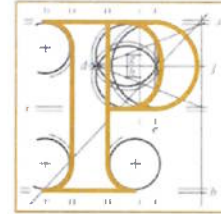


Our Case Number: ABP-319448-24



An
Bord
Pleanála

Patrick and Angela Dalton
Stranabole
Clonmellon
Navan
Co. Meath

Date: 31 May 2024

Re: Proposed Development of an 8 no turbine wind farm development and associated works on land within the townlands of Clonmellon, Kilrush Upper, Kilrush Lower, Newtown, Ballinlig, Carnybrogan, Cavestown and Rosmead, County Westmeath and Galboystown, Co. Meath. (www.knockanarraghwindfarmsid.ie)

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.

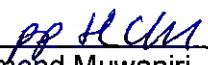
The Board will revert to you in due course with regard to the matter.

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,


Raymond Muwaniri
Executive Officer
Direct Line: 01-8737125

PA04

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Facs	Fax	(01) 872 2684
Láithreán Gréasáin	Website	www.pleanala.ie
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64 Sráid Maoilbhríde	64 Marlborough Street
Baile Átha Cliath 1	Dublin 1
D01 V902	D01 V902

ABP 319448
AN BORD PLEANALA
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Fee: € 50 Type: Cha
Time: 9:36 By: Post

Reasons and Arguments for Observation

1. Lack of Community Engagement:

Firstly, the absence of a public meeting or information evening is a glaring oversight. The Statkraft representatives' refusal to attend an information meeting, opting instead to meet individuals and distribute leaflets only to homes within 1.6 km, is insufficient and dismissive of the broader community's right to comprehensive information. Given that the proposed turbines are 180 meters tall, their impact extends well beyond this narrow radius. The lack of transparent communication undermines community trust and fails to address collective concerns effectively.

2. Impact on Protected Structures and Conservation Areas:

The proposed development poses significant threats to several protected structures, including local castles and Rosmead House, as well as the historic Smiling Bess Gates. The aesthetic and structural integrity of these culturally significant sites could be compromised by the presence of massive wind turbines. Furthermore, one proposed turbine is alarmingly close (within 60 meters) to a Special Area of Conservation (SAC). Such proximity risks damaging the delicate ecosystems these areas are designated to protect, potentially leading to irreversible environmental degradation.

3. Environmental and Biodiversity Concerns:

The area surrounding Lough Shesk/Newtown Lake, recognised for its unique alkaline fen vegetation, represents the only such ecosystem in County Meath. The introduction of wind turbines threatens this rare habitat and the biodiversity it supports. The region is also a designated habitat for protected species, including bats and Whooper Swans. Windfarms have cascading impacts on ecosystems. A paper in *Nature Ecology & Evolution*, found birds were four times scarcer and hunted food less in zones with wind farms than in those without.¹ Disruption to these species' habitats could lead to significant declines in their populations, contravening national and international conservation commitments.

4. Health Impacts:

The issue of noise pollution from wind turbines is well-documented, with potential impacts on local residents' quality of life. Additionally, shadow flicker, caused by the rotating blades of the turbines casting moving shadows, can be highly disruptive, leading to adverse health effects such as headaches and stress. Collectively, the

¹ Thaker, M., Zambre, A. and Bhosale, H. (2018) 'Wind farms have cascading impacts on ecosystems across trophic levels', *Nature Ecology & Evolution*, 2(12), pp. 1854-1858. doi:10.1038/s41559-018-0707-z.

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evidence has shown that while noise from wind turbines is not loud enough to cause hearing impairment and is not causally related to adverse effects, wind turbine noise can be a source of annoyance for some people and that annoyance may be associated with certain reported health effects (e.g., sleep disturbance), especially at sound pressure levels >40 dB(A).² These factors can significantly diminish the wellbeing of those living in proximity to the turbines.

Numerous studies and reports highlight the health risks associated with living near wind turbines. Conditions such as Wind Turbine Syndrome, characterised by symptoms like sleep disturbances and headaches, are reported by residents in similar settings. Furthermore, the continuous noise and visual disturbances can exacerbate existing health conditions, particularly for individuals with autism or those using hearing aids. The Irish Times (2020) reported settlements won by individuals suffering severe health effects due to proximity to industrial wind turbines, underscoring the legitimacy of these concerns.³

5. Visual Impact and Property Devaluation:

The visual impact of 180-meter tall turbines on an unspoiled landscape cannot be overstated. Such towering structures will dominate the skyline, detracting from the natural beauty and serenity of the area. This visual pollution not only diminishes residents' enjoyment of their surroundings but also leads to substantial property devaluation. The combined property losses for the community could amount to millions of Euros, with no compensation offered for this financial hit. A paper published in the journal 'Energy Policy' found that properties within a mile of a proposed wind farm experience an average decrease in value of 11 percent following the announcement of the project, compared to properties located three to five miles away.⁴

6. Disruption During Construction:

The construction phase of the wind turbines will involve the use of thousands of tonnes of concrete, leading to significant disruption. This process can cause noise, dust, and heavy vehicle traffic, adversely affecting daily life and potentially damaging local infrastructure. The environmental impact of such extensive construction activities is also a major concern, contributing to habitat destruction and pollution.

² O'Faolain, A. (2020) *Siblings who became ill next to Wind Farm Settle Case*, *The Irish Times*. Available at: <https://www.irishtimes.com/business/energy-and-resources/siblings-who-became-ill-next-to-wind-farm-settle-case-1.4184636> (Accessed: 19 May 2024).

³ O'Faolain, A. (2020) *Siblings who became ill next to Wind Farm Settle Case*, *The Irish Times*. Available at: <https://www.irishtimes.com/business/energy-and-resources/siblings-who-became-ill-next-to-wind-farm-settle-case-1.4184636> (Accessed: 19 May 2024).

⁴ Brunner, E.J. et al (2024) 'Commercial wind turbines and Residential Home Values: New evidence from the universe of land-based wind projects in the United States', *Energy Policy*, 185, p. 113837. doi:10.1016/j.enpol.2023.113837.

In light of these compelling reasons, ranging from insufficient community engagement and significant environmental impacts to health risks, it is evident that the proposed wind turbines should not be built near our land. The community's right to a safe, healthy, and unspoiled environment must be prioritised over the interests of industrial development.

Signed: Patrick Dalton Angela Dalton
Date: 21-05-24

Patrick + Angela Dalton
Stranabole,
Clonmellon,
Navan,
Co. Meath.