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Crean,  
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Co. Limerick.  
V35P447.

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,

I am a dairy farmer based in the Bruff area, where my family has farmed for generations. My house and farm are located within 700 meters of a turbine. My outfarm is located between the 2 clusters of turbines (Ballinrea). This cumulative effect of these turbines could be devastating on my livestock and livelihood. I am writing to lodge a formal objection to the proposed 17-turbine wind farm, due to the serious risks it poses to livestock, the local farming community, and the sensitive wildlife habitats that lie directly within the footprint of the proposed development.

The proposed turbine sites (particularly T1–T5) lie directly within the known habitats and flight paths of several protected and vulnerable bird species, many of which have been routinely observed by local farmers, walkers, and residents.

The following species have been sighted exactly in the area where the turbines are proposed, and in some cases within metres of planned turbine locations:

Protected and vulnerable bird species regularly seen on-site:

- Little Egret (protected)
- Common Crane (high conservation concern)
- Herring Gull (protected)
- Curlews (red-listed, critically endangered in Ireland)
- Plovers (protected wading birds)
- Buzzards (fully protected; cannot be hunted – confirmed by Department of Agriculture guidance)
- Corncrake – observed locally (one of Ireland’s most endangered breeding birds)
- Whooper Swans – frequently recorded flying and grazing directly across the T1–T5 corridor

These species rely on lowland wet grasslands, marshes, hedgerows, and quiet open fields — all of which lie within the construction area. Wind turbines pose severe risks to such birds through collision, displacement, noise disturbance, and fragmentation of habitat.

The presence of Whooper Swans, a strictly protected migratory species, is of particular concern, as they travel predictable flight lines across the proposed turbine cluster. Any interference with their flight path risks significant ecological damage and could contravene EU Birds Directive obligations.

These sightings have been made by lifelong residents, farmers, and local observers who know the landscape intimately. Their reports demonstrate that the EIAR has systematically underestimated the wildlife sensitivity of the proposed development zone.

Coillte has released Pine Martens into the local forestry network specifically to reduce grey squirrel populations and help restore habitat conditions needed for the native Red Squirrel, which is experiencing dramatic decline nationwide.

This wind farm site overlaps directly with:

- established red squirrel territories,
- mature hedgerows and woodland corridors, and
- the Pine Marten reintroduction zone.

This area is one of the very few places where Red Squirrels are now thriving again due to carefully managed ecological intervention. Introducing heavy construction, road widening, turbine bases, and year-round industrial activity threatens to undo years of habitat recovery work.

To approve a project that could damage a species actively being restored through State-supported conservation programmes would be contradictory to national biodiversity commitments.

My dairy herd relies on stable routines, quiet surroundings, and predictable land access. The construction of a 17-turbine industrial wind farm would:

- introduce constant noise and vibration,
- increase stress in cattle,
- reduce milk yield and fertility,
- disrupt grazing and silage operations,
- block traditional farm access routes through roadworks and machinery movement.

Livestock stress has long-term economic repercussions that cannot be undone once the environment is permanently changed.

The proposed construction traffic presents a major risk to both animal welfare and farm safety. Dairy cows are highly sensitive to noise, light, and disruption. The plan for continuous heavy-goods traffic, including night-time transport of turbine components, will cause unnecessary stress to my herd. Sudden light glare from convoys, reversing alarms, engine noise, and unfamiliar machinery during night time hours can lead to unsettled cattle, reduced milk yield, agitation, and increased risk of injury in the herd. This is not theoretical—cows

react strongly to irregular lights and loud mechanical noise, particularly at night when they expect calm and quiet. Additionally, the main access route for turbine construction passes directly through areas where my cattle must cross the road daily for milking and grazing. Introducing high-frequency HGV traffic during these crossing periods creates a serious safety hazard, both for the animals and for road users. The construction schedule indicates over 170 deliveries per day, an industrial traffic volume entirely incompatible with a working dairy farm. This level of disruption will impede safe cattle movement, increase stress-related health issues, and significantly interfere with the daily running of the farm.

The calving season is the most delicate and demanding period in dairy farming, when cows require a calm, stable, and predictable environment. Any disturbance—particularly loud noise, heavy machinery, flashing lights, or irregular movement—can cause cows to become stressed or unsettled, which increases the risk of difficult calving's, injuries, or cows rejecting their calves. Construction traffic, night-time deliveries, and sudden bursts of turbine-related activity pose a serious threat during this period, as even minor stress can lead to reduced milk let-down, delayed calving, or health complications for both cows and new born calves. A wind farm construction site operating at this scale is completely incompatible with the quiet and controlled conditions required for safe and healthy calving.

Bruff is a farming community, and agriculture is the backbone of the local economy. Seventeen industrial turbines would fundamentally alter the landscape, reduce property values, and damage the rural environment that supports farming families and farm-based businesses.

I want to emphasise that I support renewable energy when developments are appropriately sited. However, placing a 17-turbine wind farm directly into a sensitive agricultural and biodiversity corridor is not responsible environmental planning. It places farming livelihoods, protected species, and restored habitats at unnecessary risk.

The proposed development lies directly within the habitats, flight paths, and feeding grounds of numerous protected and endangered species, including Little Egrets, Curlews, Whooper Swans, Buzzards, and Red Squirrels. It also threatens the viability of dairy farming operations and undermines years of local conservation work.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that the planning authority refuse permission for this project.

Thank you for considering my submission.

Yours sincerely,

Roger Mulqueen.