

**Observation Submission – An Bord Pleanála**  
**Case reference: ABP-322787**

**To:**  
**The Secretary**  
**An Bord Pleanála**  
**64 Marlborough Street**  
**Dublin 1**  
**D01 V902**

**Planning Authority Reference 24/5503**

**ABP Case Reference 322787**

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**Date July, 14 2025**

**Signature**



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June 30, 2025

The Secretary,  
An Bord Pleanála,  
64 Marlborough Street,  
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Objection Submission to An Bord Pleanála

**Subject:** Objection – asking An Bord Pleanála to overturn Cork County Council's Decision to Grant Planning Permission for Nine Industrial Wind Turbines at Tullacondra and Surrounding Lands

**Case number:** 322787

**Planning address:** Polnareagha, Ardskeagh, Tullacondra, Crougtha Kilmaclenine, Ballyclough, Knockaunavaddreen, Copestown, Ballybeg, Baltydaniel East Twopothouse, Caurraghakerry, Co. Cork (Cork County Council planning number 24/5503)

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to formally submit my observation on the appeal currently before An Bord Pleanála in relation to the proposed construction of nine wind turbines at Tullacondra, Co. Cork. As a person with deep generational roots in this land, I wish to convey, with full sincerity and urgency, the profound devastation this proposal has already caused to our community. What we are witnessing is not just a planning issue, but a calculated erosion of trust, of rights, of health, and of heritage.

I urge the Bord to review this objection with the seriousness it deserves. This is not about resisting renewable energy; it is about protecting people, animals, wildlife, biodiversity, agricultural & equestrian livelihoods, and democracy from being carelessly bulldozed in pursuit of government targets and private profit.

## 1. The Emotional Toll and Intergenerational Connection to the Land

I have had the privilege of living in various countries and experiencing many beautiful places, yet nothing compares to home: Boherascrub. As a child, I walked the fields with my grandfather. We would listen to birds and speak of the wildlife in fields and unspoiled countryside, free of any invasive and offensive obstruction. We are the sixth generation. I still walk these fields today, still enjoying the peaceful and unspoiled countryside it was when I

walked these fields with my grandfather. It is the place I will return to permanently to build a sustainable home. It is where I belong. To see it desecrated by towering industrial machines is not just an affront to the land, but a direct attack on who I am and what I hold dear.

The proposed turbines will permanently scar this cherished place, severing the living connection between generations past, present, and future. The Council's decision disregards not only ecological and health impacts, but also the intrinsic value of place and belonging. There was also a clear lack of research from the developers, some things they ignored completely, and why we were not allowed view, input or respond to any of the additional information they submitted as part of the RFI? It's disgusting, and undemocratic.

## **2. Lack of Public Consultation**

The planning process for this development has been marked by a lack of transparency and inadequate public consultation. A so-called public meeting was held. Why were we not made aware of this meeting? The developers have also lied by saying they called to every house. My parents are at home all day every day and had no such call. Many others in the community say the same. This alone is underhanded and sneaky. Their arrogance speaks volumes of the type of people they are. Information about this so-called public meeting was not widely disseminated, and many community members only learned of the windfarm development at mass after contracts had been signed. How is this lawful? Or fair?

This approach undermines the principles of democratic engagement and fails to provide the community with a fair opportunity to voice concerns. Decisions of this magnitude should not be made without meaningful input from those most affected. Communities have time to respond to planning permission for housing but are not even informed of something this grotesque that will cause irreversible damage to the landscape, protected wildlife and underground water systems. More on these points later.

## **3. Health Risks: Proven, Ignored, and Dangerous**

Multiple international studies confirm the negative health effects of industrial wind turbines, particularly from low-frequency noise and infrasound:

- Sleep disturbance, anxiety, migraines, and cardiovascular effects are consistently reported in peer-reviewed literature.
- Vulnerable groups, of which there are in this community — including children with grommets, ADHD, or autism, and elderly people with hearing aids, people with pacemakers — are particularly sensitive to these disturbances. The World Health Organization has recognised environmental noise as a serious public health issue.

William Sweeney, a highly qualified engineer trained on noise and local resident, submitted a comprehensive 50-page objection detailing these dangers — grounded both in professional expertise and personal experience. His family was forced to relocate from another wind farm

site due to these very impacts. His voice, like hundreds of others, has been ignored. Why is the government so determined to displace its own citizens?

Additionally, recent High Court rulings have ordered the shutdown of operational wind farms in Ireland due to demonstrable health impacts. Why have these precedents not been factored into the Council's decision? Is human health now a negotiable cost? There are so many communities out there living in amongst wind farms and the effects are devastating.

#### 4. Shadow Flicker, Noise Pollution, and Inefficiency

Noise threshold for wind turbines is 37dB. The Council has placed noise conditions (37-45dB), yet the proximity of homes and the direction of prevailing winds guarantees disturbance at all times, almost 3 times what they are advertising. Anything over 37dB is in contravention of extremely outdated guidelines. Shadow flicker from sunrise to sunset will plague residents daily. That these turbines may be required to shut down regularly due to these conditions only proves they are in the wrong location and proves even further they are a con. If they cannot function without disrupting human life, they should not be built. Again there is already plenty of scientific evidence and court rulings in Ireland on the effects of wind energy. Yet we're being ignored.

Ireland is a regulated country. Why then are there no regulations for Wind Turbines? How can Wind Turbines even be brought to planning without regulations. Existing guidelines in place are twenty years old and are for Wind Turbines less than a quarter the size of what is being proposed.

1. ***Byrne & Moorhead v ABO Wind Ireland Ltd (High Court, June 2025 – Co. Wexford)***  
The High Court ordered that three wind turbines be permanently shut down. Why? After 12 years of suffering from turbine noise, the court ruled it was a private nuisance and unacceptable in a residential setting.
2. ***Webster & Anor v Meenacloghspar Wind Farm (High Court, ~2023 – Co. Wexford)***  
The wind farm was found liable for noise and shadow flicker nuisance. Despite having planning permission, the court upheld that the rights of homeowners were violated by ongoing disturbance.

#### Professor Ken Mattsson's Research on Wind Turbine Noise

- **Expertise:** Professor Ken Mattsson of Uppsala University specialises in numerical analysis and has conducted extensive research on infrasound generated by wind turbines.
- **Findings:** His studies indicate that low-frequency noise from wind turbines can propagate over long distances and have health implications for nearby residents  
<https://www.windconcerns.com/wind-powers-hidden-dangers>

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## 5. Impact on Agriculture, Bovine Health, and Rural Survival

This area is one of Ireland's most productive and agriculturally rich regions, home to multi-generational farming families whose livelihoods depend on healthy animals and usable land. Scientific studies confirm that wind turbines have deleterious effects on cattle and livestock:

- A peer-reviewed study in *Veterinary Record* (Schmidt et al., 2016) showed increased stress and cortisol levels in dairy cows exposed to wind turbine noise, leading to reduced milk yields and disrupted feeding patterns.
- Research published in the *Journal of Veterinary Science* has shown increased incidence of disease and reproductive problems in livestock living near turbines.
- Increased stress in herds has also been linked to higher vulnerability to bovine TB, already a serious concern in this region.

These turbines will render large swathes of land unviable for farming. How are farmers expected to survive in the face of declining herd health, reduced yields and diminished land value, and constant noise and flicker? Where are the supports for our food producers?

### Effects on Dairy Cows

- **Study:** A report by the European Union Reference Centre for Animal Welfare (EURCAW) examined the impact of wind turbines on cattle welfare.
- **Findings:** Bovines exposed to turbine noise exhibited increased stress levels, leading to behavioural changes and potential health issues.

Scientist Nina Pierpont wrote an entire book titled Wind Turbine Syndrome, that summarised the events that were happening on different wind farms in various locations across the world. More specifically, she studied the effects that wind turbines had on the reproductive systems of various different types of animals to assess the connection of wind farms and livestock fatalities.

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## 6. Impact on the Equestrian Industry

The proposed development poses significant threats to the local equestrian industry, which is a vital component of our rural economy. Horses are highly sensitive animals, and the presence of wind turbines can lead to behavioural changes due to noise, shadow flicker, and vibrations. Studies have shown that the noise and movement from turbines can startle horses, leading to accidents and injuries. This is particularly concerning for businesses involved in training and breeding, where the safety and well-being of horses are paramount. The British Horse Society has highlighted the potential risks turbines pose to horses, emphasising the need for careful consideration in planning processes. [puc.sd.gov](http://puc.sd.gov)

In our community, several neighbours operate equestrian businesses that provide employment and contribute to the local economy. The introduction of wind turbines threatens their livelihoods, as clients may be deterred by the potential risks associated with turbine proximity. It is unacceptable for these businesses to be jeopardised without thorough assessment and expert consultation.

**Expert Opinion:** Dr. Andrew Tribe, an animal behaviour expert from the University of Queensland, stated that horses are particularly sensitive to the noise and movement of wind turbines, which can pose safety risks for both horses and riders. *Windpower noise vs. Farmers and Livestock*

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## 7. Violation of Rights and Broken Democracy

The entire process surrounding this development has felt undemocratic and unjust. We, the community, were not consulted prior to contracts being signed. As already mentioned, a so-called information session was held but somehow the majority of the community never even heard about it. Why?

How is this a fair process? Why are developers allowed to make secretive deals with no public scrutiny until it's too late? The planning system is supposed to protect communities, not ambush them. We are being denied planning permission for modest homes, yet grotesque industrial structures hundreds of feet high are rubber-stamped with vague reports and contradictory reasoning.

This is not democratic planning. This is the erosion of rights and the rise of authoritarian energy policy disguised as progress.

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## 8. Environmental, Wildlife & Archaeological Destruction

The site is ecologically sensitive and contains protected wildlife species, underground streams & wells, rock fault lines, and karst geology. It is surrounded by:

- Protected bat species – bat surveys supplied by the developers have been wholly inadequate.
- Nesting sites of peregrine falcons and barn owls – with flight paths through the proposed turbine zone.
  - ***All protected under the Wildlife Act 1976. The legislation prohibits the disturbance, destruction, or killing of wild birds, their nests, eggs or young. The barn owl receives particular attention due to its significant population decline in recent decades. It is listed as a Red-listed Bird of Conservation Concern in Ireland. Additionally, the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 implement EU directives on biodiversity***

**conservation within Ireland. These regulations enforce protection for all wild bird species naturally occurring in Ireland.**

- Freshwater pearl mussels, salmon spawning streams, and cave networks that will be disrupted by foundations and earthworks.
- Wells and underground streams that the farming communities rely on for rich fertile land but now face collapse and contamination due to the construction of these structures. I am also led to believe that the collapse of these will have a knock-on effect on river systems in the area and beyond. Who's looking out for the environment?
- A registered monument lies inside the development site. No serious archaeological study has been done.
- Gas risk – this one is very disturbing, and perhaps the most outrageous of all. Turbines emit sulphur hexafluoride 23,500 times more damaging than CO<sub>2</sub>. This is an extremely potent greenhouse gas. Can someone please explain to me how erecting these toxic structures help the government meet their emissions targets, and why they are considered green energy? The Wind Turbine industry is the biggest joke and con going.

This area should be under special conservation, not industrial exploitation.

**1. Derryadd Wind Farm (Co. Longford – 2020)**

Planning permission was refused by An Bord Pleanála, siding with local opposition. Why? Community raised concerns over peatland habitat, landscape impact, and environmental damage. An Bord Pleanála acknowledged that the development posed significant environmental risks and was not justified despite renewable goals.

**2. Coumragappul Wind Farm, Comeragh Mountains (Co. Waterford) April 11, 2025**

10 turbines (hub height 104 m, tip 185 m) were refused by An Bord Pleanála due to significant adverse landscape and visual impacts in a sensitive scenic area, and contravention of Waterford's County Development Plan; deemed not environmentally sustainable.

**3. Three Wind Farms Refused by An Bord Pleanála for Ecological & Scenic Reasons May 2024 in Co. Donegal, Co. Clare, Co. Cork**

An Bprd Pleanála refused permission for turbines in:

Co. Donegal: 19 turbines—concerned risk to Golden Eagle habitat.

Co. Cork (Gougane Barra): 7 turbines—visually obtrusive, threatening scenic values.

Co. Clare: 7 turbines—threat to Marsh Fritillary butterfly, Golden Plover, Hen Harrier

**4. Kilranelagh Wind Farm, Wicklow Mountains (2021)**

Planning permission refused (by County Council, upheld by An Bord Pleanála inspector) Why? Would harm archaeological landscape including Baltinglass hillfort

## **9. Roads, Emergency Access, Aviation Risk, Outdate Guidelines and Mismanaged Government Policy**

- Newly resurfaced roads will be dug up to facilitate access, destroying vital infrastructure.

- Emergency response times will increase. Farming is already one of the most dangerous occupations in Ireland. Should such serious farming accidents happen, are you ok with having blood on your hands just because you have targets to meet while others line their pockets?
- The turbines exceed 575 feet, breaching aviation altitude thresholds for emergency helicopter response (typically 500 feet). These are collision risks in rural airspace.
- The guidelines for these are 20 years old. And wind energy companies are already in breach of these due to the size increase of these structures. Why aren't county development plans being studied and adjusted more carefully and offering up sites much more suitable for these? The whole thing just screams of incompetence and a serious lack of planning, and utter mismanagement of an outdated and poorly understood policy governments are clearly not qualified to manage.

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## **10. Divide, Anger, and Social Breakdown**

This project has already divided our once-cohesive community. People who have lived side-by-side for decades now find themselves on opposite sides of a bitter, painful conflict. Suspicion, resentment, and fear are replacing trust and unity. There are whispers emerging of financial agreements made with some locals in return for silence or support. Locals that were once very vocal now appear subdued.

Why is this kind of conduct permitted? Is there no legal mechanism to prevent private enrichment at the cost of public wellbeing? What protections exist against coercion and conflict of interest? This is not planning. It is bribery. It is moral bankruptcy.

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## **11. A National Shame and a Warning to Government**

The government wants to revitalise rural areas. But how do you expect to achieve that when you desecrate the very land and communities they long to return to? How can young people build lives here when every turn is met with disrespect, disenfranchisement, and decline? You are driving young people away from their homes.

This observation is not only a plea. It is a warning. The disconnect between government and people is growing dangerous. The political system is failing us. You are driving communities to despair. You are fanning the flames of populism and rage.

Shame on every authority that has enabled this.

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## 12. What I Ask of An Bord Pleanála

Please, please, please;

- Listen to the hundreds of people who objected and their well-qualified reasoning. There were over 240 objections to this. If there were over 240 to someone seeking to build a house, would the council have granted planning?
- Weigh the overwhelming evidence of health, ecological, agricultural and equestrian harm.
- Consider the moral, democratic, and legal implications of this case.
- Please overturn this decision. Stop this development.
- Help restore some faith in the system.

With deep frustration, sadness, and hope that someone, somewhere in this system still cares.



Blánaid Sheahan

July 14, 2025

