

To: An Bord Pleanála

From: Michael Costello

Ballinagoul, Kilmallock, Co Limerick.

October 30.

Subject: Observation on the Proposed Garrane Wind Farm

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am a farmer with land directly adjoining the site of the proposed Garrane Wind Farm, and I wish to make an observation regarding this application. The majority of the area around the proposed turbines is in the townland of Ballinagoul. This area is quite unlike most of County Limerick. It is not intensively farmed, but instead consists of roughly six hundred acres of extensively managed grassland with a varied flora, something that can even be seen clearly from satellite imagery. This land provides a valuable refuge for wildlife and stands in strong contrast to the ryegrass monoculture that now dominates much of the county. The grasslands support a strong and well-established population of barn owls which hunt regularly across these fields. I am personally aware of at least four roosting sites within the townland. In addition, there is a steady presence of hen harriers, which I have seen in the area over a number of years. While I cannot confirm nesting, their frequent appearance suggests that the land is an important part of their foraging territory.

The bird survey provided by the developer makes little mention of either of these protected species. The conclusion that barn owls and hen harriers are unlikely to be affected by the turbines is difficult to accept, given the evidence from direct and regular observation. The presence of barn owls could be confirmed with a single evening's visit by a surveyor, and a few days of observation would confirm hen harrier activity. For these reasons, I believe the environmental assessment does not properly reflect the true situation on the ground.

My farm lies in a direct line between the lagoons and Lough Gur, and I observe the daily flight of ducks and swans in that direction and less occasionally geese. There are also daily movements between the lagoons and the Shannon Estuary. These flight paths form an important link between inland wetland and estuarine habitats, and I am concerned that the proposed turbines will pose a collision risk or disrupt these long-established routes.

Because much of County Limerick has now become intensively managed farmland, areas such as this—extensively grazed, biodiverse, and semi-natural—are increasingly rare. The Ballinagoul area is one of the few remaining places where wildlife still thrives alongside traditional farming. The construction of large wind turbines here will have a serious impact on both the landscape and the living environment of these species. For these reasons, I wish to object to the proposed Garrane Wind Farm. The environmental study appears incomplete in its assessment of protected species, and the development would reduce the biodiversity and landscape value of one of the last remaining areas of extensively farmed land in the

county.

Yours faithfully,

Michael Costello