

Submission to An Comisiún Pleanála

Appellant Names: Claire Harte and Fiona White

Address: Shrulegrove, Co. Galway H91 RDT3

Planning Reference Number: PAX07.323699

Development Proposal: Shancloon Wind Farm

Submission to An Coimisiún Pleanála

Re: Objection to the Proposed Shancloon Wind Farm and Associated Grid Connection Works

We, Claire Harte and Fiona White, live in Shrulegrove (H91 RDT3), where we have made our home for the past 18 years. We chose this place because of its peace and quiet, its beautiful countryside, and its strong sense of community. We love walking our dogs, enjoying nature walks and living in a safe, unspoiled environment surrounded by wildlife and good neighbours.

The proposed grid connection works, including two pylons less than 500 metres from our home and a substation less than one kilometre away, will devastate everything we value about this area. We are heartbroken at the thought of losing the peace, safety, and beauty that make this place our home.

Lack of Consultation and Breach of Participation Rights

We received no letters, flyers, or contact from the developer, RWE. We only found out about the project by chance — while walking our dogs and seeing a site notice on the roadside less than 500 metres from our home. This is wholly unacceptable for a development of this magnitude.

This failure of consultation is contrary to both Irish and EU law. Under **Article 6 of the Aarhus Convention**, which Ireland has ratified stipulates that the public must be given early and effective opportunities to participate in the environmental decision-making process before any decision is made or development progresses.

Similarly, the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) require adequate public notification and consultation, particularly where developments have significant environmental or community impacts. The lack of direct engagement by RWE, the absence of information provided to residents, and the reliance on a single site notice fall far short of the spirit and letter of these obligations. This failure is not a minor procedural issue — it is a

breach of our rights as residents and citizens to participate in decisions that profoundly affect our health, wellbeing, and environment.

Environmental and Wildlife Concerns

Our countryside is rich with wildlife. We regularly see hares, foxes, and sparrowhawks, all of which depend on this landscape for survival. The grid connection works and substation construction will destroy habitats and disrupt feeding and breeding areas. These impacts are contrary to the requirements of the **EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC)** and the **Birds Directive (2009/147/EC)**, both of which oblige Ireland to protect native wildlife and maintain biodiversity.

Cultural Heritage and Landscape

We are deeply concerned about damage to historical and archaeological sites, including ring forts and the Knockma area, which are part of our shared cultural heritage. Once damaged, these treasures cannot be replaced. This proposal would permanently scar the landscape and destroy the visual beauty that defines our community.

We are sickened and disgusted by the thought of pylons and substations towering over the area where we walk our dogs and watch the sunset. It is unthinkable that this rural landscape could be industrialised in this way.

Concerns About Safety and Health

Our greatest fears are for the safety of children and residents who use the narrow single-carriageway local roads. These roads are already dangerous when used by local traffic, and the addition of heavy construction vehicles would make them unsafe for everyone — particularly children, cyclists, and pedestrians.

We are also extremely worried about the mental health impacts of living so close to industrial-scale infrastructure. The constant stress and anxiety over what this development will bring are already affecting us and others in the community. The **Planning and Development Act 2024 (Schedule 4)** explicitly allows refusal of developments that would endanger public safety or be prejudicial to public health, and we believe this proposal does both.

Community and Mental Health Impacts

This project has already divided our once close and supportive community. The developer shows no concern for the damage they have caused to community trust — they only care about pushing this project through, no matter the cost to people's lives and wellbeing.

We ask An Coimisiún Pleanála to recognise the deep psychological and social impacts this has already caused and to act in line with the precautionary principle set out in EU law, ensuring that potential harm to human health or the environment is avoided where uncertainty exists.

Our Request

We ask An Coimisiún Pleanála to think not only about the technical details of this application, but about the people who live here — about the next generation, and about our wellbeing, peace of mind, and mental health.

We respectfully submit that the proposed project is contrary to Irish and EU law, the Aarhus Convention and Schedule 4 of the Planning and Development Act 2024, as they would be prejudicial to public health, destructive to the environment and cultural heritage, and incompatible with our fundamental rights to information and participation.

We ask you, with all our hearts, to refuse permission for this development and to protect our homes, our landscape, and our community.

Yours sincerely,

Claire Harte and Fiona White
Shrulegrove, Co. Galway
H91 RDT3