

Sonas,  
Knockmeal,  
Ballinamult,  
Co. Waterford,  
Ireland,  
E91 RP30

20<sup>th</sup> Nov 2025

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

To whom it may concern

**An Coimisiún Pleanála Case Reference: VA93.323791**

**Strategic Infrastructure Development Application** (SID Determination ref: ABP-317824-23)  
By TOBIN Consulting Engineers on behalf of **FuturEnergy Scart Mountain Designated Activity Company**

**Description: Proposed Development of a 110kV underground Grid Connection from the proposed Scart Mountain Wind Farm development (case ref: PA93.321522, currently awaiting decision) to Dungarvan substation in County Waterford.**

The proposed 110kV grid connection and related works are located within the townlands of Ballykerin Middle, Ballymacmague North, Carrigaun (Hely), Carrowgarriff Beg, Carrowgarriff More, Churchquarter, Colligan More, Colliganmountain, Colliganwood, Coolroe, Glen Lower, Glen Upper, Graigue Beg, Graigue More, Inchindrisla, Inchindrislawood, Killadangan, Lisroe, Newtown, Parkmore, Scart (Hely), Scart (Sergeant), Scartmountain, Staigbraud, and Vicarstown South, Co. Waterford.

[www.scartmountaingridplanning.ie](http://www.scartmountaingridplanning.ie)

I wish to make the following Observation against the above planning application for the construction of Scart Mountain Grid Connection:

This planning application is for construction of an underground 110kV Grid Connection (and all associated infrastructure) that will connect the proposed Scart Mountain Wind Farm (ACP Ref. 321522) development (approximately 4 km northeast of Cappoquin and approximately 13 km northwest of Dungarvan) to the existing 110kv Dungarvan substation in County Waterford. The cable route will be constructed primarily within public roads within the jurisdiction of Waterford City and County Council.

The site of the no. 15-turbine proposed Scart Mountain Wind Farm itself is located in an area deemed a 'Wind Energy Exclusion' area and 'Highly Sensitive' in the Landscape and Seascape Character Assessment by Waterford City and County Council (WCCC) under the Waterford City and County Council Development Plan 2022-2028. And while I understand I can no longer make an Observation against the wind farm development, I wish the Commission to bear in mind that its unsuitability needs to be taken into consideration when making a decision on the Grid Connection Application as both developments are interdependent on each other and one cannot function without the other – as the Applicant themselves states.

There are many alternative location options within Waterford, where land is zoned as 'Preferred' and 'Open to Consideration' under the Wind Energy Strategy of the Development Plan. One of the aims of the Renewable Energy Strategy is to maximise the opportunities for renewable energy development, whilst safeguarding the environment and other amenities, subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Directive Assessment requirements. Much research and careful consideration was undertaken by WCCC when deciding the areas of suitability for wind farm development. And as the Commission will be aware, the Planning Authority of Waterford County Council does not recommend that planning permission be granted for the proposed wind farm development – this was unanimously agreed by all councillors present at the Dungarvan and Lismore District Meeting on 26 February 2025 (please refer to correspondence from WCC dated 10 March 2025).

My main concerns for this Grid Connection planning application are:

### **1. Road Safety & Traffic**

As someone who travels these rural roads daily, I am deeply concerned about the disruption this project will cause. Our roads are narrow, winding, and already hazardous. Closures and detours will severely impact local businesses and the farming community. School bus routes have not been addressed, putting children at risk. Emergency services could face delays reaching homes and businesses, which again, is unacceptable. These disruptions will also make the area less attractive to potential homebuyers, stressing an already depopulated area.

### **2. Cumulative Effects**

Our community has already endured years of uncertainty due to multiple wind farm proposals. If this grid connection overlaps with others, the combined impact will mean constant road closures and disruption for local businesses, farmers, and tradespeople. This will affect school runs from Modeligo and Touraneena National schools, medical appointments, and the ability to maintain livelihoods. Prolonged disruption will make the area less desirable for new residents and investors, negatively impacting property values and long-term community growth.

### **3. Risk to Public Water Supply**

Our community and local enterprises depend on the Modeligo Water Pump Station for clean drinking water. The proposed borrow pit and route are dangerously close to this supply, yet the application ignores Uisce Éireann's warnings. Any contamination would directly affect homes, schools, and businesses such as food producers and hospitality venues. This is not just a technical oversight - it's a threat to public health and economic stability. A perceived risk to water quality will also deter property buyers and reduce confidence in the area.

#### 4. Environmental, SAC, and Biodiversity Risks

We take pride in living in an area rich in natural beauty and biodiversity, which supports tourism and outdoor recreation businesses. The Blackwater River SAC and Dungarvan Harbour SPA are vital to our environment and local economy. The proposed works risk polluting these waters, harming protected species and damaging ecosystems that attract visitors. After the recent ecological disaster in the Blackwater SAC, approving this project would be reckless and detrimental to tourism and fishing industries. Loss of natural amenities will also reduce the attractiveness of the area for homeowners, impacting property values.

#### 5. Heritage Impact

Our heritage sites - such as the ringfort and the old church and graveyard - are part of our identity and draw cultural tourism. Modeligo has mountain castle (Slade Castle), linked to the McGrath family, which was built back in 1628. Damage to these monuments would not only erase history but also harm businesses that depend on heritage tourism. It would also diminish the cultural value of living here, making the area less appealing to prospective buyers and lowering property values.

#### 6. Legislative & Policy Compliance

Our community expects developments to respect environmental laws and Ireland's Climate & Biodiversity Emergency commitments. This application fails to demonstrate compliance with key directives and policies, undermining trust in the planning process and threatening the sustainability of our region and its economy. Uncertainty and perceived risk from non-compliant projects can depress property values and discourage investment.

#### 7. Division Within the Community

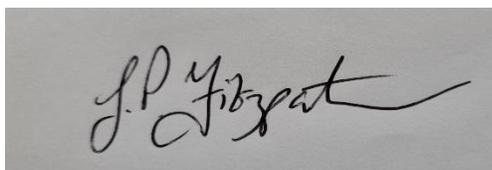
This proposal is already creating tension and division among residents. Some see potential economic benefits, while others fear irreversible environmental and social damage. This split is harmful to community cohesion, leading to strained relationships and conflict. The planning process should aim to unite communities, not fracture them. Approving a project that polarizes opinion without proper consultation will have long-term social consequences.

#### 8. Telecommunications Impacts

The proposal fails to assess impacts on Wireless (Satellite) Broadband services operating in the area, which rural communities rely on for internet access. Wind turbines can cause signal blocking, reflection, and chopping, leading to degraded broadband and broadcast services. With multiple wind farms planned in proximity, cumulative interference risks are significant.

I trust that An Coimisiún Pleanála will refuse to grant planning permission for the proposed Grid Connection, based on the grounds of this Observation and other reasons which the Commission consider appropriate for refusing permission.

Yours faithfully

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in black ink. The signature appears to be 'J.P. Fitzpatrick' written in a cursive, flowing style.

Please note, a €50 payment of my observation has been made via the <https://online.pleanala.ie/en-ie/sid/observation?q=323791> online portal database.