

Ballinoe

Miltown Malbay

Co Clare

15/05/2026

To: An Coimisiun Pleanala

Planning Ref No: PAX03.324155

Description: Windfarm referred to As Cahermurphy West

Location: Townlands of Cahermurphy, Carrowmagry South, Castlepark, Caheraghacullin, Doolough, Drummin, Kilmihil, Knockalough, Knocknahila More South, Co. Clare.

Dear Sir/Madam,

On behalf of our group Miltown Locals Say No To Windfarm, I am writing to formally object to the proposed wind farm development and associated grid infrastructure referenced above. We are a small rural community similar in many respects to the local population in the vicinity of the proposed Cahermurphy West windfarm. Our motivation for objecting to this development is also influenced by injustice and imbalance whereby a small community is repeatedly facing a developer with apparently unlimited resources.

Our concerns about this development include:

1. Overconcentration of Wind Turbines

West Clare already hosts scores of operating turbines, with many more awaiting decisions. This site would contribute to saturation and over proliferation of wind turbines in a small rural area. While accepting the necessity for renewable energy, we feel that our local communities already host more than their fair share of the wind energy developments.

2. Scale and Visual Impact

Industrial turbines of 600ft (185m) would be visually overwhelming considering their scale and size. They would constitute an overbearingly prominent feature in the landscape that would be visible for several miles in all directions. It is impossible to mitigate such gigantic turbines.

3. Proximity to Residences

The turbines are planned too close to homes, causing major concerns about noise, shadow flicker, and overall impact on residential amenity. Clare County Council have repeatedly refused windfarm applications citing the necessity for an appropriate balance to be reached between these developments and the preservation of residential amenity. Herein we have grave concerns as to the reliability of predictions carried out by consultants acting on behalf of the developers. The EIAR is essentially a subjective developer sponsored document prepared with the sole purpose of facilitating the development by minimising likely impacts. These predictions are then taken on board by planning authorities who often lack the technical expertise required to see the flaws involved.

A local resident and member of our group has been complaining for years about noise levels from the nearby Sl Callan windfarm. The complaints fell on deaf ears. Frustrated by this inaction, the resident recently commissioned an independent noise survey at his residence. The noise levels exceeded the permitted 45dB level for days on end. The exceedance was regularly of the order of 20-25dB which must cast serious doubt on the authenticity of the studies carried out by the consultants as part of the EIA.

4. Health Risks

Windfarms pose potential health effects include sensory issues, epilepsy, hearing impacts, and child development concerns. Shadow Flicker is a major concern for many in our communities. It has been over seven years since Sl Callan has become operational and in that time the much-heralded practice of wind turbines automatically turning off has not been witnessed even once by locals. The most vulnerable in our communities need protection as opposed to being cast as guinea pigs with regard to risks that developers deny and cite the lack of conclusive proof. The asbestos parallel is particularly relevant for many in our communities.

5. Impact on Communications

It is well documented that large wind turbines interfere with certain forms of electromagnetic and radio-frequency communications. TV and radio signals are disturbed by the physical presence of rotating blades leading to signal reflection, diffraction and shadowing. This results in degraded or intermittent reception at local residences. Huge wind turbines also interfere with cellular and broadband signals, potentially creating dead zones or reducing signal strengths. This interference has widespread implications for everyday communications and emergency services. People depending on remote working capabilities are also seriously impacted.

6. Environmental Concerns

The site poses a serious threat to local wildlife, particularly the EU-protected Hen Harrier. The loss of foraging area will result negatively on the preservation and potential breeding of hen harriers, a protected species that are listed on Annex 1 of the EU, due to their declining population. Wind farms elsewhere, particularly in similar upland habitats have been documented to cause direct mortality due to turbine collisions. Proposed mitigation measures are totally inadequate. We urge the planning authority to refuse this application as allowing this development would pose an unacceptable risk to a nationally important bird of prey and would ultimately help in leading to their extinction.

Furthermore, the site of this proposed development has been shown to support a range of species and habitats of immense ecological value. This development threatens local wildlife populations and ecological networks due to disturbance, habitat loss and fragmentation.

7. Property and Community Impacts

Property values in the vicinity of turbines will be reduced. More and more people are reaching that conclusion, and it is easy to understand why this is the case. Homes that are dwarfed by 600ft turbines and exposed to turbine noise and shadow flicker are just not an attractive investment. The gigantic nature of these turbines means that entire areas of rural countryside are effectively sterilised with regard to new house developments. Young people restricted by the local “thinning need” policy are put in a terrible position and are left with little choice other than to move away from their native areas which leads to further depopulation and economic hardship. It is somewhat encouraging that potential property devaluation has been cited as a reason for refusal of wind farms by Clare County Council.

8. Consultation, Guidelines and Community Fund

Public consultation has been inadequate, and the outdated Wind Energy Guidelines (2006) do not reflect recent health research. Notably, the Cahermurphy II site has been refused permission twice previously. Guidelines, though notoriously outdated and inadequate, still require proper and meaningful community engagement. This never happens in reality. Periodic communications and public displays informing the public on what has been decided hardly counts as meaningful engagement. The community fund is something that should be totally discarded for the reasons that it is of minimal benefit to the residents who are most impacted and it clearly adds to further community tensions and divisions in the administration of the fund.

9: Grid Route Concerns

In addition to the severe disruption caused by the delivery of the gigantic turbines, we have the following concerns with regard to the proposed grid route

- A. High Voltage Cables
Potential hazards associated with high voltage infrastructure
- B. Extensive Trenching
Significant disruption to roads and private land will occur during cable installation
- C. Travel Disruption

The project will cause significant travel disturbance, including 241 planned road closure days and access restrictions during works.

D. Future Planning Issues

The grid infrastructure may create obstacles for future development and planning.

E. Risk to Local Water Supplies

Construction and trenching may pose risks to water sources.

F. Health Risks from EMF

There are potential health concerns related to exposure to electro-magnetic fields (EMF).

For these reasons, we respectfully request that the planning authority refuse permission for the proposed wind farm and associated grid route development.

Thank you for considering my objection/submission

Yours sincerely,

Laura MacMahon

On behalf of Miltown Local Say No To Windfarm