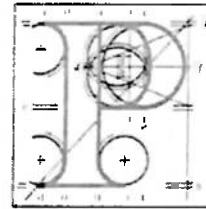


Our Case Number: ABP-317809-23

Planning Authority Reference Number:



**An
Bord
Pleanála**

Jimmy and Deirdre Doone
Aghadreen
Wolfhill
Athy
Co. Laois
R14DD74

Date: 09 October 2023

Re: Proposed Coolglass windfarm and related works
In the townlands of Fossy Upper, Aghoney, Gorreelagh, Knocklead, Scotland, Brennanshill,
Monamantry, Coolglass, Crissard and Kylenebehy, Co. Laois.

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 or email sids@pleanala.ie quoting the above mentioned An Bord Pleanála reference number in any correspondence with the Board.

Yours faithfully,



Evan McGuigan
Executive Officer
Direct Line:

PA04

Tel	Tel	(01) 858 8100
Glaos 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

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An Bord Pleanála
64 Malborough Street
Dublin 1

1st October 2023

AN BORD PLEANÁLA	
LDG-	066976-23
ABP.	
04 OCT 2023	
Fee: €	50
Type:	Cas9
Time:	
By:	Hand

Case Reference: PA11.317809

Development address; I the townlands of Fossy Upper, Aghoney, Gorreelagh, Knocklead, Scotland, Brennanshill, Monamantry, Coolglass, Crissard and Kylenebehy, Co. Laois.

Proposed Coolglass Windfarm and related works

We Jimmy and Deirdre Doone Aghadreen Wolfhill VIA Athy Co Laois R14 DD74 wish to object against the proposed development.

Visual Impact

We built our house and moved in in October 2017. The main design concept of the house was to capture the panoramic view of the surrounding countryside. As shown in the images below our house contains a large feature window and a patio area to the front to capture the view. If this development goes ahead we will no longer be viewing the beautiful unspoilt countryside, instead several turbines will be totally dominating the landscape. Turbines will be visible from 3 of the 4 sides of our house if this development goes ahead.

Recreational Impact

As an active family with 3 young children we spend a lot of our time exploring the local forestry area where the development is proposed. The peaceful nature of the area will be destroyed in numerous ways. The constant rotation of the turbines will be a visual distraction. This combined with the destruction of forestry and installation of massive roadways will certainly have a major negative impact on what is currently a peaceful and restful area.

Financial Impact

We have invested a significant amount of money on our property. If this development goes ahead it will have a major negative impact on the resale value of our home.

Laois County Council Policy

The current version of the wind energy strategy from the Laois county development plan states that wind turbines must be at least 1.5km from a residential property. These suggested turbines are within 1 km of our house which would make Coolglass Windfarm in breach of Laois County council policy. In addition as per Laois County Council the land in consideration for the development of the turbines is in an area not zoned for windfarm development. If County Council policy is worthless why are County Councils in place and why are tax payers funding an organisation to create completely meaningless policies?

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* Colour images can be provided electronically if required.



HOUSE CIRCLED IN GREEN.



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Images taken from inside our home.



In addition to the concerns raised above, as a local resident with knowledge of the location, I wish to object to the proposed development by Statkraft. Listed below are some of my summarised observations and concerns.

The proposed windfarm development serves no function if it cannot be connected to the national grid. Connection to the national grid is fundamental to the entire project and the

cumulative effect of both must be assessed according to the EIA Directive. The Bord needs to regard this proposal as premature in the absence of a grid connection application.

The location of these two clusters of turbines are on two different sites one on Fossy Mountain and the other on the townlands of Wolfhill presented by the developer as one site is disingenuous and misleading.

The Bord needs to regard the cumulative effects of both sites of this proposed windfarm on Fossy Mountain and Wolfhill named by the developer as 'Coolglass Windfarm', combined with the following projects which have already secured planning permission.

- a. EirGrid's Laois Kilkenny Reinforcement Project (Coolnabacky 400kv Substation).
- b. 18 No. wind turbines in the nearby townlands of Ballinclogh Upper, Garryglass, Clarabarracum, Clontycoe, Dooary, Cloncullane, Crubeen, Cullenagh, Rahanavagh and Raheenduff. *Ref.11.242626 (Laois County Council)*.
- c. 11. No. wind turbines Pinewoods Wind Farm *Ref. PL11.248518 (An Bord Pleanala)*.
- d. 300 Acre Solar Farm at Bigbog, Coolnabacky, Esker, Money Lower and Loughteeog, Stradbally. *Ref.17/532 (Laois County Council)*.

The Bord must consider the cumulative effects of this proposed development along with the other granted developments mentioned above, all of which are within a 10km radius of the subject development. The Bord must consider the visual impact on the rural scenic landscape close to the Heritage village of Timahoe and the rural scenic uplands of the Coolglass, Aghadreen, Moyad, Scotland, Wolfhill, and Slatt areas. The proposed development alone would form a visually obtrusive feature in the landscape and negatively impact the nationally significant archaeological, heritage sites and sacred spaces. (2003 Unesco Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Heritage) and (European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage).

The location for the proposed development is in an area not open for consideration by the Laois County Development Plan and deemed unsuitable for wind development due to the sensitive environment. The proposed development sits in a Water Source Protection Zone (see CDP map 10.4). The Swan public water scheme identified by the EPA as being 'vulnerable and without an alternative source' is fed by the entire area of the proposed Wolfhill cluster. Water courses and streams which originate throughout the catchment of the proposed windfarm development, ultimately feed the River Nore and River Barrow, which are both noted for its sensitive stocks of fresh water pearl mussels and crayfish. The Bord needs to have regard in particular to the cumulative effect with regard to *Margaritifera Margaritifera*, dwrovcmsis, which requires protection under Directive 92/43/EEC, on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Flora and Fauna.

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Laois is well known for its peregrine falcons. The bord must consider the locally known established nesting sites of the identified and documented pairs of ringed peregrine falcons, and their yearly chicks located between Slatt, Spink and Dunamaise. The nesting site in Slatt is only meters from the proposed turbines on the Wolfhill site. The hunting ground of the peregrine falcons nesting at Slatt is directly over the proposed turbine area on Wolfhill and the surrounding area (Birdwatch Ireland/NPWS). The bord must consider the cumulative effects of the Coolglass windfarm project in conjunction with the above mentioned projects already granted permission. I urge in the strongest possible way not to hinder the feeding ground of these protected birds. In accordance with the EU Habitats Directive, these birds must be protected.

According to the guidelines issued by The Bat Conservation Council of Ireland(2012), Wind Turbine/Wind Farm Development a preliminary desktop study should include all details of known bat roosts, bat activity and other records of these animals from within a 10km radius of the proposed wind turbine development. The bord needs to consider the cumulative effects of Coolglass windfarm development in conjunction with the above mentioned projects on the locally known bat populations and all wildlife in accordance with EU Habitats Directive.

The developer cannot mitigate against the noise of a 180mtr turbine with a setback distance of approximately 700mtrs to the nearest homes. The developer cannot realistically mitigate how the uphill/downhill gradient will treat the noise from turbines of this measure and what effect it will have on the nearest homes. This development is too close to the homes of local people for turbines of this scale.

The bord must consider the cumulative effects of the Coolglass windfarm development in conjunction with the above mentioned projects already granted permission, on the local community and its people. The community has had no meaningful engagement with the developer Statkraft. Glossy brochures delivered through letter boxes does not constitute public participation. No public meetings were held with the community. Therefore, we were obliged to have our own public meetings in the local halls of The Swan and Timahoe to discuss our concerns regarding the environment and protection of our homes. (Article 7 Aarhus Convention) We are a civilised community of people, all with our concerns of climate change and willing to play our part.

I respectfully urge that planning permission for this development be refused.

I enclose 50 Euro in respect of this objection. All correspondence in this matter can be sent to me at:

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Address: Jimmy and Deirdre Doone Aghadreen Wolfhill VIA Athy Co. Laois.

Yours sincerely

Amir Doone Deirdre Doone