



Observation on a Strategic Infrastructure Development Application

Observer's details

1. Observer's details (person making the observation)

If you are making the observation, write your full name and address.

If you are an agent completing the observation for someone else, write the observer's details:

(a) Observer's name

Carl and Irene Morrissey

(b) Observer's postal address

Knock, Barnaderg, Tuam, Co. Galway, H54DH93

Agent's details

2. Agent's details (if applicable)

If you are an agent and are acting for someone else **on this observation**, please **also** write your details below.

If you are not using an agent, please write "Not applicable" below.

(a) Agent's name

Click or tap here to enter text.

(b) Agent's postal address

Click or tap here to enter text.

Postal address for letters

3. During the process to decide the application, we will post information and items to you or to your agent. For this **current application**, who should we write to? (Please tick ✓ one box only)

You (the observer) at the postal address in Part 1

The agent at the postal address in Part 2

Details about the proposed development

4. Please provide details about the **current application** you wish to make an observation.

- (a) **An Bord Pleanála case number for the current application (if available)**
(for example: 300000)

316466

- (b) **Name or description of proposed development**

Cooloo Windfarm

- (c) **Location of proposed development**

(for example: 1 Main Street, Baile Fearainn, Co Abhaile)

Within the townlands of Cooloo, Elmhill, Cloondahamper, Lecarrow and Dangan Eighter, Co. Galway.

Observation details

5. Grounds

Please describe the grounds of your observation (planning reasons and arguments). You can type or write them in the space below. There is **no word** limit as the box expands to fit what you write.

You can also insert photographs or images in this box. (See part 6 – Supporting materials for more information).

We are residents of Knock, Barnaderg, Tuam, Co. Galway living approximately 2 km from the proposed Cooloo Wind Farm and wish to lodge a formal and comprehensive objection to the development. The project will have a direct, significant and long-lasting impact on our home, our family, the local environment and the wider community. Although, Knock and Barnaderg are not specifically listed in the planning application, these areas are directly and significantly impacted by the proposed development. No consideration on the impact on these areas was considered in the proposed planning application and we will set out a number of these issues below.

The turbines will be clearly visible from our property from Knock, Barnaderg, and the associated environmental, visual, safety, and social impacts will fundamentally alter the character and quality of life in our area.

1. Impact on Landscape and Visibility from My Home

The turbines, each up to 180 metres high, will be highly visible from our home in Knock which lies only 2 km from the development site. At this distance, the turbine towers and rotating blades will dominate the skyline, particularly given the open agricultural and peatland landscape in our area.

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The local area is characterised by:

- low-lying fields,
- modest rural homes,
- small clusters of farms,
- and unobstructed views of the surrounding countryside.

The proposed turbines are entirely out of scale with this environment. Their presence will permanently alter the visual character of the area, overshadowing the rural nature of Knock and diminishing the peaceful scenery that residents, including our family, currently enjoy.

The visual impact from our home will be continuous, unavoidable and intrusive.

2. Impact on Residential Amenity and Quality of Life for Families in Knock

Living 2 km from turbines of this scale will expose households in Knock to:

- noise disturbance (including low-frequency noise),
- shadow flicker during large parts of the year,
- potential night-time turbine lighting visibility, and
- significant construction noise and activity.

Knock is an exceptionally quiet rural area with very low background noise. Any industrial noise, particularly rhythmic blade noise, will be sharply noticeable.

5. Grounds

This development threatens the peaceful rural environment that our family, including our children, rely on for rest, health, and quality of life.

3. Traffic, Road Safety and Community Risk on the N63 (Barnaderg Village)

Construction traffic to the site will rely on the N63, which passes directly through Barnaderg village, a small rural settlement with:

- Barnaderg National School,
- Breifield National School,
- after-school facilities,
- the Killererin GAA football club,
- narrow footpaths,
- and significant pedestrian and cyclist activity to include large numbers of children

Introducing heavy good vehicles (HGVs), abnormal loads, turbine components, concrete trucks and machinery into a village with such limited road capacity poses a major safety risk.

This is not a road designed for industrial traffic of this scale.

Children walking to school, sports training, or simply using village footpaths would be placed at elevated risk. The increased noise, dust, road wear and

5. Grounds

disruption in such a small village is incompatible with the safety and wellbeing of the community.

4. Ecological and Swan Flight Path Impacts Specific to the Knock and Barnaderg Area

Residents in Knock and Barnaderg regularly witness swans travelling between local wetlands and feeding areas. The route between Knock, Cooloo and surrounding wetlands forms a natural flight corridor for these birds.

The proposed turbine locations lie directly in this swan movement pathway.

Swans fly at heights that overlap with turbine rotor sweep areas, and their large size and limited manoeuvrability make them especially vulnerable to collision. Seasonal migration, low cloud, fog and dusk flights further increase the risk.

The EIAR fails to sufficiently address this localised flight behaviour and does not propose any guarantees that swan populations will not be harmed.

5. Threat to Local Peatland and Hydrological Stability in Knock & Cooloo Area

The land between Knock and Cooloo includes sensitive peatland that plays an important environmental role. Construction will require:

5. Grounds

- stripping peat,
- introducing drainage channels,
- excavating foundations,
- and constructing heavy access roads through or adjacent to peat.

This poses serious risks, including:

- peat instability,
- watercourse disruption,
- carbon release,
- habitat destruction,
- and long-term ecological damage.

Any negative hydrological change could impact farms and landholdings in the Knock area, including my own family's land.

6. Carbon Emissions and Climate Burden of Construction

Wind energy must not be presumed to be carbon-neutral. The Cooloo project will generate significant carbon emissions through:

- transporting massive turbine components along the N63,
- producing concrete bases (cement is a high-carbon material),
- excavating large volumes of soil and peat,
- diesel-powered machinery running for months or years,
- and long-term maintenance traffic.

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The EIAR does not demonstrate that the lifetime emissions will be outweighed by operational carbon savings. When peatland disturbance is included, the construction phase may produce substantial net emissions.

Given Ireland's climate commitments, this omission is unacceptable.

7. Impact on My Children's Future Ability to Obtain Planning Permission

One of the most significant personal impacts of this proposal is the effect on our children's ability to live and remain in Knock, on the family farm.

Turbines of this scale create:

- noise contour zones,
- shadow flicker buffers,
- visual impact zones,
- and new landscape sensitivity restrictions.

These constraints greatly reduce the number of sites that will be deemed suitable for residential planning permission.

This means that our children may no longer be able to build homes on our own land, even though this is a central part of rural life, family continuity, and the sustainability of villages like Barnaderg.

The development threatens the generational continuity of our community.

5. Grounds

8. Mortgage Restrictions & Devaluation of Property in Knock

There is a realistic and widely recognised risk that:

- mortgage lenders may refuse or restrict lending on homes located near large turbines,
- valuation surveys may reduce the market value of affected properties,
- potential buyers may avoid homes within visible proximity to turbines.

This directly affects our home which is 2 km from the proposed turbines and our children's future prospects of building homes on our family farm land.

Reduced property value undermines family stability, retirement planning, ability to borrow for farming or education, and the overall economic wellbeing of rural communities.

9. Inadequate Community Consultation with Knock & Barnaderg Residents

The scale and proximity of the development require deep, ongoing consultation. Many in Knock and Barnaderg and the wider parish feel their concerns were not genuinely considered. The areas of Knock and Baranderg were not addressed in any capacity in the planning application, despite the unequivocal and extensive impact, the proposed works would create for the areas.

Public information sessions are not meaningful consultation when:

5. Grounds

- turbine placement remains unchanged,
- community safety concerns are unaddressed,
- and key issues like traffic on the N63 are not properly mitigated.

Residents directly affected, such as those of us living in Knock, must have a stronger voice in decisions that will impact our families for decades.

10. Impact on Natural Water Sources and Local Water Schemes

The proposed development also presents a serious and insufficiently assessed risk to natural water sources and existing water schemes serving the Knock and Barnaderg areas. The construction of turbine bases, access roads, drainage channels and deep excavations across peatland and agricultural land will alter the natural hydrology of the region. These lands rely on established underground water flows / springs and surface drainage patterns that have remained stable for generations. Disrupting these systems could lead to contamination of groundwater, changes in the water table levels, increased siltation and the diversion of natural springs. Many homes and farms in Knock, including my own, depend on the local group water scheme and groundwater fed supplies. Any interference with natural water movement risks compromising water quality, water pressure and long-term availability. These potential impacts were not examined in the EIAR and pose a real threat to the reliability of the existing rural water infrastructure on which our community depends.

5. Grounds

Conclusion

The various reasons as set out above clearly show that the Cooloo Wind Farm creates an excessive overall burden on our small community and its environment. Given the direct and disproportionate impact on our home in Knock, Barnaderg, the risks to road safety, the threat to our children's future planning and mortgage opportunities, the damage to peatland, the extensive carbon emissions, and the substantial visual, residential and ecological impacts, I respectfully request that An Bord Pleanála refuse permission for the Cooloo Wind Farm.

If the Board nevertheless considers approval, it must impose strict, enforceable conditions to protect residents, including specific protections for Knock and Barnaderg homes, roads, families, water services and wildlife.

Supporting materials

6. If you wish, you can include supporting materials with your observation.

Supporting materials include:

- photographs,
- plans,
- surveys,
- drawings,
- digital videos or DVDs,
- technical guidance, or
- other supporting materials.

You can insert photographs and similar items in your observation details: grounds (part 5 of this form).

If your supporting materials are physical objects, you must send them together with your observation by post or deliver it in person to our office. You cannot use the online uploader facility.

Fee

7. You **must** make sure that the correct fee is included with your observation.

Observers (except prescribed bodies)

- strategic infrastructure observation is €50.
- there is no fee for an oral hearing request

Oral hearing request

8. If you wish to [request the Board to hold an oral hearing](#), please tick the “Yes, I wish to request an oral hearing” box below.

You can find information on how to make this request on [our website](#) or by contacting us.

If you do not wish to request an oral hearing, please tick the “No, I do not wish to request an oral hearing” box.

Yes, I wish to request an oral hearing

No, I do not wish to request an oral hearing

Final steps before you send us your observations

9. If you are sending us your observation using **the online uploader facility**, remember to save this document as a Microsoft word or PDF and title it with:

- the case number and your name, or
- the name and location of the development and your name.

This also applies to prescribed bodies sending an observation by email.

If you are sending your observation to us by post or delivering in person, remember to print off all the pages of this document and send it to us.

For Office Use Only

FEM – Received		SIDS – Processed	
Initials		Initials	
Date		Date	

Notes