

The Secretary
An Coimisiun Pleanala
64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1,
D01 V902

Morning Star Stud,
Rathcannon,
Kilmallock,
Co Limerick.
V35KH66.
17th October 2025.

Re 10 year planning permission for Ballinlee Wind Farm consisting of 17 nowind turbines, a permanent 110kV substation and ancillary development

Located in Ballinacurra, Ballingayrou, Ballinlee North and South, Ballinrea, Ballyreesode, Camas North & South, Carrigeen, Knockuregare, Ballybane and other townlands in County Limerick.

To whom it may concern,

I Eithne Thompson write in connection with the above listed planning application at Ballinacurra, Ballingayrou, Ballinlee North and South, Ballinrea, Ballyreesode, Camas North & South, Carrigeen, Knockuregare, Ballybane and other townlands in County Limerick.

I wish to object strongly to this proposal and request that the Board refuse planning permission.

Some of my summarized observations and concerns are as follows;

1. Effect on our Farming Enterprise.

We breed thoroughbred racehorses. Having studied papers prepared on behalf of the Irish Thoroughbred Breeders Association, it appears the proposed development will have a detrimental effect on our business. For example, one of the turbines will be within 1000m of our land, which would place it directly in the line of vision of our horses. Horses utilize what is termed the "flight response" in response to stimuli. The startled reaction of flight response can lead to serious injury to horses and people caring for them.

Concerns have been raised on the effect of sleep disturbance on horses caused by noise and infrasound on the flicker of light reflecting off rotating blades during periods of low sun and on the shadows of blades during daylight hours.

The average farm has a noise level of 30-45 decibels if a turbine is within 1000m the noise level increases to 50-70 decibels which can trigger a fight or flight response in horses.

The UK's Secretary of State for Communities & Local Government acknowledged in one of the reasons given for refusing permission for a proposed windfarm, that the proposed development would have a potential significant adverse impact on 3 nearby equine businesses.

Individual horses can have an extremely high value. In general stud fees for thoroughbred mares are very high involving a large investment on the part of the owner. Therefore, if the resulting progeny gets injured, their sale value can be reduced to zero or greatly diminished. This can impact on the viability of the farming enterprise.

Furthermore, I understand the insurers can refuse insurance cover where there are turbines in close proximity to an equine establishment, potentially, causing litigation where an owner has no other recourse.

The unnecessary imposition of massive wind turbines in an area of low wind capacity is incompatible with use of our land as a stud farm and therefore will affect our livelihood.

2. Planning.

We run a family farm. Succession planning is essential. The next generation must be able to reside on the land to continue operations. The presence of a large windfarm nearby could make it more difficult to obtain planning permission for a family dwelling. Realistically, it is not possible to properly run a farming enterprise without residing on the farm.

3. Biodiversity & Wildlife Protection.

The lands surrounding the proposed development are primarily agricultural, including areas known locally as Corcas lands. The Morning Star River runs through these wetlands. Over the years, wildlife numbers in the surrounding uplands have declined significantly; several bird species have virtually disappeared, and hares and rabbits, once common, have become scarce.

The Corcas lands, being wet and prone to flooding, have remained largely undeveloped, providing an important refuge for wildlife. During winter, whooper swans are frequently seen in this area.

Siting a large wind farm in the middle of such a sensitive and undeveloped wetland will have serious consequences for local biodiversity for all lands in the vicinity. Although mitigation measures will be envisaged, their effectiveness is doubtful as there is limited community support for this project.

4. Water Quality & Drainage Risk.

The Morning Star River is already of poor water quality. Large scale excavations and concrete foundations in wetland areas pose a high risk of contamination to the river, its tributaries, local groundwater and private wells.

5. Peat Stability and Soil Erosion.

With turbine heights proposed up to 160 metres, the construction of heavy infrastructure on unstable waterlogged soils raises serious concerns. A large ESB pylon near the proposed site was previously blown down during a storm, highlighting instability. Disturbing these wetlands could increase the risk of landslips and sediment run-off.

6. Air Quality and Dust during Construction.

The amount of heavy goods vehicle (HGV) traffic and the scale of excavation required will lead to significant fumes and dust emissions affecting nearby homes and farms. Effective mitigation appears highly improbable.

7. Climate and Carbon Accounting.

Current environmental policy supports rewetting boglands to transform them into carbon sinks and enhance natural habitats. Developing a windfarm on wetlands contradicts this policy by disturbing carbon-storing soils.

8. Shadow Flicker Impacts.

Given the turbine height, shadow flicker could significantly impact our residence. Modelling can only predict average conditions, and it is difficult to show the effect of shadow flicker by modelling in that modelling only predicts typical conditions and cannot fully capture real-world variations, meaning potential impacts can be underestimated.

7. Noise and Vibration.

I am concerned that the development will impact our residence due to noise and vibration. The EIAR relies on average conditions and does not include nighttime background measurements.

8. Traffic access & Road Safety.

The development will bring a substantial increase in HGV movements on narrow rural roads that lack the capacity to handle such traffic safely. This poses serious risks to other road users, pedestrians, and cyclists. Without major road upgrades, mitigation measures will be ineffective.

9. Telecommunications and Aviation Safety.

Broadband in this area is already poor. I am concerned that the proposed development could further degrade the broadband and mobile signal quality.

Our property lies beneath the flight path of helicopters, and the erection of large turbines poses potential aviation safety hazards.

10. Community Consultation Deficiencies.

One of the proposed turbines appears to be located on land across the river from my land. I did not see any planning notices erected in the vicinity of my property alerting me to this fact. The developers have not engaged effectively with adjoining landowners.

11. Cumulative Impacts of Multiple Developments.

The project is of a very large scale, involving turbines, foundations, grid connections and quarries. The cumulative environmental impact of the entire development must be assessed as a whole, not in isolation.

12. Lack of Long Term Monitoring & Enforcement.

Monitoring the long term environmental and social effects of such a development will be extremely difficult. It is unclear how compliance with conditions and commitments will be effectively enforced.

Conclusion

It is inconceivable that such a large scale windfarm should be proposed in an agricultural area of low wind potential, parts of which are sensitive wetland habitat. I am concerned that it will impact our farming enterprise. The project threatens wildlife, water quality, farming livelihoods and the social fabric of rural Limerick. This proposal is unsustainable, environmentally damaging, and economically unjustified. I therefore urge the board to refuse planning permission for the development.

Eithne Thompson.