for purpose in the current day due to the vast increase in turbine size, scale and power since that model was issued in 1996.

### **Size and scale**

The proposed site is located in an area in rural Co. Westmeath that is designated as a 'low wind' area in the Westmeath County Development Plan. The SEAI Wind Atlas reports low average wind speeds for the proposed site. The planning application refers to the low wind capacity of the proposed site. It is not appropriate to consider this site suitable for such a large scale wind farm development in this low wind area.

9 turbines are proposed, each with a tip height of 185m, a rotor blade diameter of 162m and hub height of 104m. Such turbines would be amongst the largest that it is possible to build at the current time in Ireland. Such enormous turbine structures, and the infrastructure required to construct and maintain those structures, is completely out of place in this rural agricultural setting.

The 'Proposed Development Layout' contained in EIA Report Appendix 2-2 Community Report (pg20) shows there are approximately 160 homes within the 2 km setback from the site of the proposed development. Such industrial scale development is inappropriate so close to so many homes.

### **Screening**

The dominant variety of tree in our local area is the Ash tree. With the rapid onset of Ash Die Back Disease in Ireland, the screening these trees could provide, as referenced in the EIA report that accompanied the planning application, will not in fact exist in the short to medium term.

### **Nature and biodiversity**

The EIA Report in this application lists a broad range of local wildlife (birds, badgers, bats and other wildlife) that will be impacted by the development. The site is located along the Dungolman River. The development will adversely impact on nature and biodiversity in the immediate and surrounding areas. Not only will extremely large foundations for the turbines be necessary but removal of existing hedgerows and trees and construction of significant distance of roadways will be required on land that is currently used for agricultural purposes. For example, in Section 1.4 of the EIA Report, reference is made to the upgrading of approximately 1.1km of existing roadways/tracks and approximately 7.6km of new access road to be constructed.

There is emphasis in the Climate Action Plan 2023 on protection, preserving and enhancing biodiversity as part of the strategy for dealing with climate change. The proposed development will fly in the face of that, damaging and destroying local nature and biodiversity in the area.