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The Secretary,
An Coimisiún Pleanála,
64 Marlborough Street,
Dublin 1,
D01 V902

Case reference: PAX91.323780

Date: _____

Re: Objection to the Proposed Ballinlee Wind Farm Development

Development: 10-year planning permission for the construction of 17 wind turbines (160m tip height), permanent 110kV substation, and associated infrastructure across the townlands of Ballincurra, Ballingayroure, Ballinlee North & South, Ballinrea, Ballyreesode, Camas North & South, Carrigeen, Knockuregare, Ballybane, and adjoining areas in County Limerick.

To Whom It May Concern,

I, Bridie O'Shea, wish to register a strong objection to the proposed Ballinlee Wind Farm. I am a lifelong resident of Ballinstona South, where my family has lived for five generations. The proposed turbines will dominate our local skyline, permanently altering the rural character and the amenity of the Golden Vale. I ask that An Coimisiún Pleanála refuse permission for this development based on the significant and lasting impacts outlined below.

Lack of Meaningful Public Consultation

The developer's outreach programme failed to meet the principles of fair and accessible consultation. Many residents in this area are elderly or lack digital access, yet Appendix 1C – Community Engagement Report shows that meetings were held online or by appointment, with no inclusive public session. This constitutes a failure of community participation, contrary to Article 6 of the Aarhus Convention and Policy Objective COM O1 of the Limerick Development Plan, which requires transparent engagement with affected communities.

Noise and Shadow Flicker – Risk to Health and Wellbeing

The EIAR Chapter 13 (Noise and Vibration) and Chapter 15 (Shadow Flicker) acknowledge that 279 sensitive receptors lie within 1.5 km of turbines. As a carer for vulnerable individuals and a grandmother to a child with epilepsy, I am deeply concerned about the risk of flicker-induced seizures, disturbed sleep, and anxiety from low-frequency noise. These effects are recognised in the World Health Organization's Environmental Noise Guidelines (2018) and Wind Energy Development Guidelines (2023), which call for ongoing noise verification - something this proposal does not mention.

Road Damage and Travel Disruption

I travel the R516 and R512 daily for work and am deeply concerned about the plan to use these routes for construction traffic and to install the underground power cable from Holycross to Killonan Substation, a distance of approximately 18 kilometres along the R512/L1170. These regional roads are already heavily used by commuters, school buses, and agricultural vehicles, yet EIAR Chapter 16 (Traffic and Transport) confirms that they will carry high volumes of HGV traffic and prolonged trenching works for the grid connection, likely lasting 12–18 months. This will cause major disruption, surface damage, and congestion on narrow rural sections not built for such heavy loads. More importantly, these routes are vital for ambulance and fire services, and any obstruction or delay to emergency vehicles could endanger lives. The absence of a detailed Traffic Management Plan, emergency access protocol, or road restoration commitment represents a serious omission under Schedule 6 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, and raises major concerns for public safety, road durability, and community access during construction.

Impact on Private Water Supply

My home and two neighbouring homes rely on a shared private well. The EIAR Chapter 9 (Water) does say that excavation, turbine foundations, and borrow pits will disturb groundwater and overburden layers, and that dewatering may be required. This creates a real risk of aquifer contamination, risking safe domestic water supply. No specific hydrological survey or baseline water-quality monitoring is provided for private wells within 1 km. I request that the Board recognise this omission as non-compliance with Schedule 6 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, which requires detailed assessment of water impacts.

Inadequate Health Impact Consideration

The EIAR Chapter 5 (Population and Human Health) concludes there will be “no significant health effects,” based solely on general studies rather than local health data. This chapter fails to consider the compounded stress, sleep deprivation, and mental-health impacts associated with living near large turbines. As a carer and resident of a rural area with an already overstretched healthcare system, I believe this omission seriously underestimates the real burden on local health and wellbeing services.

Damage to the Landscape and Tourism

The Golden Vale is internationally recognised for its scenic quality and cultural identity. The Limerick Development Plan 2022–2028, seeks to protect the high value landscape of the Golden Vale and its tourism potential. The EIAR Chapter 12 (Landscape and Visual) confirms high visual magnitude for receptors within 5 km, including visibility from Lough Gur, an archaeological site of national significance. This proposal contradicts local and national policy objectives to safeguard tourism, heritage, and the character of rural landscapes.

Community and Social Division

The limited and selective consultation process has caused tension and anxiety within the local community. Many residents lack the financial means or technical skills to prepare formal submissions, yet their quality of life will be directly affected.

Conclusion and Request for Oral Hearing

Given the scale of this proposal, the pattern of local housing, the presence of vulnerable residents, and the potential impact on heritage landscapes such as Lough Gur, I respectfully request that An Coimisiún Pleanála hold an Oral Hearing to fully examine these issues.

This development is incompatible with the Limerick Development Plan, fails to protect public health, and does not meet the requirements of Schedule 6 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001.

I ask that planning permission be refused for the Ballinlee Wind Farm.

Kind regards,

Bridie O'Shea

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