

To:

An Coimisiún Pleanála
64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1, D01 V902

Re: Formal Submission to Planning Application PAX91.323780 — Ballinlee Wind Farm (17 turbines, 110kV substation and ancillary works)

From: Janet Power, New Deerpark, Bunclody, Enniscorthy, Co.Wexford, Y21 V4HE

Date: 18 November 2025

Introduction and Position

I support Ireland's transition to renewable energy and recognise the need to expand green electricity generation. My objection is not to renewable energy in principle. I object to this specific proposal — its scale, its location adjacent to Bruff, the exceptionally high number of nearby homes, and the construction traffic impacts.

While I currently reside in Bunclody, Co. Wexford I was born and grew up in Knockuregare and went to school in Bruff, both primary and secondary. I maintain significant familial and social links with the area and return frequently.

I am the owner of a property located on the R516, which I inherited from my late father. The house, known as *The Orchard*, is a small road-facing cottage, situated at Newtown, Bruff, Co. Limerick, (Eircode V35 FK03). The Orchard is occupied by my elderly aunt (my late father's sister) who has resided there for the last fifty years and is the sole occupant.

Grounds for Objection**(a) Inappropriate Location and Scale**

The proposal for 17 turbines up to 160 metres in height would place industrial-scale structures within a few kilometres of Bruff and hundreds of homes.

The development would permanently and detrimentally alter the character of the landscape and the setting of Bruff, introducing large moving, unnatural structures visible over a wide area. It would replace the area's rural, bucolic identity with an industrial skyline. The scale and proximity are fundamentally inconsistent with proper planning and sustainable development.

(b) Traffic and Road Safety

Chapter 16 'Material Assets - Traffic & Transportation', Table 16-9 confirms extremely high construction traffic volumes:

- Wind-farm and substation works (24 months): 11,405 heavy-vehicle loads
- Grid-connection works (6 months): 6,414 heavy-vehicle loads
- Total: 17,819 heavy-vehicle loads, with up to 142 HGVs per day and 16 per hour

More than 50 percent of this traffic will pass my property - that includes the entirety of the concrete trucks and up to half of the aggregate; reference *Chapter 4: Civil Engineering Figure 4-12: Map of the aggregate and concrete quarries*

These figures indicate a level of industrial traffic entirely unsuited to this road network. The route is narrow, winding, and lacks any hard shoulders or pedestrian refuges. It is already hazardous for local users and would become genuinely unsafe for pedestrians and ordinary vehicles during construction.

For my aunt, and other residents who walk or cycle locally, the proposed traffic levels would make normal daily movement impossible. The development would impose prolonged noise, vibration, dust, and danger on an already vulnerable population.

Most significantly there is insufficient detail on the traffic management within Chapter 16 for me to fully assess the risk to my property, which is road-facing. The house is already subject to high levels of noise and vibration from passing traffic. Increasing the traffic load, both in terms of volume and scale, during the construction stage, would have an extreme impact on the dweller, both when inside the property and when attempting to access the town of Bruff on foot.

In the last number of years I have overseen improvements to the access to the property, which is located just outside the town speed limit. Due to the presence of a blind bend it is a hazardous location, and because of this I improved the access to the property. The improvements include opening up a wide margin in front of the house to allow for a vehicle to turn safely. This margin is for private use and I do not grant permission to the Ballinlee wind-farm developers to avail of this margin, or any aspect of the property, for the purpose of managing traffic flow during the construction phase.

(c) Visual and Residential Impact

From my property, multiple turbines would be visible at distances of around 2 kilometres. At 160 metres high, each would dominate the skyline. The visual movement of the blades, together with potential aviation lighting, would permanently change the character of the area and erode the sense of rural peace that defines this community.

The Environmental Impact Assessment fails to include realistic visual representations from nearby homes and from Bruff itself. The omission understates the true visual impact on residents.

(d) Construction Duration and Uncertainty

The developer seeks a 10-year construction permission, which is excessive and unjustified for a 17-turbine project. Such a timeframe would subject residents to a decade of uncertainty, noise, and disruption. It would effectively place the entire area under construction conditions for years, with no clear timeline for completion or recovery.

(e) Cumulative Effects and Property Impact

Residents here would experience the combined effects of both the wind farm and the grid-connection works. The cumulative disturbance, together with loss of amenity and visual dominance, would inevitably reduce property values and quality of life. The application provides no meaningful assessment or acknowledgment of these impacts.

(f) Failure of Proper Planning and Sustainable Development

Under Section 37(2)(b)(i) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), a development must be refused if it is not consistent with proper planning and sustainable development.

This proposal fails that standard. It would:

1. Endanger public safety through excessive heavy-vehicle traffic on a substandard road;
2. Cause serious injury to residential amenity through visual, noise, and construction impacts;
3. Disrupt the daily lives of hundreds of residents and particularly vulnerable people such as the elderly;
4. Permanently alter the rural landscape and character of Bruff; and
5. Deliver minimal local benefit relative to the scale of social and environmental harm.

Heritage & Agriculture

The proposed location of this development is within the area known as the "Golden Vale", a fertile, rolling pastureland known for dairy farming. The area is famous for its rich soil that supports abundant grass for dairy cows producing nutritious, globally recognised, dairy products. Historically known as the "Golden Vein," it is an essential agricultural hub, and along with dairy, suckler/ dry stock farming are significant enterprises in this area. The weekly cattle mart in Kilmallock is one of the largest in the country. Agriculture is a vital economic component of the rural economy where this development is proposed. Not only economically, but culturally speaking the roaming green fields interspersed with abundant hedgerows is part of the visual and inherent identity of the area. The value of this heritage will be completely decimated by the visual and auditory impact of this development.

Soil Compaction

The EU Soil Strategy for 2030 sets out a clear framework and concrete steps for protecting, restoring, and ensuring the sustainable use of soils. One of the key indicators of soil health within this framework is soil compaction.

The level of soil compaction resulting from this development is likely to be significant and must be fully assessed. This will require proper evaluation, ideally involving the Department of Agriculture and Teagasc. Based on my professional experience—as a full-time farmer and vegetable grower with a Level 9 qualification in Soil Health—the construction phase will have a severe impact on the clay soils typical of this area. These soils are highly vulnerable to structural damage, and the resulting compaction is likely to lead to persistent waterlogging and long-term deterioration of farmland productivity.

Cumulative Impacts

The cumulative effect of all existing and proposed wind farm developments must be fully taken into account. Limerick has a disproportionately large area designated as a “preferred wind area” compared to other parts of the country, but this should not result in our landscape being saturated with wind farms. Please consider the combined impact of all existing, permitted, and currently proposed developments in the region; it is unrealistic to expect that our community and our landscape can absorb them all. Please also give full consideration to how the proposed wind farm would affect the daily lives of the people who live here.

Personal Reflection

I know this landscape intimately. I grew up on the very farm where one of these turbines is now proposed. This place is part of who I am, and I know every inch of it.

From that perspective, it is my firm view that this development is completely unsuitable for the area. The idea of imposing structures of this scale—160-metre turbines with constantly moving 135m blades—on a rural community like this is, frankly, unimaginable. If someone proposed a high-rise building in the centre of Bruff, it would be dismissed immediately as absurd. Yet we are being asked to accept something even more intrusive: industrial-scale machines that would dominate the landscape day and night for generations.

It is deeply distressing to even visualise what this would do to the place I grew up in, to my family who still live here, and to the character of the community itself.

I am also deeply concerned for my niece, who is on the autism spectrum and will be living in close proximity to two of the proposed turbines. She is a sensitive child, particularly to noise and sensory stimuli. The prospect of exposing her to constant low-frequency noise and visual movement is frightening for her parents, and for me as her aunt. Her wellbeing is

paramount, and the risk that this development could cause her distress or harm is something I cannot ignore.

Conclusion

For the reasons outlined above, I respectfully submit that the proposed Ballinlee Wind Farm represents a fundamentally inappropriate development in terms of its scale, location, visual intrusion, construction impacts, traffic risks, cumulative effects, and the long-term damage it would inflict on both the local community and the agricultural landscape.

This area—its people, its heritage, its farms, and its rural character—would bear disproportionate and unacceptable burdens. The development would jeopardise public safety, undermine residential amenity, degrade soil health, and irreversibly alter one of Ireland’s most valued agricultural regions. Critically, the proposal provides no commensurate local benefit to justify these impacts.

I therefore urge An Coimisiún Pleanála to refuse permission for this application in the interest of proper planning, sustainable development, and the protection of the wellbeing, safety, and heritage of the Bruff community.

Thank you for considering this submission.

Signed:

Janet Power

Gorse Farm, New Deerpark, Bunclody, Enniscorthy, Co.Wexford

Y21 V4HE

Date: 18Nov2025

REFERENCES

Chapter 02 Description of the Proposed Development

“Subject to planning permission, it is envisaged that works would commence at the proposed development site during Q1, 2028, with a construction duration of approximately 24 months, followed by six months of commissioning. The proposed development is scheduled to be fully complete and operational during Q3, 2030.

The peak construction and commissioning year is late 2028-early 2029.”

“The 24 months construction would require the importation of a total of up to 14,714 loads of construction materials plus the removal of 3,105 loads from the grid connection works along the public road network to a licensed waste facility. All construction materials would be transported using standard heavy vehicle delivery trucks with capacities of 8 m³ and 20 tonnes for aggregate, and 7 m³ for concrete trucks. The peak daily imported loads would occur during the hardstand formation and access tracks’ works, and during the turbine bases’ concrete works. The proposed on-site borrow pits will provide 99,852 m³ (61%) of aggregate materials required for the proposed development. Construction excavated material for the proposed windfarm and substation site and associated proposed access tracks will be retained on-site.”

“it is envisaged that the delivery of construction materials would be typically circa 50% via the R516 east of the proposed windfarm “

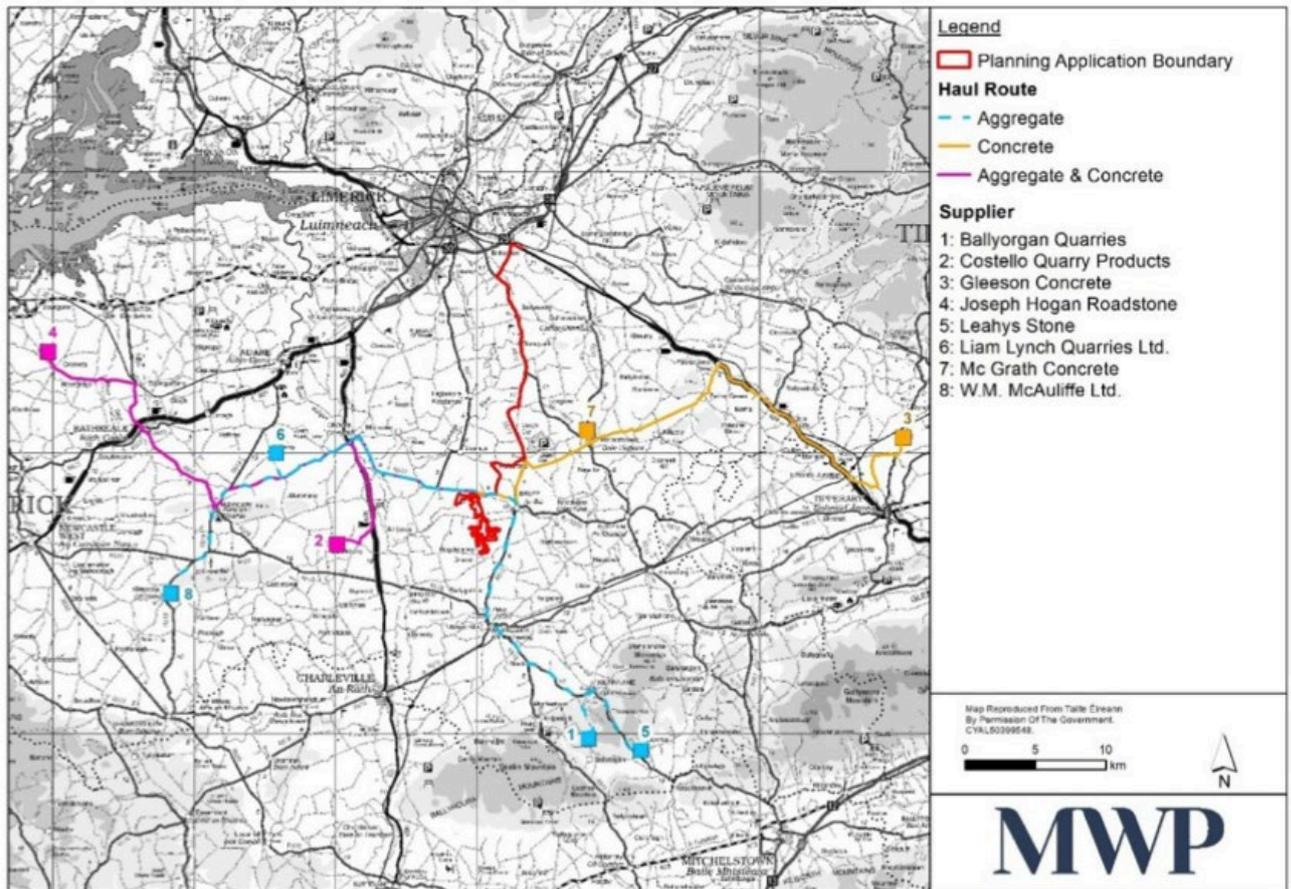


Figure 4-12: Map of the aggregate and concrete quarries

Chapter 4: Civil Engineering Figure 4-12: Map of the aggregate and concrete quarries illustrates that approximately half of the aggregate and all of the concrete haulage will be pass along the R516 passing The Orchard directly. This relates to