

Case Number: ACP-323761-25

Please find below my response to the further information provided by MKO & Neon Renewables.

I feel that while MKO has grouped observations under common themes, it's response does not adequately address many of the specific issues raised in my submission. Instead, it relies largely on generic references to the EIAR and planning documentation without engaging with the individual circumstances of my family or the evidence presented.

1. My Location Issues Were Not Addressed

My submission explained that my home is approximately 1km from Turbines 1 and 3 and approximately 250m from the proposed substation and Battery Energy Storage System (BESS). I also described the particular impact this development would have on my family home, children's future, and surrounding family lands.

MKO's responses under **Sections 2.5 (Population & Human Health), 2.11 (Landscape & Visual), and 2.4.1 (Proposed Grid Connection)** discuss the project only in broad terms. At no point do they assess the cumulative impact of the turbines together with the proposed substation/BESS on my property or explain why this level of impact is considered acceptable.

2. Property Rights and Constitutional Issues Were Not Addressed

My submission raised concerns under Article 43 of Bunreacht na hÉireann and Article 1 of Protocol 1 of the European Convention on Human Rights regarding:

- peaceful enjoyment of my home;
- practical loss of future use of family lands;
- inheritance and transfer of property;
- disproportionate burden placed on nearby residents.

These matters are not addressed anywhere within MKO's response. Instead, **Section 2.5.3 (Community Impact)** discusses only academic studies concerning possible property value effects. It does not address the constitutional or human rights issues raised or the practical sterilisation of nearby family lands for future housing.

Furthermore when addressing property value effects they fail to properly acknowledge Irish studies and instead favour out of date international literature.

3. Community Consultation Concerns Remain Unanswered

My submission identified several specific failures during consultation, including:

- my home being omitted from consultation maps;
- representatives being unable to answer questions regarding Dangan road crossings;
- no meaningful follow-up after concerns were raised.

In **Section 2.2.1 (Community Consultation & Engagement)** MKO simply lists consultation activities undertaken, meetings held and information distributed. It does not respond to these specific failures or explain why my property was omitted or why legitimate questions raised during consultation remained unanswered.

Listing consultation events is not the same as demonstrating meaningful consultation.

4. Local Schools and Neurodiverse Children

My submission raised concerns regarding:

- Barnaderg National School;
- Brierfield National School;
- Brierfield Autism Class;
- disruption caused by construction traffic;
- routine changes for autistic children;
- educational impacts arising from noise, shadow flicker and infrasound.

In **Section 2.5.4 (Human Health Impacts)** MKO acknowledges that autistic people may experience greater sensitivity but immediately relies on general literature suggesting evidence is inconclusive.

Crucially, MKO does not address:

- the specific circumstances of Brierfield National School;
- the impact on its Autism Class;
- disruption caused by altered transport routes;
- routine changes during prolonged construction;
- my professional evidence as someone working within special education.

These project-specific concerns remain unanswered.

5. Barnaderg Gortbeg Group Water Scheme

My submission raised concerns regarding:

- turbines within the Source Protection Area;
- contamination risks;
- karst geology;
- protection of my family's drinking water.

These concerns are not directly answered.

Although MKO refers generally to environmental protection measures in **Section 2.5.2 (Construction Impact)** and hydrogeology is referred to **Appendix 2 (Hydro-Environmental Services)**, there is no direct response explaining how turbines within the Source Protection Area pose no unacceptable risk to the Barnaderg Gortbeg Group Water Scheme.

The specific concerns raised remain unanswered.

6. Project Splitting

My submission argued that separating the wind farm from the substation, BESS and grid connection prevents proper public assessment of one integrated project.

MKO addresses this in **Section 2.1.4 (Project Splitting)** by stating that the entire project has been assessed within the EIAR.

However, this does not answer the principal concern that:

- residents cannot examine the detailed design of the substation and BESS;
- separate planning applications prevent the public from assessing the complete development before a decision on the turbines is made;
- the closest residents remain uncertain regarding the final infrastructure proposed approximately 250 metres from homes.

Assessment within an EIAR is not equivalent to seeking planning consent for the complete development.

7. Visual Impact

My submission explained how the turbines would permanently alter the landscape surrounding my home and fundamentally change the character of our community.

MKO refers generally to the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment under **Section 2.11**, but nowhere addresses my site-specific concerns regarding:

- continuous visual dominance from my home;
- cumulative effects alongside the proposed substation/BESS;
- permanent loss of rural character;
- impact on family enjoyment of our home.

Again, the response is generic rather than addressing the specific objection made.

8. Outdated Wind Energy Guidelines

My submission argued that reliance on the 2006 Wind Energy Development Guidelines is inappropriate for turbines of this scale and referred to recent Government statements acknowledging the need for replacement guidelines.

MKO responds in **Section 2.1.2** by stating that the 2006 Guidelines remain the applicable Section 28 guidance while noting that the proposed project could comply with the draft 2019 Guidelines if adopted.

This does not answer my central point that the current statutory guidance was written for significantly smaller turbines and has itself been acknowledged by the Government as outdated.

Compliance with an outdated standard does not necessarily demonstrate that impacts from modern 180-metre turbines have been appropriately assessed.

9. Fire Safety and Emergency Response

MKO's response under **Section 2.15 (Major Accidents and Natural Disasters)** does not address my concerns regarding emergency response capability.

Rather than responding to the issue raised, MKO simply states that the likelihood of fire is low, that the project will follow best practice, and that a fire safety risk assessment and Risk Management Plan will be prepared. These are generic commitments applicable to most developments.

Crucially, MKO does not address whether:

- Galway Fire & Rescue Service has personnel trained to respond to wind turbine or Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) fires;
- local retained fire stations possess the specialist equipment required to deal with lithium-ion battery fires or prolonged thermal runaway incidents;
- emergency response times have been assessed for this rural location;
- additional resources or specialist contractors would be required;
- consultation has taken place with the Fire Authority regarding operational response capability; or
- nearby residents would be protected should a significant fire occur.

Simply stating that the likelihood of fire is considered low does not answer whether the emergency services are capable of responding effectively if such an event occurs. MKO has not demonstrated that the consequences of a fire have been adequately planned for, particularly in relation to local emergency response capability.

Given the proposed proximity of the substation and BESS to my home, these issues are fundamental considerations for me, and for public safety, and remain unanswered in MKO's response.

Conclusion

Overall, MKO's response adopts a thematic approach by referring repeatedly to chapters of the EIAR rather than responding to the individual facts and evidence contained in my submission.

Many of my principal concerns remain either unanswered or addressed only in broad generic terms.

I respectfully request that An Coimisiún Pleanála attach limited weight to those parts of MKO's response that merely restate material already contained within the EIAR without engaging with the substance of the specific objections raised by affected residents.

Sincerely,
Katie Ann Stone.