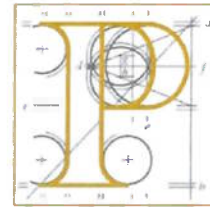


**Our Case Number:** ABP-317560-23



An  
Bord  
Pleanála

Danny and Sandra Beardshall  
'The Haggard'  
Carraun  
Corballa  
Co. Sligo  
F26XA30

**Date:** 22 January 2024

**Re:** Proposed windfarm development including 13 no. wind turbines in Bunnyconnellan, Co. Mayo and hydrogen plant in Castleconnor, Co. Sligo.  
Carrowleagh, Bunnyconnellan, Co. Mayo and Curraun, Castleconnor, Co. Sligo.

Dear Sir / Madam,

An Bord Pleanála has received your submission in relation to the above mentioned proposed development and will take it into consideration in its determination of the matter.

The Board will revert to you in due course in respect of this matter.

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.

More detailed information in relation to strategic infrastructure development can be viewed on the Board's website: [www.pleanala.ie](http://www.pleanala.ie).

If you have any queries in the meantime, please contact the undersigned officer of the Board or email [sids@pleanala.ie](mailto:sids@pleanala.ie) quoting the above mentioned An Bord Pleanála reference number in any correspondence with the Board.

Yours faithfully,

Lauren Murphy  
Executive Officer  
Direct Line: 01-8737275

PA09

Teil	Tel	(01) 858 8100
Glaó Áitiúil	LoCall	1800 275 175
Facs	Fax	(01) 872 2684
Láithreán Gréasáin	Website	<a href="http://www.pleanala.ie">www.pleanala.ie</a>
Ríomhphost	Email	<a href="mailto:bord@pleanala.ie">bord@pleanala.ie</a>

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

**From:** Bord <bord@pleanala.ie>  
**Sent on:** Thursday, January 18, 2024 4:05:35 PM  
**To:** SIDS <sids@pleanala.ie>  
**Subject:** FW: CASE# PA16.317560 - Windfarm Development Bunnyconnellan, Co Mayo & Hydrogen Plant, Castleconnor, Co Sligo  
**Attachments:** Mercury Renewables PA16.317560.docx (30.41 KB), Mercury Renewables PA16.317560.pdf (387.59 KB)

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**From:** Danny Beardshall <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 18, 2024 3:57 PM  
**To:** Bord <bord@pleanala.ie>  
**Subject:** CASE# PA16.317560 - Windfarm Development Bunnyconnellan, Co Mayo & Hydrogen Plant, Castleconnor, Co Sligo

Please find enclosed Document - See Att.

I wish to request an oral hearing regarding this application.

Regards

Danny Beardshall

**Submitted By:- Daniel & Sandra Beardshall & Family.**  
**The Haggard, Carraun, Corballa, Co. Sligo F26XA30**

**My wife and I have spent our working lives building our home, family and life in this area. For the past 25 years of constantly working and raising 3 children, our financial decisions have been governed by the constraints of the monthly repayments of a huge mortgage. One of us is semi-retired with the other planning retirement in a few years, and we cannot let our lives and properties be affected by what we deem a premature, misplaced, hastily planned industrial development in our rural homeland to produce a very dangerous volatile chemical with such proximity to our home.**

**Communication.**

Mercury Renewables have stated that they went 'above and beyond' the terms of communicating with the locality, this is not the case. The one or two photocopied letters we received from Mercury Renewables were delivered by hand to our outside mailbox and they did not strike us as being very professionally done, at first we thought they were junk mail. No liaison officer or representative of Mercury Renewables had any meeting or introduction during these hand deliveries. We subsequently received a September 2022 Newsletter which was more professionally presented. None of this paper correspondence was of a standard one would expect from a company proposing such a vast project.

On page 52 of their response document, it is stated that consultations were undertaken by community liaison officers. On page 43 it also stated a neighbourhood meeting with individual households in close proximity to the proposed hydrogen plant. It has in fact come to light that over 80% of some 25 of the closest households were never invited or consulted in anything. Also, leaflets regarding information and invites to the Furlough Windfarm online virtual information day were never distributed in Carraun therefore they were not delivered to our home. In fact, we knew nothing of the hydrogen site being proposed in Carraun until September 2022. Communication from Mercury Renewables to local households has been practically non-existent and it is an indication from the very start of their way of operating. Therefore an oral public hearing must be arranged and is demanded by us.

There was a meeting in 'Muddy Burns Pub' on 25/5/23. We were not advised of, or invited to this meeting despite our home (Hydrogen plant site location EIAR Fig 1:3 - H18), being one of the closest to the proposed plant, we are baffled as to why this happened without our knowledge or invite. To date, my wife, family and I have never been consulted by any liaison officer, representative of Mercury Renewables, or had any other communication despite their claims. It must be noted that because one of us works from home, someone is always in our house to meet any visitor so we couldn't have missed any visit if their representative had called.

## **Health & Safety.**

We are fearful that hydrogen production and usage is in its infancy. There is currently no EU directive for its production. We are therefore concerned that this is leaving us and our community in a very vulnerable position. We note that 'Jennings & O'Donovan' are Sligo based project, civil and structural consultants with experience in wind generated electricity, but we are concerned that they may not have enough necessary experience in the construction of facilities for the production of hydrogen gas. We are also very concerned that Mercury Renewables have never undertaken a project demanding the many different types of experience needed to deal with a volatile and dangerous chemical like hydrogen, the production, storage and transportation of which being so very close to our home. To date, Mercury have only been in ongoing discussions with the emergency fire services (Page 74 4.4.2), and no definite strategies, plans or emergency procedures have been agreed. Also there has been no agreement on the funding and planning of the new equipment, training and manpower that would be essential to combat a hydrogen emergency situation. Surely this must be of paramount importance to all! As stated in our concerns, this has to be determined before ANY planning could even be considered.

## **Infrastructure & Transport**

The methods of transportation are not clear as Mercury have only made assumptions on the carriage of 1200 KG of hydrogen. They have not given dimensions for the size or weight of these vehicles or taken into consideration the weight of the cylinders transporting the hydrogen. They have also not offered information regarding the scaled up much larger hydrogen powered vehicles which as yet don't exist, that will be needed in the future when the plant is increased to up scaled production.

There is confusion in the proposal regarding the road L6612 and the road L66121 which is a different junction over half a kilometre away (See response document Pages 104-108). This is despite the fact that mercury state that the design of the junction of L66121 and the N59 has been carried out in accordance with TII specifications. It has not been explained why according to the EIAR, the road safety audit location for the Hydrogen plant site is Carrowleagh Bog, not Carraun. All this conjecture brings into doubt, and brings Mercury Renewables ability to question.

Concerns have been voiced by Sligo County Council regarding the safety and high traffic volume at this point. There can be therefore no road safety audit for these vehicles at these junctions. Estimates for the amount of truck movements is therefore pure conjecture.

Not much consideration or information has been given to the road L6611 on which our home is situated and which we and other residents in the area constantly use. The traffic count for Junction L66121 taken on 23/1/23 which is the most important junction, it being the main entrance and exit to the site, did not take into consideration the amount of traffic at junction L6611 which is just a few yards away. We are very concerned regarding this as the possibility for vehicles on the N59 overtaking slow moving HGV manoeuvres at the junctions in question will cause the possibility of collision accidents to greatly increase. As we have stated, there have already been many accidents at the junction of L6611 with the N59.

Although we submitted photographic evidence of the proximity and inclines leading to and from, and the closeness of these two junctions, pointing out the obvious dangers of vehicles entering and exiting L6611, our concerns have not been addressed. It is obvious to us that large numbers of HGV's slowly turning out of a small side road pose a very dangerous situation.

Also to be addressed is the noise generated by the turning of these HGV's including the audible warnings that they emit. The vibration aspect generated by the many movements of trucks and the potential effects to the N59 sub structure and surface at this turning point is also of great concern. This cannot accurately be determined especially when the proposed hydrogen powered larger HGV's are not even in existence! If larger HGV's are used, it is determined that they will carry up to three times the load of that of the smaller HGVs. If this is so, this would have a very detrimental effect on the ability of the N59 to handle such weights and volume of heavy goods traffic.

If no large hydrogen powered Lorries emerge, and smaller HGVs continue to be utilised, this will mean a large increase in the amount of movements per day. Therefore the transport figures put forward by Mercury Renewables must be treated as conjecture.

### **Concern For Our Property.**

In our reply, we voiced our very justified concerns that such large amounts of water being removed from the water table and the effects it could, and will have to the surrounding area. We understand that although it is not possible to assess this, it is a totally relevant concern, and if sink holes and subsidence should occur causing irreparable damage due to the operation of the proposed hydrogen plant, who is going to be responsible?

We also voiced grave concerns regarding Mercury Renewables proposals effects on the value of our property and the ability for us to obtain insurance cover. Also the effect on our ability to obtain planning permission in the future or sale of the property. The proposal if sanctioned will turn our area from a rural one to an Industrial zone.

None of these questions were addressed in any respect in Mercury Renewables replies. This fact combined with the total lack of consultation with residents closest to the plant indicate to us that Mercury Renewables have little regard for the locality, its people, families or their property, farms and lands.

### **Hydrogen Demand**

On page 65 4.2.4, Mercury Renewables give the figures of Irelands demand for hydrogen as 2.000 tonnes per annum which is currently being supplied by BOC and produced by electrolysis methods within the country. Irelands demand for hydrogen is different from that of many other hydrogen demanding countries in the World. This is because Ireland does not have a major petrochemical sector, and its manufacturing industry is limited.

We are concerned that Mercury Renewables have not given figures regarding the foreseeable demand for hydrogen both in the West of Ireland or Nationwide, and in a radio interview of 11/08/23 Mercury Renewables go on to say that currently the demand is not there, but they are "actively engaging" with the 'Western Development Commission' to promote the use of hydrogen". Since this interview, we are interested to know if any progress has been made to substantiate increased demand for hydrogen? If this is not the case, then we would be very concerned about the need for more hydrogen production, especially in this area.

Also on Page 65 4.2.4 Mercury Renewables go on to say that there was a rollout of hydrogen powered busses in Ireland. In truth, this consisted of three busses which 'Dublin Bus' introduced into service three years ago in 2021 at a cost of 2.4 million Euro. These were electric

Proposed windfarm development including #13 wind turbines in Bunnyconnellan, Co Mayo  
& Hydrogen production plant in Castleconnor, Co Sligo.– PA16.317560

hydrogen fuel cell busses, and it is our concern that after operating these busses for three years 'Dublin Bus' have since not expanded their hydrogen fleet and If they were a viable public transport option then why have they not done so and have Dublin Bus committed to purchasing more hydrogen fuel cell busses to substantiate increased hydrogen demand?

As stated in our opening paragraph, we are concerned that hydrogen Production is a premature industry especially in the volumes proposed. It is our concern that the market is not there for a vastly increased supply of hydrogen. If this is the case, where and how will the excess unwanted product be transported and stored? We asked this question, but it was not addressed.