

TO: An Coimisiun Pleanala
RE: Glenora Wind Farm, Ref: ABP-318701-23
FROM: Marion Bourke, Kilfian, Ballina, Co Mayo, F26X6Y4
DATE: 22 February 2026

While cognisant of the need for Ireland to secure itself a renewable energy supply, I object to this proposed wind farm on several grounds.

One major concern is that, once implemented, fragile habitats and archaeological monuments will be lost forever.

Also, the piecemeal approach of accepting small wind farms developments without considering the overall impact of a cumulative 500 turbines envisaged for North Mayo (a number quoted by Councillor Michael Loftus) is worrying to those of us living in the area.

I accept that such policy may not be in the remit of ACP - but the uncontrolled, developer-led approach to this multi-layered and complex issue is leading to planning chaos.

That the Government faces a multi-billion carbon credit bill in 2030 is not reason enough to allow light-touch planning or regulation. Nor is it reason enough to despoil one of Ireland's most pristine and beautiful areas, altering a unique landscape, flora, fauna and archeology forever.

One misrepresentation in the application is the claim to provide green energy for 115,000 homes annually. However, any power produced appears destined for a hydrogen gas plant and data centre in Killala. The claim to offset 113,000 metric tonnes of harmful carbon emissions each year does not factor-in the project's true carbon cost nor the loss of the vast carbon sink its site will destroy.

The following are specific areas of concern I have regarding this proposed wind farm:

- the danger of bog slippage and flooding,
- negative impact on tourism and local amenities,
- potential destruction of flora and fauna,
- damage to archeological heritage,
- the nefarious practice of project splitting.

Bog Slippage

An element of this project not adequately addressed is the danger of bog slippage and toxic leaching into rivers and drainage areas.

The danger of slippage appears real. In 2024 Glenora had a peat slippage, the photographic evidence of which is to be included in the Geological Survey Ireland's records. There have also been slippages in Keerglen. In 2003 nearby Polatomish saw 43 homes destroyed, livestock lost, and bridges washed away after heavy rainfall cause a bogslide.

The National Parks and Wildlife Services notes precedents: in 2020 a significant slide at the Meenbog windfarm destroyed fish farms and angling rivers. Any further development was prohibited by Donegal County Council. In 2003, after the devastating Derrbrien slide in Co Galway, the ESB was ordered to dismantle the turbines.

The NPWS points out that *“while natural bog bursts occur, the stability of Irish bogs is highly susceptible to interventions like drainage ... and construction on deep peat.”*

Underlining the danger of peat slippage is non-porous Metadolerite bedrock in the project's location. Add in the proposed removal of 116 hectares of trees and ever-growing precipitation levels due to climate change, the equation augurs ill.

The site drains into the Glenora river which joins the Fiddaunfrankagh stream, and onwards into the Altderg river, into the Oweniney and finally the Owenmore river, a renowned salmon and trout fishery.

Flooding is already a factor associated with this site - the runoff area contains a water treatment plant which regularly struggles to contain toxic pollution being released into the Ballinglen river. The project's potential to release toxic and/or unmanageable runoff into surrounding sea and watercourses has not been properly considered.

Accentuating these problems will result in damage to fragile fish ecosystems, safety issues, insurance problems and a depreciating effect on property.

Tourism and Local Amenities

I refer to the submission by Failte Ireland on 24/2/2024 which outlines the detrimental effect this project would have on the area's natural amenities.

A unique and pristine landscape will be severely damaged by the 180m turbines, heavy vehicle traffic and road widening proposed by this and several other projects in the area. The project will hinder local efforts to develop walkways and other assets which attract year-round visitors and also helps improve the mental health of its community.

Destruction of Flora and Fauna

The disturbance to habitat, especially considering the cumulative effect of multiple wind farms, would severely impact the area's bird and flora populations.

As part of the Glenamoy Bog Complex (SAC 500), Glenora is an area of Atlantic blanket bog considered globally rare and a scarce, high-value wildlife habitat. The EU-protected marsh saxifrage, for instance, has survived here since the ice age. It is the undisturbed nature of the habitat that allows it to flourish.

I have personally seen kingfishers and corncrakes while walking in the vicinity of Glenora and Keerglen. Snipe, herons and red grouse are reported in the area. The NPWS has done considerable work in the surrounding area to stabilise the endangered population of red grouse (*Irish Wildlife Manuals No.77*). Another endangered bird, the skylark, is often to be heard in the area.

Although the proposed development may be considered small in scale and not on a major bird migration route, the Whooper swan flies over Glenora to Lough Conn. Given the cumulative effect of multiple wind farms, the swans' corridor between the coast and Lough Conn will be severely impeded. As to dismissing collision danger because of 'increasing rotor visibility', Whooper swans are nocturnal fliers.

Although some of the site habitat has already been damaged by forestation, some still exists as blanket bog, hosting rare and endan-

gered flora like butterworts, various sphagnum species, sundews, lichens, asphodel and the rare marsh saxifrage.

The massive anchoring necessary to keep 180m turbines secure in bogland plus the interconnecting roadways for maintenance will result in considerable environmental destruction.

Archeological Heritage

The nearby Ceide Fields is an internationally-renowned archaeological treasure. Stone Age walls and megalithic tombs have been found in the blanket bog stretching out for miles from the Centre, making it the world's most extensive stone age monument. Much more has yet to be uncovered.

The proposed 8,274 cubic metres of concrete and 24,022 cubic metres of crushed rock to be used, however, will consign these ancient remains to oblivion.

I would refer you to the report by Mayo County Council's senior archaeologist Gerry Walsh on the abutting Keerglen wind farm (P24/60537) which stresses the need for a survey to be conducted using the correct 'probing techniques' to properly assess then area.

Project Splitting

I understand that splitting projects into multiple planning applications is strictly prohibited by the EIA Directive and underlined by the O'Gianna v An Bord Pleanala case in 2014.

However, it appears this current application by ABO Energy does not include the 110kV substation, grid connection or the battery energy storage system that would be necessary to the project. I would like to object to this splitting; the project must be considered as a whole.

In light of the fact that current guidelines for wind farm development date from 2006 and such out-of-date regulations are currently under revision, it behoves An Coimisiun Pleanala to be scrupulously attentive to this application.

Thank you for your attention.