

Gearoid O'Leary & Tina Gammell

Rathcannon,

Athlacca,

Kilmallock,

Co.Limerick

V35XE89

The Secretary,

An Coimisiún Pleanála,

64 Marlborough Street,

Dublin 1,

D01V902

Date: 18th November 2025

Re- 10 year planning permission for Ballinlee Wind Farm consisting of 17 no. wind turbines, a permanent 110kV substation and ancillary development

Case reference: PAX91.323780

To Whom it may concern,

We, Gearoid O'Leary and Tina Gammell, are writing to lodge a formal objection to the proposed wind farm development associated with case reference 323780 and ask that An Coimisiún Pleanála refuse permission for this development.

The proposal is inappropriate due to its scale, location, and failure to comply with planning, environmental, and community protection standards.

Some of our summarised concerns and observations are as follows:

Grounds for Objection

1. Risk to Human and Animal Health

Numerous studies and cases highlight serious concerns about noise (including low-frequency and infrasound), shadow flicker, and stress-related impacts on residents living near turbines. Symptoms reported include sleep disturbance, headaches, and anxiety, particularly when turbines are sited too close to homes.

Animals, including livestock and wildlife, are vulnerable to similar disturbances, which can affect breeding and behaviour.

2. Proximity to Residential Properties

The proposed turbines could be within 500m of homes, far below internationally recommended setback distances (often 1–2 km or more) to mitigate health and amenity impacts.

3. Devaluation of Property and Depopulation

Research shows property values in proximity of wind farms can drop significantly post-announcement of planning grant and during construction, with property value recovery unlikely in such rural areas.

This economic impact is significant for local residents and also risks depopulation as families relocate to protect quality of life. An existential threat to our community.

4. Deterioration of Local Amenities

The development threatens the character and heritage of the area, including the UNESCO-protected sport of Hurling. UNESCO guidance requires strict protection of Outstanding Universal Value and heritage impact assessments before approving such projects. In 2018, UNESCO inscribed hurling, which also includes camogie, on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, giving it international protection as a vital part of Irish identity and culture. This recognition, championed by the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA), the Camogie Association, and the Irish government, highlights the game's role in promoting health, community, and well-being, and helps to ensure its continued transmission to future generations.

Granting permission for this development will significantly impact the local GAA and Hurling Club due to inevitable accelerated depopulation in the Clubs' catchment area which will ultimately force it out of existence thus eliminating its role in promoting health, community, and well-being.

The depopulation that will be triggered by this development will affect all community amenities including school and pre-school viability. This is a major concern for the future and vibrancy of our rural community. Ours is a community that has lost its post office, shop, and multiple public houses. This development will destroy the community and the remaining fragile amenities we have left.

5. Disruption During Construction

Construction will involve heavy traffic, noise, and dust, disrupting rural roads and daily life. Similar projects have caused significant community disruption due to poor planning and coordination.

6. Improper Environmental Surveys

The Environmental Impact Assessment appears inadequate, particularly regarding bat populations. Irish guidelines require comprehensive seasonal bat activity surveys and mitigation measures, which have not been properly conducted or addressed.

Short sample of discrepancies:

- Roost re-entry surveys are no longer recommended as a standard approach but have been used in this case.
- Bat equipment not set-up at the exact proposed turbine locations
- Limited geographical area of surveys
- Failed survey equipment *“In spring the detector at D.08 failed to record any data and D.09 recorded for only one night (18May). In summer D.14 failed to record any data and autumn D.09 and D.10 failed to record any data.”*

7. Sterilisation of Land

Large-scale turbine infrastructure will permanently alter land use, reducing agricultural productivity and biodiversity, contrary to sustainable rural development principles.

Building of new homes will be significantly curtailed by planning issues resulting from the presence of the wind farms and by people/families not choosing to live adjacent to such infrastructure owing to proven human health side effects.

Legal and Policy Non-Compliance

The proposal fails to meet obligations under the Climate Act to balance renewable energy goals with community and environmental protection.

No adequate heritage impact assessment has been conducted, breaching UNESCO and national planning guidelines.

There has been wholly inadequate or no community engagement from the developer.

In the ‘Stakeholder Consultation and Responses’ (Appendix 1B) document, 67% of the chosen state agencies did not even respond or engage in any consultation. This is entirely unacceptable, and the application cannot therefore reflect, include or mitigate all aspects or impacts of the development.

Under the Limerick County Development Plan 2022-2028, almost the entire county is within a ‘Preferred Area’ for wind energy development. This determination is flawed and does not set out the criteria for such ‘preferred area’ designation. The entirety of the county has the potential to become an industrial wind farm. When other local wind farm applications are considered, the cumulative effect will be devastating to our collective local communities.

Conclusion

For these reasons, I respectfully request that planning permission for this wind farm be refused. The project poses unacceptable risks to health, heritage, environment, and community well-being. I urge the authority to prioritise balanced solutions that protect both climate objectives and rural communities.

Signed:



Gearoid O'Leary



Tina Gammell

18th November 2025