

Nicola and Sean Smith,
Rockbarton,
Bruff,
Co. Limerick.

An Coimisiún Pleanála.
64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1, D01 V902.

Subject: Formal Objection to Proposed Ballinlee Wind Farm – Co. Limerick

Reference: An Coimisiún Pleanála Case Ref. PAX91.323780

Dear Sir/Madam,

We are writing to express our serious concerns regarding the proposed cable route near our home. We chose to live in the county and build our family home here because of the safe, peaceful, and rural environment, living in close proximity to our parents, ideal for raising our children, enjoying outdoor activities, and caring for our animals. The proposed works will have profound impacts on our family life, our animals, and the local landscape.

We have young children, and the increased noise, traffic, and industrial activity will disrupt their upbringing in a quiet rural setting. The road and surrounding areas are currently safe spaces for them to play, explore, and build in the open countryside. With construction vehicles, turbines, and increased traffic, these activities will no longer be possible. Our children will lose the ability to enjoy outdoor play and to develop independence, confidence, and a connection with nature in the space where we chose to raise them.

We keep horses, which are extremely sensitive and flighty animals. The road is an essential space for exercising and riding them, especially when the children are riding. Horses can be easily spooked by noise, machinery, or unfamiliar activity, which poses a serious safety risk both to the animals and to our children. If the road becomes unusable, we would be forced to transport the horses to other locations for exercise. This not only increases stress for the animals but also adds logistical challenges and risk, fundamentally disrupting their routine and wellbeing. The welfare of our horses depends on regular, safe access to familiar spaces, and the cable route will prevent this.

The area is home to wildlife, including barn owls and hawks. These species rely on quiet, undisturbed habitats for hunting and nesting. Construction noise and increased human activity may disturb these birds, reduce prey availability, and threaten their local populations, further impacting the rural ecosystem we value so highly.

We also have elderly parents living close to the proposed turbine sites. Increased noise, visual disruption, and industrial activity will significantly affect their wellbeing, peace of mind, and enjoyment of their own homes. The rural environment, quiet surroundings, and sense of community are essential to their quality of life, and these would be compromised.

We support renewable energy and have our own rainwater harvesting system for our domestic water usage and installed solar panels at our home to contribute to sustainable energy solutions. However, we are concerned that the cumulative impact of multiple turbines and the proposed cable route will permanently alter the character of the landscape and the tranquillity that drew us here, with no offshore wind farms being built in the area for over 20 years. This will negatively affect our mental health, the wellbeing of our children and animals, and our enjoyment of the countryside.

In summary, while we are not opposed to renewable energy, the proposed cable route will have profound and lasting effects on our children, our horses, our elderly family members, and our enjoyment of the rural landscape. Our children will no longer be able to play, explore, and build in the area safely, which is a fundamental part of their childhood. We urge decision-makers to fully consider the welfare of families and animals, the safety of children, and the cumulative impact on the local environment before approving this project.

Yours sincerely,

Nicola and Sean Smith.