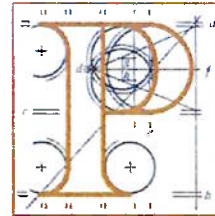


Our Case Number: ABP-317560-23

Planning Authority Reference Number:



An
Bord
Pleanála

Tom Tuffy
Rathglass
Corballa
Co. Sligo
F26PC98

Date: 27 May 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 recent submission in relation to the above mentioned proposed development 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.

The Board will revert to you in due course with regard to the 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.

If you have any queries in the meantime please contact the undersigned officer of the Board. Please quote the above mentioned An Bord Pleanála reference number in any correspondence or telephone contact with the Board.

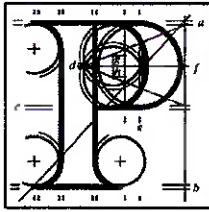
Yours faithfully,

Lauren Murphy
Executive Officer
Direct Line: 01-8737275

PA04

Tell	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	64 Marlborough Street
Baile Átha Cliath 1	Dublin 1
D01 V902	D01 V902



An
Bord
Pleanála

Observation on a Strategic Infrastructure Development Application

Observer's details

1. Observer's details (person making the observation)

If you are making the observation, write your full name and address.

If you are an agent completing the observation for someone else, write the observer's details:

(a) Observer's name

Tom Tuffy

(b) Observer's postal address

Rathglass Corballa, Co Sligo F26PC98

Agent's details

2. Agent's details (if applicable)

If you are an agent and are acting for someone else **on this observation**, please **also** write your details below.

If you are not using an agent, please write "Not applicable" below.

(a) Agent's name

Click or tap here to enter text.

(b) Agent's postal address

Click or tap here to enter text.

Postal address for letters

3. During the process to decide the application, we will post information and items to you or to your agent. For this **current application**, who should we write to? (Please tick ✓ one box only)

You (the observer) at the postal address in Part 1

☒

The agent at the postal address in Part 2

☐

Details about the proposed development

4. Please provide details about the **current application** you wish to make an observation.

- (a) **An Bord Pleanála case number for the current application (if available)**
(for example: 300000)

317560-23

- (b) **Name or description of proposed development**

Firlough Windfarm, Mayo and Hydrogen Plant Sligo

- (c) **Location of proposed development**

(for example: 1 Main Street, Baile Fearainn, Co Abhaile)

Carrowleagh , Co Mayo and Carraun Castleconnor Co Sligo

Observation details

5. Grounds

Please describe the grounds of your observation (planning reasons and arguments). You can type or write them in the space below. There is **no word limit** as the box expands to fit what you write.

You can also insert photographs or images in this box. (See part 6 – Supporting materials for more information).

Case number 317560-23

Submission to An Bord Pleanála by Tom Tuffy, Rathglass, Corballa, Co Sligo F26PC98.

Re proposed windfarm and Hydrogen plant in Mayo and Sligo by Mercury Renewables,
Firlough Windfarm and Hydrogen plant Carrowleagh Co Mayo and Carraun Co. Sligo.

I wish to make the following observations on the planning application and request for further information on behalf of An Bord Pleanála to Mercury Renewables on their proposed planning application, case number 317560-23.

Regarding the haul route away from the wind farm, the L1102, an increase of traffic on a road that cannot sustain the current traffic that exists on it, seems a very bad decision, 15 heavy goods vehicles a day during the construction phase as well as an increase to 140 a day when concrete pour is necessary will only destroy the existing road structure. Add to this the fact that this route is a recognised Euro Velo Route and it has gained that distinction as a link road to traverse by cycle where it is deemed safe and quiet. Should an existing European funded route be obliterated to risk backlash to facilitate a project that will be of no use to locals or tourists. While it may be necessary to promote the green agenda and no doubt there is requirement for renewable energy, it too must observe the laws of the land, currently there is no Strategic Environmental Assessment, this is a legal requirement under EU law, and the proposed heights of the turbines are not covered due to this.

The applicant states that this will be for a timeline of 21 months and the thoughts of trucks overturning and blocking the road are not impossible as it did happen the last time that route was used for the construction of a nearby industrial site and it's lucky that lives were not lost.

The exit from the windfarm L1102 to its meeting with the N59 occurs at Corballa, and is one of the most dangerous locations for incidents along the N59. Along the route from the windfarm entry, to the Hydrogen exit there have been multiple fatalities and there is no need for additional traffic to make this the site of another fatality.

I'm not sure whether it has been an omission from the applicant but there is no notice at the location of the exit from the windfarm onto the N59 at Corballa, similar to those at the opposite end of the road in Bonniclon. This seems rather peculiar, given the fact that the applicant states that communication has been a key part of the process, the omission of a roadside notice at this strategic location

5. Grounds

has kept this project quiet and off the record for many as they simply don't realise that this application may be of concern to them. The exit onto the N59 from L1102 is sited beside St Joseph's Church in Castleconnor, and is a busy location as a result. This road is also the main transport link between south Sligo and west Sligo with a lot of traffic using it for business and leisure purposes.

Regarding communication between the applicant and the general public, it seems to be a one way road once the information day had happened it was doors closed for another information day.

It must be noted that on this information day the general public were aware that a windfarm and hydrogen plant were in the process of planning application, however all the advanced public reporting on it, in the papers, on the radio, etc, was that the entire facility was to be based in Kilbride bog or Carrowleagh where the current application for the turbines are. This change to incorporate a Sligo side to the story was one that had escaped public knowledge due to the fact that all the reporting had happened in Dec 2021 relating to the entirety of the project in Mayo was suddenly halved and that a proposed hydrogen facility, an industrial project, would be centred, not in an industrial area, not in an industrial estate, but in rural country in west county Sligo, namely Carraun, Castleconnor. The continued lack of interest to state their intentions has led to many wondering what is going on, when there exists an obvious choice to construct the hydrogen facility in a port, like Sligo Port and work out the electricity supply with the electricity going into the grid from the windfarm.

Next to the Windfarm, based in Kilbride bog, where it appears that there is a train of thought that commonage ownership is akin to being a landlord in 18th century Ireland. The owner shall take control, this is simply not true, commonage ownership does not have one-upmanship on the owners of turbary rights and these people must be catered for. There is a entire flora and fauna up there also that is unique to Ireland on these bogs and indiscriminate development of these areas must not be allowed in favour of seeking to destroy one environment to create another of one's choosing.

The habitats in the bogs as well as the unique tomb structures have been noted but have not had the opportunity to be fully investigated as the tomb structures would require serious development and at the time of their recording, an investigative study would have significant costs which in turn would have been a barrier to any such studies, it must not be overlooked as one generations failure to the next, and so we must not destroy this heritage to fail the next generations whatever the cost.

The exploration of both the flora and fauna at both sites also leads to another problem, namely these investigations of wildlife at inopportune times of the year. I'm not sure that the applicant is aware that wildlife is around all year long, but similar to nocturnal wildlife, they rest at night, some do tend to switch off at certain times and rest for the winter. The lack of mention of the bats at either site, citing that they merely, may be there! This is where communication would have played a major role in requesting that locals may provide information, however the fact remains that this application has as much relevant information in it as the amount of bats sighted. No mention of the Cuckoo, no mention of the Buzzards, no mention of the Frogs that use the streams and the wetlands to survive. The report into the drilling for viable wells stating that it dried up downstream is a damning indication that if it can do that much damage in a few days what effect will it have during a longer cycle. The wetlands surrounding the proposed hydrogen plant extend into Co Mayo and it is there that most of the damage will be done, the farmlands and wetlands to the south west of the hydrogen facility will no doubt be

5. Grounds

affected and could have the potential to create an environmental disaster in a few short years due to the shortage of water. In an era where departments are calling on farmers to recreate the wetlands it seems odd that a facility such as this could be considered when everything is taken into account.

Water is a basic right, yes we have come a long way from the wells of old but still in our community many householders have their own wells and have sustainable drinking water as a result, but for how much longer would an asset like this be available to householders should an application like this be allowed to continue to construction. Is this to be another victim to renewable energy?, safe secure drinking water at the mercy of industry, it has happened before, don't allow the path of green energy to leave a wake of natural disasters in its wake.

There are many reasons why this application should go ahead but there are many, many more reasons why it should not be allowed at this location, simply because it is the wrong location for it. Having to rely on road transport in a rural location, disrupting the natural environment to bring more and more heavy goods vehicles onto roads, destroying the air with pollutants, there was mention by the applicant that hydrogen vehicles would be utilised at some stage during transportation, this seems unlikely now as urban centres that utilised the hydrogen buses are handing back keys in favour of electric buses, the technology is not there, neither is the transportation. The ideal placement for a facility like this is in an industrial area with links to rail and or shipping freight where hydrogen can be pumped directly into containers and transported with little or no disruption to the environment.

Placing a facility such as the hydrogen plant in Carraun in Castleconnor makes no sense as we have neither a rail or road structure in place to cater for this plan.

Supporting materials

6. If you wish, you can include supporting materials with your observation.

Supporting materials include:

- photographs,
- plans,
- surveys,
- drawings,
- digital videos or DVDs,
- technical guidance, or
- other supporting materials.

You can insert photographs and similar items in your observation details: grounds (part 5 of this form).

If your supporting materials are physical objects, you must send them together with your observation by post or deliver it in person to our office. You cannot use the online uploader facility.

Fee

7. You **must** make sure that the correct fee is included with your observation.

Observers (except prescribed bodies)

- strategic infrastructure observation is €50.
- there is no fee for an oral hearing request

Oral hearing request

8. If you wish to **request the Board to hold an oral hearing**, please tick the “Yes, I wish to request an oral hearing” box below.

You can find information on how to make this request on [our website](#) or by contacting us.

If you do not wish to request an oral hearing, please tick the “No, I do not wish to request an oral hearing” box.

Yes, I wish to request an oral hearing

☐ yes

No, I do not wish to request an oral hearing

☐

Final steps before you send us your observations

9. If you are sending us your observation using **the online uploader facility**, remember to save this document as a Microsoft word or PDF and title it with:

- the case number and your name, or
- the name and location of the development and your name.

This also applies to prescribed bodies sending an observation by email.

If you are sending your observation to us by post or delivering in person, remember to print off all the pages of this document and send it to us.

For Office Use Only

FEM – Received		SIDS – Processed	
Initials		Initials	
Date		Date	

Notes