Our Case Number: ABP-316051-23

Planning Authority Reference Number:

An Bord Pleanála

Danny Sheerin
Dungolman
Ballymore
Mullingar
Co. Westmeath
Co. Westmeath

Date: 25 April 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 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,

pp. Kevin McGettigan
Administrative Assistant
Direct Line: 01-8737263

BL50A

Teil	**Tel**	(01) 858 8100
Glao Áitiúil	**LoCall**	1890 275 175
Facs	**Fax**	(01) 872 2684
Láithreán Gréasáin	**Website**	www.pleanala.ie
Ríomhphost	**Email**	bord@pleanala.ie

64 Sráid Maoilbhríde
Baile Átha Cliath 1
D01 V902

64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1
D01 V902

The Secretary,
An Bord Pleanala,
64 Marlborough Street,
Dublin 1.
D01V902.
18/04/2023

Observation on Umma More Wind Farm. Case Ref. 316051.

Dear Sir/Madam,

I wish to make the following observations on the proposal by Umma More Ltd/MKO (the Applicant) to build a wind farm consisting of 9 turbines of height 185 metres in South Westmeath to be known as the Ummamore Renewable Energy Development (the Development).

Shadow Flicker

I Danny Sheerin am the registered owner of Folio No. WH12047 in the townland of Dungolman and Barony of Rathconrath with a full house address of Dungolman, Ballymore, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath. N91 R978. I wish to confirm to An Bord Pleanála that I am not and do not intend to become a participating property in this Development. I am not one of the eighteen participating landowners listed in the relevant planning application and I have not entered into any agreements of any kind whatsoever with the applicant. I do not support the proposed Development.

In the Shadow Flicker Assessment section of the application (EIAR, Chapter 5, Table 5-9) my family home is listed as H13 in the relevant Table. You can imagine my surprise when I scrolled down the page to find that the Applicant had listed my home as a 'participating property'. I have never spoken to any representatives from Enerco Energy or MKO in my life. I do not understand how they could make such an obvious mistake.

What is even more alarming for my family and I is that because they have listed our property as a participating property our home is noted as not requiring a Mitigation Strategy against shadow flicker' According to the Table, the Applicant has calculated that shadow flicker from three turbines (T1, T2 and T3) could impact my home for up to 49 minutes a day.

This oversight/error on behalf of the Applicant cannot be overlooked by the Board. It has caused me undue stress with the prospect of this daily shadow flicker going unchecked by the Applicant because they seem to mistakenly believe that I am in someway participating in their development. Such an oversight surely renders this shadow flicker assessment not fit for purpose.

If the Applicant can make such a clear and obvious error like this then how many other properties have been incorrectly labelled and will therefore, according to the Applicant, not require a mitigation strategy?

Given the Applicant's history in the area (including the distribution of leaflets in 2019 which contained information that was proven to be untrue by the ASAI and the fact that their wind measuring mast fell to the ground on two occasions) how many other mistakes and errors have they made throughout this application? How many more people and homes will be impacted by their shoddy workmanship?

Beyond the development, I consider this to be obvious defamation of my character by the Applicant. While my name is not published, any local person that can read a map is fully aware of where I live.

Therefore, much to my embarrassment, they now believe that I have some role to play in consenting to this development.

In fact, since the plans were published some weeks ago my participation has been questioned on multiple occasions by local people who were astonished to believe that I would consent to this development in such close proximity to my family home. Not only has my character been questioned but my reputation locally has been damaged as I have had to repeatedly explain to people who have seen the map that I have no role to play in this development.

Noise:

I also believe that the Applicant has done a poor job in carrying out their noise assessments. On any given day I can hear the machinery and work being carried out within the quarry that is situated just over 200 metres from my home. To potentially have noise emitting from 9 turbines surrounding two sides of my family home is beyond alarming for me and my family.

When reading the Applicant's chapter on noise I was somewhat pleased to see that the Environmental Health Service had recommended in the EIAR Ch 11 Noise & Vibration pg.5 that 'The potential cumulative effects of other windfarms, industry, quarrying etc in the vicinity of the development should be assessed as part of the noise survey. All mitigation measures for the control of noise shall be described.'

However, what I went on to read throughout the rest of the chapter is nothing short of unbelievable.

On p. 26 of the same chapter the applicant states:

'In respect to the quarry that is located adjacent to the Wind Farm Site at its north-eastern boundary, there is the potential for cumulative effects to occur due to the concurrent operation of Proposed Development and the nearby quarry. It is not appropriate to consider the cumulative impacts in relation to the limits set in accordance with the Guidelines as they are specific to wind turbine noise. Conversely it is not appropriate to consider wind turbine noise in the context of any noise and vibration limits set for the quarry.'

They clearly admit here that there is potential for cumulative effects from the combined forces. Noise is noise whether it comes from wind turbines or quarry work and I am concerned that the Applicant has decided to overlook this recommendation from the Environmental Health Service. What is the purpose of scoping and scoping responses if the applicant decides to pick and choose what they want to do and what they want to ignore?

Not only do I feel that the shadow flicker assessment is not fit for purpose but I firmly believe that this noise assessment does not meet the standards required for such a massive development which has the potential to make my home and its immediate surroundings virtually uninhabitable.

Conclusion:

This rushed and destructive windfarm proposal involves drastic overdevelopment of a low-lying river plain. The Applicant has turned large swathes of the community against them as a result of their actions and tactics since 2019. One gets the impression that the Applicant has forced in a ninth turbine just so that they could exceed the 50 MW capacity required for SID consideration. Both the noise & vibration and the shadow flicker assessments are visibly shoddy work and contain errors and omissions that leads one to believe that this application should be thrown out by the Board.

This development should not only be about reaching Ireland's climate targets but it should also enhance and protect the community around it. Having gone through the items that the Applicant has posted to me and looked at some of the planning application I do not believe that this development will enhance the community and the Applicant most certainly will not go out of their way to protect the people and homes around the development from adverse side effects. Simply put, we do not trust them.

Turbines of such a height will completely dominate this rural countryside for decades to come. It would cause noise levels around my home that may just become unbearable, it would destroy the local landscape and it would in no way be in accordance with the objectives of the Westmeath County Development Plan.

The Wind Energy Development Guidelines do not appear to recommend the construction of wind farms of large spatial extent and does not envisage tall wind turbines within areas considered to be hilly and flat farmland.

Taking all of the above factors into consideration, this development would appear to be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of this area.

Yours sincerely,

Danny Sheerin.
Dungolman,
Ballymore,
Mullingar,
Co. Westmeath.