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V35 PC64

The Secretary,
An Coimisiún Pleanála
64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1,
D01 V902

I wish to object to the proposed development by Balinlee Green Energy for the construction of a wind farm comprising 17 turbines and associated infrastructure at Balinlee County Limerick. Whilst I acknowledge the importance of renewable energy and the need for sustainable development, this proposal is inappropriate for this location and would result in significant adverse impact.

I have lived in the Golden Vale area for a large portion of my life. The Golden Vale is famous for its rich fertile soil. The soil is great for growing grass which is why it is do good for dairy farms. Farmers here can raise healthy cows that produce a lot of milk. I have a farm rented on a lease and it is my main source of income. My late husband and raised a family on this land and have fond memories of this. When the current lease has expired some of my sons might farm the land again. The construction of the wind turbines will be unnecessarily impact the heart of the Golden Vale without giving sufficient return or value to the hinterland and wider area, potentially my income and the chance for my sons to make a viable living from the farm.

Some of my family have recently built homes in the area. The construction of 17 turbines will impact the site of the house with the turbines in close proximity. The closeness of large turbines is widely associated with reduced property values and diminished attractiveness of rural areas for residential settlement. They were previously living in Dublin and still work there. I am anxious that the construction may force them to move, along with my grandchildren back to Dublin.

A further threat to my family living in the area is that this development would discourage future rural housing and risk population decline contrary to the County Development Plan's rural sustainability objectives. This could further prompt my family to consider moving as it could impact their education. They attend a local rural primary school with already reducing numbers in the school. They attend activities and play for the local GAA club who are also struggling for playing resources. Any further pressure on numbers would see the club come under further pressure. When they were looking for planning permission to build our forever home we had no indication that a proposed 17 wind turbine could be out noisy neighbour. To operate a transparent and clear planning framework key developments like this should be signposted in some fashion.

The EIAR (Chapter 12 – Noise & Vibration) concludes no significant health effects, but provides limited receptor specific analysis for homes within approximately 2km and does not assess low frequency noise or amplitude modulation. This conflicts with the WHO Environmental Noise Guidelines (2018), which link wind turbine noise to sleep disturbance and reduced quality of life. Independent baseline and post-construction monitoring, curtailment protocols and accessible community reporting are required.

My home is approximately 2km from the nearest turbine. I am an elderly lady and at the moment I do not require much sleep but I am a light sleeper and I worry that if I wake at night I may not get back to sleep. As I live on my own, but with family nearby, the days can be long and I wonder what the long days hold.

The proposed construction and maintenance traffic, including oversized turbine deliveries, would place severe pressure on the local road network, which is narrow rural and unsuitable for heavy industrial transport. There are legitimate concerns regarding road safety, fire tender access and the adequacy of emergency responses routes which are not clearly demonstrated in the application. I like the independence my car gives me. I can drive around locally, get messages, call to life-long friends and provide them with support and do messages for them. Chapter 2 notes that it is proposed that construction will occur within the hours of 7am to 7pm, Monday to Saturday or as otherwise conditional as part of the consent. The traffic at construction is at the times I would be out and about and the very busy roads would mean additional challenges to get around. This would have a negative impact on my well being.

Conclusion

For the reasons outlined above, the proposed Balinlee Wind farm:

- Conflicts with multiple policies and objectives of the Limerick County Development Plan 2022 – 2028
- Fails to protect the residential amenity, health and long term welfare of local communities with a big impact on my family,
- Would cause unacceptable visual noise and environmental impacts, and
- The additional traffic at construction will present challenges.

Regards,
Rose