

Re: Observation on Proposed Laurclavagh Renewable Energy Development, Co. Galway
An Bord Pleanála Reference: 319307

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing in my capacity as a public representative to formally record the significant concerns raised with me by local residents regarding the proposed Laurclavagh Renewable Energy Development. Many in the community have expressed uncertainty and apprehension about the scale, suitability and potential impacts of this project, and I believe these issues warrant careful scrutiny before any decision is made.

1. Community Engagement and Communication

Residents feel that communication to date has been limited and, in some cases, unclear. Given the magnitude of the proposed development, it is essential that:

- A structured and independent community liaison process be established from the outset, rather than after any approval.
- Regular public updates be provided in plain, accessible language.
- A clear and accountable point of contact be designated for residents.

Without such measures, the community risks being left in the dark about a development that could fundamentally affect their area.

2. Residential Amenity: Noise, Shadow Flicker and Proximity

The proposed turbine scale raises genuine concerns regarding noise, shadow flicker and proximity to homes. I ask that the Board rigorously examine:

- Whether the noise modelling fully reflects recognised guidance and includes verifiable baseline data.
- Whether shadow-flicker predictions are transparent and independently validated.
- What enforceable mitigation or curtailment measures are proposed and whether they are sufficient.

Residents are far from reassured, and these issues could significantly affect quality of life if the project proceeds.

3. Ecology and Biodiversity

The application acknowledges habitat alteration, including hedgerow removal and other site interventions. Given the sensitivity of local ecosystems, I request that:

- Habitat protection and biodiversity measures be fully detailed, not broadly referenced.
- Long-term monitoring and management plans be robust, enforceable and publicly accessible.
- Natura 2000 assessments be clearly explained to residents, highlighting any risks rather than minimising them.

There is concern that once damage is done, it may be irreversible.

4. Traffic and Local Roads

Local roads are already under pressure, and residents are unsure whether they can realistically accommodate the heavy transport associated with turbine components. To prevent major disruption, the Board should seek:

- A detailed and fully costed Construction Traffic Management Plan.
- Clear commitments on timing, routing and safety measures for schools, farms and vulnerable road users.
- Binding road reinstatement arrangements, rather than vague assurances.

The community fears substantial inconvenience and safety risks if the project proceeds.

5. Community Benefit and Participation

There is considerable scepticism regarding claims of community benefit. Residents want clarity on:

- Whether any meaningful, guaranteed community benefit initiatives are proposed.
- How local people would have a real say in shaping such initiatives, rather than being presented with predetermined schemes.

Without this, the project risks offering little to those who would bear its impacts.

6. Cumulative Impact and Policy Alignment

With multiple renewable developments already proposed or underway in the region, residents are questioning whether this project adds to an excessive cumulative burden. I request that the Board clearly confirm:

- How cumulative visual, environmental and residential impacts have been assessed.
- Whether the proposal genuinely aligns with national, regional and local policy—or whether it risks undermining balanced, sustainable planning.

There is a strong feeling locally that the area may already be at saturation point.

7. Summary

I am submitting this observation to reflect the concerns that have been brought to my attention by members of the local community living near the proposed development. I respectfully request that the Board give full consideration to these issues and ensure that any decision made takes account of the potential impacts on residents, local infrastructure, and the surrounding environment.

Thank you for considering this submission.

Yours sincerely,

Albert Dolan TD

Monivea
Athenry
Co. Galway.