

Karen Hopkins
Clogher,
Kilmallock,

Co. Limerick

V35 YT78

16/11/2025

The Secretary,
An Coimisiun Pleanála,
64 Marlborough Street,
Dublin 1
D01V902

Reference PAX91.323780

10-year planning permission for Ballinlee Wind Farm consisting of 17 no wind turbines, a permanent 110kV substation and ancillary development. Located in Ballincurra, Ballingayrou, Ballinlee North and South, Ballinrea, Ballyreesode, Camas North and South, Carrigeen, Knockuregare, Ballybane and other townlands in County Limerick.

To whom it may concern,

I, Karen Hopkins write in connection with the above listed planning application.

I wish to object strongly to the proposal and request that An Coimisiun Pleanála refuse planning permission.

My grounds for submission are as follows.

Background

I have grown up in Dromin Athlacca and lived here most of my life. My father farmed here in Dromin as a suckler beef farmer for decades and my grandfather and his siblings before him. I am now carrying on that tradition having built a house and settled with my husband and three children aged 9, 12 and 14 in the same townland of Clogher in Dromin Athlacca parish where I grew up. I went to school in Athlacca national school and then FCJ convent in Bruff. My mother commuted every day from Dromin to Bruff working as the school nurse in the FCJ convent which is now providing refuge for Ukrainian refugees.

Golden Vale

We built and moved into our new home in Dromin in 2019. Our home is located approximately 2.8 km for the nearest proposed turbine. We are farming in some of the best grassland farming in Europe located in the Golden Vale region of Munster. This Golden Vale region has an unbroken settlement pattern and field usage going back to 17th century and the Desmond Rebellion, historically known as the "Golden Vein". Dromin was renowned for its fair held by the graveyard in Dromin where people travelled from far and wide to buy and sell cattle.

The fair brought trade and prosperity to the area. This proposed windfarm if approved will do the opposite.

Division

The proposed development is divisive in nature by dividing neighbours, communities, and families. It will remove large tracts of land from agricultural purposes either directly or indirectly. Years of negotiation and planning were completed before the community were ever given an opportunity to review and determine the impact of the planning application over a six-week window. A similar amount of time is given for a private home application.

I respectfully request that An Coimisiun Pleanála consider this timeframe for review as inadequate. We had difficulty accessing clear detailed route maps and plain language information and improved accessibility should be in place before there is any decision made regarding this planning application.

Traffic Management

I respectfully request that traffic and road safety considerations outlined in Chapter 13 of the EIAR be reviewed to consider the impact of the proposed development on an elderly people like my mother, trying to drive through Bruff to get to the church and shops and park as she has done on an almost daily for for the last 30 years. In addition, in an emergency scenario if I needed to get to her quickly, I am concerned about the impact of construction traffic along the small narrow roads in Dromin which could impede my speedy response in the event of an emergency.

I request that a detailed construction traffic management plan with HGV embargoes is required at a minimum and that the impact on vulnerable elderly people that have worked their whole lives in the area be considered as crucial in this assessment.

Impact of noise, vibration, and infrasound

There is much research compiled on the negative impact of noise, vibration and low frequency infrasound from wind turbines and its impact on animals including cattle, sheep, and horses. This has the potential to impact our farm animals. My daughter has a pony which we hack out on the local roads with her friends around the ring of Dromin (this road can be travelled from Dromin Church around Rathcannon, Clogher, on past Trinity Holy Well and Dromin graveyard before taking the hill back to the church) and I am concerned of

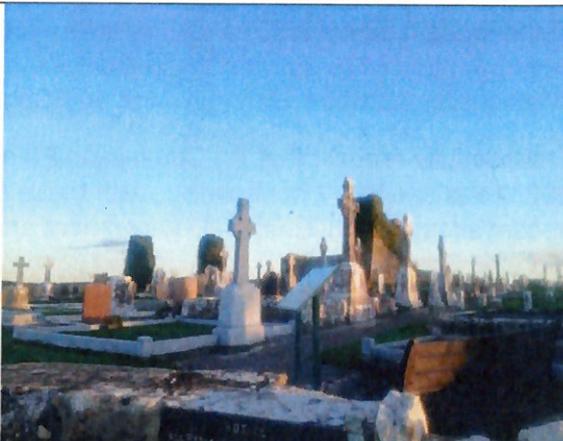
the impact of noise and vibration of turbines located near this route and construction traffic could have on the ponies and for her safety should the pony become startled or upset.

Local amenity

In addition, I enjoy running and walking around this same route (ring of Dromin) which is approximately 9.7 km in length a great challenge if training for a 10 km run. During a fine summers day there are lots of people doing the same cycling, walking and horse-riding around Dromin as it is quiet and easy route with very enjoyable scenery.

The views from in front of the graveyard and just fabulous. My father is buried near the front of Dromin graveyard, and I always think how peaceful and tranquil it is there. The local graveyard committee have done amazing work maintaining and improving the graveyard. and I am very worried that this peacefulness and serenity will be lost should this proposed development proceed. See Figure 1 and 2 Views from the graveyard and graveyard itself.

Figure 3 is of the proposed turbines -Industrialisation of the countryside captured in one image.

	
<p>Fig 1 View from Dromin Graveyard 16/11/2025</p>	<p>Fig Dromin Graveyard</p>
	
<p>Fig 3. View from Dromin graveyard with proposed turbines the nearest being only 1.7km away.</p>	

I respectfully request that the amenity value in this area of Dromin be considered as part of the EIAR.

Zoning

I am concerned over 70% of the county was zoned by our elected representatives for wind renewable energy given its agricultural capabilities with no apparent consultation with the people living and working in rural Co. Limerick. There does not seem to be any scientific or planning principles engaged with for this zoning. At the very least the potential impact of this zoning was not made aware to the communities in the region.

The planning application makes reference to the Limerick Development plan 2022-2028 but the development plans written statement is in direct conflict with the wind map. Page 9 of the development plan states "in the event that any conflict or ambiguity arises between the written statement and supporting maps, the written statement shall take precedence".

Section 8.8 details the strategic objectives of the overall plan " protect , enhance and connect areas of natural heritage, green infrastructure and open space for the benefits of quality of life, biodiversity, protected species and habitats, while having the potential to facilitate climate change adaption and flood risk measures and section 10.10 support growth in the tourism sector in Limerick , specifically focussing on sustainable tourism, and capture key opportunities to develop the sector based around the key drivers- Greenways, Waterways, Activities, Heritage, Arts and Culture, in an urban and a rural environment.

I respectfully request that An Commisiun Pleanála review the area plan (as per LDP 2022-2028) and see that it contravenes with these objectives objective BR-01 Redevelopment of vacant sites, BR-03 Tourism Development and BR-06 Safeguard the lands along the Morning Star River.

Cumulative Effect

We are also located approximately 5km from the Garrane wind turbine development yet there has been no indicator of assessment of cumulative impact of living in close proximity to many different proposed wind turbine locations. In addition, Limerick wind profile is significantly lower than that of Irelands coastal regions. Deploying turbines of such scale in low wind areas has potential to be both ineffective and inefficient.

There have been recent reports in the media relating to the objections by wind farm operators objecting to new rural dwelling houses if they are near the wind turbines. I am concerned about the impact on planning restrictions on the ability of my children to live nearby me in in years to come. In addition, there is the potential loss in value of existing homes in the vicinity of the turbines and I am concerned about a drop in rural population, rural school decline and school and childcare closures.

Lough Gur

The proximity of the proposed development to Lough Gur is concerning. Lough Gur is an internationally important heritage site. Having lived several years under the flight path for Heathrow airport it was a blessing to go for a walk around Lough Gur and regularly enjoyed the peace and serenity when I was home on visits. After settling back to Dromin Athlacca there was nothing nicer than picking the kids up from school on Friday and heading off to Lough Gur for a coffee and let them run around the lake and climb the fairy steps. Any visitors coming from abroad always have a stop at Lough Gur included in their itinerary even getting off the plane in Shannon from the US and coming straight to Lough Gur. The grid connection route is going to cause chaos in the region and the visual impact of the turbines from the hill in Lough Gur is going to alter the visual identity and character of this area forever. The beautiful Whooper swan landing on the lake of which any visitor to Lough Gur is familiar with will be no more should the turbines have the potential to kill and alter their nesting site. I am concerned that the photomontages in the planning application do not appear to represent the true appearance of the turbines from the many vantage points around Lough Gur.

Wildlife and habitats

Badgers' sets will be torn out, and these protected animals will be displaced. Given the huge emphasis and cost that the Department of Agriculture spends and increasing its spend year on year on control of bovine tuberculosis it seems in contradiction to this to allow this destruction and displacement of badgers to take place. The review of bats appears inadequate and incomplete and there is limited bat corridor mapping along treelines and watercourses. Other wildlife including insects, birds and microorganisms which have nurtured their own environment in the hedgerows will be destroyed with the kilometres of tree and hedgerow removal planned. These have been there for centuries and their value to biodiversity, land character and carbon sequestration value has not been considered.

I am also concerned about the impact on other migratory birds that use the wetlands in the "Corcass" in Camas near Ballinlee. The EIAR appears to lack the full seasonal bird surveys and assumes they can navigate their way around 160 m, 136 m wide turbines. I am concerned that the removal of vast amounts of drainage ditches will adversely impact the flora and fauna in the area and the negative impact of tonnes of concrete being poured near the Corcass and so close to the Morning Star River which feeds into the Maigne which is a tributary of the Shannon.

I respectfully request that the impact of the removal of habitats and potential pollution be further assessed as part of the planning application.

Health

I respectfully request a better evaluation of the impact of turbines on my children's health and well-being. The environmental impact assessment does not detail any specific childcare school receptors in the area. My children travel to school along the route through Dromin and one of my children is in Athlacca National school and attends Star Kids afterschool. Under the EIA Directive and Irish childcare frameworks, children are a vulnerable group requiring dedicated assessment.

I respectfully request more thorough assessment of my children's health and wellbeing including identifying the children affected in the planning application area.

In conclusion,

I am concerned that the environmental impact report and mitigation plan for this proposed development are inaccurate, inadequate and go no way to register the true level of destruction to the land, waterways, animals, biodiversity and people in this region created by this proposed development.

Proceeding with the development despite known and unaddressed harm to protected species and human well-being undermines the principles of proper planning and sustainable development.

I respectfully request that An Coimisiun Pleanála refuse planning permission or require substantial further information to address these deficiencies.

I request for an oral hearing in relation to this wind farm application, for the reasons outlined above. In particular the proximity this development could have on the character and rural setting in Dromin, its impact on the Goldan Vale region, its impact on communities, construction traffic management, impact of noise and vibration, local amenities, zoning of the region, cumulative impact of windfarms in the region, potential impact on the world renowned heritage site Lough Gur and local rivers and habitats and for the health implications for my children that are of immediate concern to me.

Sincerely,

Karen Hopkins

Dated 16/11/2025.