

**FAO: Sinead White**

Executive Officer

**An Coimisiún Pleanála**

64 Marlborough Street

Dublin 1

D01 V902

09 July 2026

**RE: YOUR LETTER DATED 05 JUNE 2026**

|                             |                                                                                                                  |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Your Case Number</b>     | <b>ACP - 323761 - 25</b>                                                                                         |
| <b>Proposed Development</b> | <b>Cooloo Wind Farm</b> ( <a href="http://www.cooloowfplanning.com">www.cooloowfplanning.com</a> )               |
| <b>Location</b>             | Cloondahamper, Cloonascragh, Elmhill, Cooloo, Lecarrow,<br>Dangan Eighter, Lissavally, and Slievegorm, Co Galway |
| <b>Applicant</b>            | Neoen Renewables Ireland Limited                                                                                 |

***A Chara,***

**I wish to make the following submission in response to the Applicant's response to submissions made in in November 2025 regarding the proposed windfarm development on Cooloo, Co. Galway [REF: ACP - 323761]**

I confirm that I have read and considered the Applicant's response to submissions as available on your website. I respectfully submit that the Applicant has not demonstrated that the proposed development satisfies the requirements of proper planning and sustainable development.

While the Applicant repeatedly asserts that concerns raised by residents, prescribed bodies and Galway County Council have been "addressed" within the EIAR or Planning Report, I do not find this to be true.

The Applicant's responses do not materially resolve many of the substantive issues raised during the statutory consultation process.

In many instances the Applicant:

- refers back to material already contained within the original application rather than addressing the issues raised;
- relies on assertions rather than providing additional technical evidence;
- proposes that important matters be addressed during detailed design or construction rather than before a planning decision;
- fails to support new explanations with additional survey work or independent verification; and
- seeks to minimise cumulative environmental effects without adequately demonstrating why the original assessments remain valid.

For these reasons, I find that my position is unchanged, and is instead strengthened in opposing this development as currently described by the Applicant's materials.

On this basis, I reassert a summary of my original submission.

I have lived in Cooloo with my wife and teenage daughter since September 2021. Having lived in East Galway for the last 25 years, we are excited to be part of this rural community due to the tranquil environment, the ability to walk unimpeded along country roads, enjoying the uninterrupted views, as well as the sights and sounds of nature situated all around our property.

We are very proud of our heritage and believe strongly in preserving the integrity and values of past generations. We are part of a community who shares the responsibility that comes with this legacy, as we create a home and place that will pass to our only daughter and the family that may someday follow.

We are in favour of preserving the planet for future generations, however, this must not come at a cost to our communities. Simply put, a windfarm of the proposed size, scale and proximity to the local communities is too big, too loud and too close.

**Having completed my own research, engagement and outreach, I reiterate our strongly objection to the proposed windfarm development at Cooloo and Barnaderg, Co Galway on the following eleven (11) grounds:**

**1. COMMUNITY CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

I strongly urge An Coimisiún Pleanála to recognise these significant deficiencies when assessing the project's compliance with public engagement standards.

**2. PLANNING FRAMEWORK AND GUIDELINES**

I strongly urge An Coimisiún Pleanála to recognise that any decisions today must be informed by current standards and technological realities.

**3. RIGHT TO OWN / TRANSFER PROPERTY**

I strongly urge An Coimisiún Pleanála to recognise that in these circumstances, permitting this development would be neither fair nor consistent with the principles of social justice recognised under Article 43.

**4. RIGHT TO PEACEFUL ENJOYMENT OF PROPERTY**

I strongly urge An Coimisiún Pleanála to recognise that this level of intrusion cannot be considered proportionate or justified in the public interest, and therefore conflicts with the protections afforded under **Article 1, Protocol 1 of the ECHR**.

**5. BROADBAND**

Strong broadband is an absolute necessity.

**6. VISUAL IMPACT**

I strongly urge An Coimisiún Pleanála to recognise the visual and landscape impacts and unacceptable.

## 7. SCHOOLS

We are concerned that the presence of the wind turbines so close to the three of our local schools will have a negative, immediate and long-term impact on students, staff and the overall school community. Turbines are known to create noise, low frequency infrasound and shadow flicker. These issues will no doubt impact on the students in the local schools.

I am also concerned that if planning permission is granted less people will be moving to or building in the Cooloo and Barnaderg areas. This will lead to fewer children in the community and may lead to the school losing teachers, and ultimately the school closure.

## 8. PROPERTY DEVALUATION

**The 2023 CERIS (Centre for Economic Research on Inclusivity and Sustainability) paper ‘Wind Turbines and House Prices Along the West of Ireland: A Hedonic Pricing Approach’** surveyed the prices of houses located near windfarms in seven counties.

The paper states that: *‘The analysis finds a robust and significant reduction in property value of -14.7% within 1km of a turbine’* and that *‘Back-of-the-envelope calculations suggest that the total loss in value for houses within 1km of a turbine in the case counties is approximately €6.8 million.’*

This is extremely troubling to me as we only just purchased this property in September 2021, and anticipated this to be an investment in our future and that of future generations.

## 9. NOISE

I strongly urge An Coimisiún Pleanála to consider that approving this development under obsolete standards would disregard the High Court’s findings and expose local residents to predictable and legally recognized interference with their right to the peaceful enjoyment of their homes.

## 10. SHADOW FLICKER

**Chapter 5 of the EIAR (‘Population and Human Health’)** states that the nearest residential property is 720 metres away from the closest wind turbine.

While the Wind Energy Guidelines of 2006 advise a setback distance between a wind turbine and a house of 500 metres. These guidelines are almost 20 years old and outdated.

In the meantime, the (Draft) 2019 Wind Energy Development Guidelines suggest a mandatory minimum setback distance of 500 metres between a wind turbine and the nearest residential property, and 4 times the tip height, whichever is greater.

Adequate setback distances and screening measures should be implemented to minimize the potential health effects associated with shadow flicker.

## 11. BIODIVERSITY IMPACT

As residents and now landowners in Cooloo, my wife and I are opposed to the proposed Cooloo Wind Farm because of its significant and permanent impact on biodiversity.

The developer's **Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR)** acknowledges a residual adverse effect on **Degraded Raised Bog (habitat 7120)**, a habitat of County Importance with capacity for natural regeneration (**EIAR Ch. 6, p. 142**).

Construction of the proposed floating access road between turbines T7 and T9 will directly remove approximately 0.18 ha of this sensitive peatland and disrupt its hydrological balance (**EIAR Ch. 6, Sec. 6.5.2.1.2**), contrary to the conservation obligations set out under the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC).

The site also supports cutover bogs (PB4) which impacts Marsh Fritillary (*Euphydryas aurinia*), an Annex II species protected under European law.

Breeding webs were recorded near turbine T5 within metres of proposed construction works (**EIAR Ch. 6, Sec. 6.4.3.3**).

The disturbance, dust, and drainage changes associated with turbine and road construction threaten the species' survival locally, directly conflicting with Ireland's duty to maintain favourable conservation status for Annex II species.

Further, the EIAR highlights potential effects on hydrology and connected wetland systems that could degrade otter (*Lutra lutra*) habitat and aquatic fauna (EIAR Ch. 6, Sec. 6.5.2.1.1 and 6.2.2).

I strongly urge An Coimisiún Pleanála to consider that these outcomes are inconsistent with the objectives of the National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023–2030, which seeks to prevent net biodiversity loss.

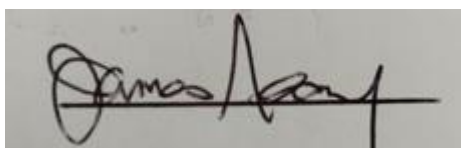
#### **IN CONCLUSION,**

I implore An Coimisiún Pleanála to take please consider the genuine concerns raised by me and by hundreds of other locals and interested stakeholders and to reject this development in the interest of protecting our environment, our homes, and our future.

I respectfully urge An Coimisiún Pleanála to refuse permission for this development in light of the serious concerns which remain and are outlined above.

The proposal is not compatible with the principles of proper planning or sustainable development. I therefore strongly object to this proposal and ask that it be refused in full.

***Mise le Meas,***

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James Neary', written over a horizontal line.

**James Neary**