

Planning Submission to An Coimisiún Pleanála

Kilatal
Ballingarry
Co Limerick

Re: Proposed Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) – Ballinlee Green Energy in the Bruff–Dromin–Athlacca

A chara,

I wish to make this submission in support of the local community in Bruff, Dromin, Athlacca, and the surrounding hinterlands, who have articulated serious and well-founded concerns regarding the proposed wind farm development. As a public representative, I have worked closely with residents on these issues—particularly the public-health and environmental implications—and I will continue to support their efforts to ensure that community welfare is not overshadowed by large-scale infrastructural policy.

The community has commissioned expert assessments, and the concerns raised are based on substantive evidence. While the transition to renewable energy is a national priority, it cannot come at the expense of rural communities who stand to bear disproportionate impacts from developments of this scale.

Accordingly, I wish to address the proposed development under the following headings:

1. Health Concerns: Noise and Shadow Flicker

Many residents are already living with noise impacts from existing wind infrastructure in the wider region. The addition of further turbines increases the cumulative potential for:

- low-frequency noise disturbances,
- shadow flicker effects, and
- impacts on sleep quality and mental wellbeing.

These issues warrant rigorous independent assessment based on actual rural conditions, not broad generalised modelling.

2. Social Impact and Community Wellbeing

This proposal would have **life-changing consequences** for numerous families living around the perimeter of the site. I strongly encourage all decision-makers involved to visit the area, travel the full circumference of the proposed development, and observe first-hand the density of family homes and farms located in close proximity to the proposed turbine locations.

A planning process of this scale must ensure that communities are not marginalised and that rural residents are afforded the same level of environmental protection and quality-of-life considerations as urban populations.

3. Visual Impact and Residential Amenity

Residents across the area will experience a significant change to the visual landscape. Many homes—including those more than 5 km away—will face uninterrupted visibility of the full array of turbines. With turbine heights more than three times that of existing local landmarks such as the spire of Kilmallock Church, the scale of visual intrusion is clear.

For many families, almost every turbine—save a small number—falls within a 3 km radius of their homes. This represents a substantial alteration of the established rural landscape and directly affects residential amenity, property value, and the character of the community.

4. Construction Impacts and Road Infrastructure

The road network in this region, comprising local and regional roads already in need of regular maintenance, is not equipped for construction traffic on the scale anticipated. The proposed grid connection, stretching approximately 26 km and following local road corridors, will significantly increase disruption and risk for daily commuters, school traffic, and farm activities.

The long-term implications are equally concerning. The installation of underground electrical infrastructure along this route will:

- hinder future road repairs and drainage works,
- restrict future development applications along the corridor, and
- impose additional maintenance burdens on local authorities.

This route also passes near culturally significant locations, including the historic area of **Lough Gur** and directly alongside the **Grange Stone Circle**, raising further concerns regarding heritage protection.

5. Agriculture and Environmental Impacts

The Dromin–Athlacca–Bruff region is a strong agricultural area, supporting numerous family farms and small rural enterprises. The introduction of a large-scale industrial project in this landscape poses risks to:

- rivers, streams, and private wells,
- local wastewater treatment systems,
- soil integrity and field drainage,

- the habitats of local bird species and wildlife, and
- the movement patterns of animals, machinery, and people between farm holdings.

Concerns have also been raised regarding the potential for disease spread in livestock due to increased traffic, disruption of farm boundaries, and the movement of wildlife along newly created pathways and river crossings.

Furthermore, the risk of pollution to waterways during construction—through disturbed soils, industrial materials, or accidental runoff—cannot be underestimated.

I respectfully request that An Coimisiún Pleanála give full and careful consideration to the concerns outlined above and to the submissions made by residents, experts, and community groups. Renewable energy development must be achieved in a manner that respects the health, heritage, environment, and sustainability of rural communities.

Thank you for your attention to this submission.

Le meas,

Richard O'Donoghue TD