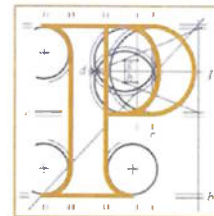


Our Case Number: ABP-318704-23



An
Bord
Pleanála

Margaret Ryan
Graffin
Cloonmore
Templemore
Co. Tipperary
E41EP23

Date: 27 February 2024

Re: 10 year development of 9 Wind Turbines and associated infrastructure
at Borrisbeg and adjacent townlands, near Templemore town in Co. Tipperary
(<https://borrisbegplanning.com>)

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

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19th Feb 2024
E41 EP23

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Dublin 1,
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D01 V902.

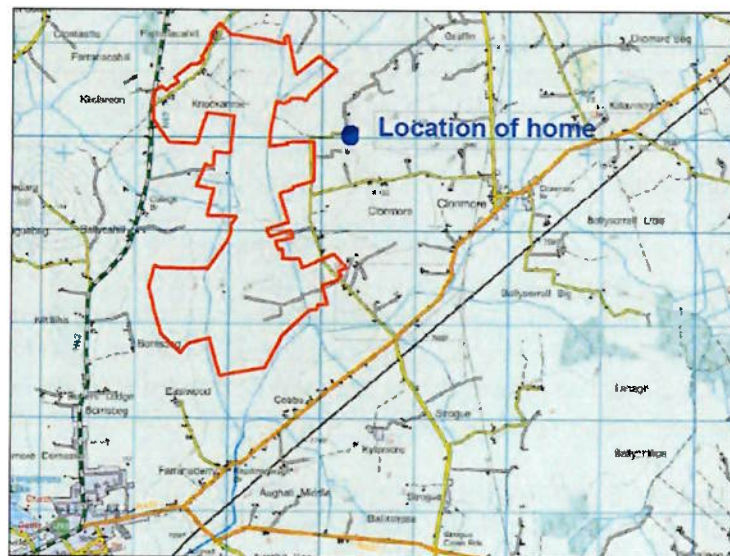
Re: Observation to Strategic Infrastructure Development PA.318704 – Borrisbeg Renewable Energy Development in townlands of Borrisbeg, Eastwood, Ballycahill, Knockanroe, Clonmore, Graffin and Skehanagh, Co. Tipperary.

Applicant: Buirios Limited

Dear Sir/Madam,

I refer to the Strategic Infrastructure for a 9 no. Wind Turbine Development and associated infrastructure in the above townlands. As a local resident, farmer and adjacent landowner who has lived in the vicinity of the proposed site location for most of my life, I wish to take this opportunity to comment on the proposed development.

To provide context, my home can be identified as **House H063** on *Appendix 12-5 – Wind Turbine Noise Contour Map of the EIAR*. The house is located approximately 1km northeast of the nearest wind turbine and downwind of T04, T05, T06, T07, T08 and T09. Having reviewed the accompanying planning and environmental documentation, there are several aspects of the development proposal that remain of concern to me, namely my residential amenity, the value of my home and farm, the viability of my farm for development opportunities, the safety of my livestock and the overall environmental integrity of the area. The issue of wind take from our adjoining farm is also a matter of concern.



Windtake

Section 5.13 of the Wind Energy Guidelines states that the question of wind take should be dealt with to ensure that any proposed layout of wind turbines takes into account the development potential of an adjoining site for a similar development. The guidelines state that the minimum distances between

wind turbines will generally be three times the rotor diameter in the crosswind direction and seven times the rotor diameter in the prevailing downwind direction. T02 is located approximately 325 metres from the boundary of my farm. The rotor diameter of the turbine is 163 metres, reflecting a distance of just twice the proposed rotor diameter. In addition to this, my farm is located cross and downwind of this turbine indicating that this separation distance will adversely impact the development potential of a portion of my lands for wind energy. While there is no planning permission for a turbine on these lands, the affected piece of land is over 500m away from the nearest house indicating its suitability for a wind turbine. Should my children wish to develop these lands in the future with a wind turbine, the location of T02 will effectively sterilize the part of my land that is appropriate for the development of a wind turbine due to the proximity of T02 from my lands and the necessary separation distances between turbines.

Section 7.17 of the Wind Energy Guidelines states that wind turbines are located in a manner that respects the development potential of the adjoining site for a similar development. Given the proximity of T2 to my lands and the prevailing wind direction, this will undoubtedly prejudice the development potential and wind resources available on my lands.

Lack of Consultation and Meaningful Engagement

As a local homeowner and adjoining landowner who actively farms the adjacent lands, I have received no direct correspondence from the developer of this proposal. This is an industrial development of a significant size, which will change the adjoining land use from agriculture to industrial and caused me deep concerns about the impacts of the proposal on my farming operations. Given my location as a neighbour, I am disappointed with the lack of meaningful engagement on this project.

Visual Impact

The Proposed Development site is located in an area of open landscape containing a high density of residential units for a countryside area. The policy of mixing a populated rural area with wind energy development and the requirement for less carbon-intensive sources of energy is difficult to reconcile without adversely affecting the residential amenities of the neighbouring homes. No photomontages have been taken from my home or the home of my daughter (House H011 on Appendix 12-5 – Wind Turbine Noise Contour Map of the EIAR), even though their proximity of 700m from the nearest turbine and the orientation of their home would indicate the most significant impact would occur at this range.

The closest viewpoint offered within the Photowire Booklet is taken 1km further back from where my home is located and reflects its dominance in the area (**PWVP – N of Photowire Booklet**). While being over 1km further away from the proposed wind farm than my own home, it is arguably the most impacted viewpoint of all images presented in the booklet and it is very conceivable that when taken 1km closer and from my home, these wind turbines will have an overbearing impact on my residential amenity and that of my daughter who is located even closer to the site.

This wind farm would constitute a dominant and obtrusive feature on the area and its residents and having regard to the size and scale of the proposed turbines from this viewpoint, the proposed development will create a significant visual intrusion in this landscape when viewed from the surrounding countryside and would seriously injure the visual amenities of the area.

Flood Risk

I note in Chapter 9 of the EIAR on flooding states that the OPW Past Flood Events Map has no records of recurring or historic flood instances within the site or in the surrounding lands. This is not the case and I attach images below of lands adjoining the red line boundary of the proposed site location that suffered from heavy flooding in recent years. These images below were taken in 2022 and I am

concerned that the development of any hardstanding areas such as turbines bases will further compound the risk of flooding in the adjacent lands, particularly if this risk could threaten my home and farm operations upon which I rely.



Lands adjoining Site Boundary in 2022

Adequacy of the existing Noise Guidance in the 2006 Wind Energy Guidelines

Wind turbine noise is frequently pointed out as the reason for local communities' objection to the installation of wind farms. My home, H063 in Appendix 12-5, is positioned directly northeast of T03 and T04.

The current setback distances for wind turbines are set out in the 2006 Wind Energy Guidelines. Draft Wind Energy Guidelines commenced in 2013 and while they have been updated and revised in 2019, these Guidelines have not progressed to adoption. Contrary to the slow progress with respect to wind energy policy, wind turbine technology, by way of its height and mass has advanced significantly from the technology upon which the 2006 guidance was originally drafted.

The draft Wind Energy Guidelines 2019 casts doubt on the robustness of the existing methodology outlined in the 2006 Guidelines stating that the approach *'lacked clarity and could potentially lead to significant increases in noise levels being set at low background noise level locations.'*¹ These draft guidelines instead propose an alternative *'Relative Rated Noise Limit (RRNL) in the range of 35 – 43 dB(A), while not exceeding the background noise level by more than 5dB(A) with an upper limit of 43 dB(A).'*² This affords a higher level of protection to people who live in the vicinity of any future wind farm developments and is based on best international practice on wind turbine noise control including the Institute of Acoustics Good Practice Guides², WHO Guidelines³, and a procedure for the assessment of low-frequency noise complaints⁴.

Environmental noise is highly technical and High Court decisions in recent years have found developers liable for causing nuisance to families who were severely impacted by noise living within 1km of a Cork Wind farm. As with all windfarm developments, this development was subject to a full Noise Impact Assessment before construction and further indicates failures in noise assessment methodology within 1km of windfarms.

My property is located approximately 1km from the nearest turbine. In addition to this and given the prevailing wind in Ireland which will carry noise in the direction of my home, I remain deeply concerned that there is a very real risk of experiencing adverse noise impacts both inside and outside of my house.

We also note the operational noise daytime criterion differs per house with day-time noise criteria ranging from 40.0 – 45.0db for non-participating homeowners (e.g H011). However, such limits are increased to 45db for participating landowners. I respectively suggest that a cautious approach should be taken to the relaxation of the guidelines and question if allowing such relaxation is appropriate if such houses are not guaranteed to remain within the ownership of the landowner for the duration of the operation of the wind farm. Furthermore, abandonment of property due to noise impacts would make for unnecessary dereliction and unsightliness in the countryside.

While it is the aim of the Government policy to strike a balance between the concerns of local communities and the need to invest in indigenous energy projects, I am concerned that such balance is currently tipped in the favour of wind energy given the ambitious targets set out in the Climate Action Plan 2023. It is also my concern that the failure by the Dept. of Housing, Local Government, and Heritage to produce robust and fit-for-purpose Wind Energy Guidelines may result in the inappropriate siting of windfarms with the prospect of future legal challenges and costly outlays for

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<https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/46097/6e68ea81b8084ac5b7f9343d04f0b0ef.pdf#page=nu>
ll

² Institute of Acoustics, A Good Practice Guide to the Application of ETSU-R-97 for the Assessment and Rating of Wind Turbine Noise, May 2013 including Supplementary Guidance Note 1 to 6

³ World Health Organization, Environmental Noise Guidelines for the European Union, 2018

⁴ Moorhouse, A., Waddington D. and Adams, M., Procedure for the assessment of low-frequency noise complaints, February 2005, Contract no NANR45 to the UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA).

both locally impacted residents and developers, as well as the associated health impacts of such exposure.

Accordingly, I ask that the Board:

- 1) seek guidance on when new noise guidance will be produced and to ensure the protection of our residential amenities;
- 2) to carry out an independent assessment or review by a competent expert of the potential noise impacts of the proposed wind farm to ensure the safeguarding of our residential amenity and health.
- 3) Satisfy themselves with adequate evidence that the current guidelines are compatible and sufficiently robust to reflect the noise emissions from the latest technology proposed, which post-dates the 2006 Guidelines.

Accordingly, in the absence of the pending publication of revised guidelines, I ask that the Board broaden the scope of the noise assessment to consider the best international and EU practice in the interest of proper planning and sustainable development.

Shadow Flicker

The Shadow Flicker software modeled 140 sensitive properties for potential shadow flicker impact. Of these, a total of 110 properties are theoretically predicted to experience shadow flicker, one of which is my home. This is a considerable number of homes that may be potentially impacted by shadow flicker and reflects the residential nature of this area. The mitigation strategy proposed includes the installation of appropriate window blinds in the affected rooms of the residence and the planting of screening vegetation. However, while these measures in themselves may alleviate flicker impacts but will also lead to a loss of light or views of the countryside. Given the number of homes potentially impacted by the proposed development, I ask that the board refuse permission for the proposed development having regard to its potential impact on the amenity of local residents, in particular, the impact of shadow flicker.

Proposed Community Scheme

While the proposed community scheme is noted, an equitable provision is required for local residents whose residential amenities are most impacted. While a householder living near the site will receive a minimal payment of 1,000 euros per annum, this is not in any way sufficient to compensate or address any potential adverse impacts by way of visual impact, shadow flicker, and noise as planting and the addition of noise abatement measures in an affected home would far exceed this. Consequently, the proposed scheme does little to alleviate my concerns about the potential impacts.

Examination of Alternatives

In a scoping response from the Department of Transport, a request to examine an alternative to routing cables along the public road was proposed. Having regard to the alternatives section in Chapter 3 of the EIAR, this option does not appear to have been examined in detail.

Natura Impact Statement and Local Ecology

The local area has a diverse and varied wildlife which includes birds of prey such as barn owls, kestrels, the sparrow hawk, buzzards, and bats as well as pine martins, foxes, and pheasants. Accordingly, much of the proposed lands could be considered of a High Nature Value and this is reflected in the biodiversity chapter of the EIAR. Biodiversity in Ireland is deteriorating due to the acceptance of minor to moderate impacts on habitat that over time, cumulatively result in significant biodiversity

degradation. Given the ecological diversity of this area, it is asked that the Board ensure that their assessment concludes beyond all scientific doubt, that the potential adverse effects on the sensitive areas and adjacent lands have been removed, and that the protection of local habitats is preserved through assessing the adequacy of the practical effectiveness of the proposed mitigation set out in Section 6 of the EIAR.

I would be grateful if this submission could be given consideration during the assessment of the proposed application and ask that the Board refuse the application based on the reasons outlined above.

Mise le Meas,

Margaret Ryan