

Eileen O'Mahony
13 Slip Grow
Bantry, Co. Cork
P75 AP92

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eilywillows@gmail.com
086 3409143

Planning Application Reference Number: ACP-324165-26

Applicant: Maughanaclea Ltd / Enerco

Description of Development: 10 year planning permission for Maughanaclea Wind Farm consisting of 14 no. wind turbines, a 110kV substation and 110kV underground cabling connection and associated work

Location: Maughanaclea, County Cork

Dear Sirs

I am writing to object to the proposed wind farm development at Maughanaclea. Although I live in Bantry, my nephews and extended family live in the area and my family has deep roots there. I have known this landscape all my life and I am very worried about the effect this development could have on the people living nearby, on the wider environment and on the future character of the area.

My biggest concern by far is the impact this proposal could have on my family members who live close to the proposed turbines. Some have lived there for generations and others had hoped to continue building their lives and raising families in the area. This is currently a peaceful rural place where people chose to live because of the quiet surroundings, natural beauty and strong sense of community. The thought of having 14 industrial scale turbines surrounding homes and farmland is causing real stress and uncertainty for people locally.

I understand the importance of renewable energy and the need to address climate change. However, I do not believe every location is suitable for a development of this scale. The proposed turbines are extremely large at almost 169 metres in height and the project is proposed to operate for up to 35 years. This is not a short-term or temporary change. It would permanently alter the landscape and living environment of the area for decades.

I am very concerned about the effect this could have on people's quality of life and wellbeing. This is currently an exceptionally quiet and unspoilt rural area. The introduction of turbines of this size, together with noise, shadow flicker, aviation lighting and the constant movement of turbine blades, would completely change the experience of living there. While reports and models may state impacts can be controlled, I believe the real lived experience for nearby residents can be very different.

Even the uncertainty surrounding the proposal is already affecting people emotionally. Families who have lived and farmed in the area for generations feel they are facing a future they did not choose and cannot control. Younger members of the family who had hoped to build homes and remain in the area are now questioning what the future will look like if this development proceeds.

I am also deeply concerned about the financial impact on local families. People's homes and land are often their main asset as well as the centre of family life. Families who farm locally or who have lived there for generations cannot simply leave if the development negatively affects their enjoyment of their homes or the value of their property. I do not believe community benefit funds can compensate families for permanent impacts on their homes, landscape and quality of life.

The visual impact on this part of West Cork would also be enormous. This is an area of exceptional scenic beauty with hills, lakes, streams, bogland and quiet rural roads that are valued by both local people and visitors. It is a landscape that still feels natural and relatively untouched in many places. I believe turbines of this scale are completely out of character with the area and would industrialise a landscape that is currently peaceful and unspoilt.

I am also very concerned about the cumulative impact of wind farm development across West Cork. This is not a single isolated proposal. More and more large-scale wind energy developments are being proposed throughout the region and there comes a point where the landscape simply cannot absorb further development without losing the qualities that make it special. The gradual industrialisation of rural West Cork is becoming increasingly noticeable and worrying for many people.

The Environmental Impact Assessment itself acknowledges that cumulative impacts, residential amenity, visual impact and environmental sensitivities must all be carefully considered. While the site may be described as "Open to Consideration" within planning policy, this clearly does not mean that any development should automatically proceed regardless of impact. The planning

policies themselves refer to the need to avoid unacceptable impacts on residential amenity, visual impact and the wider landscape. I do not believe this proposal achieves that balance.

I also have serious concerns regarding the environmental impact of the construction works on sensitive upland habitats, peatland and local watercourses. This area contains important bogland, streams and wet ground which are part of a fragile upland environment. The scale of excavation, road building, drainage works and turbine foundations required for a project of this size would inevitably change the character of the area and risks causing long-term environmental damage.

The wider area is also important for wildlife and birdlife. Over many years visiting and spending time there I have seen many species associated with these upland habitats. I find it very difficult to believe that a development involving turbines, new roads, construction compounds, borrow pits and large-scale excavation can happen without significant disturbance to the local environment.

West Cork's scenery and rural character are some of its greatest strengths. People are drawn to this area because of its beauty, peace, wildlife and sense of place. Tourism and the local quality of life are closely connected to the unspoilt nature of the landscape. I believe developments of this scale risk gradually changing the character of the area beyond recognition.

For all of these reasons, I respectfully ask An Coimisiún Pleanála to refuse permission for the proposed development.

Regards
Eileen OMahony