Patrick O’Sullivan
Goulanes
Bantry
Co. Cork
P75 XN61

An Coimisiún Pleanála
64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1
D01 V902

15 May 2026

Re: Submission of objection. Proposed Maughanaclea Wind Farm, townlands of Maughanaclea, Coornahahilly and Derryduff, Co. Cork. Planning reference ACP-324165-26.

Dear Sir or Madam,

I object to the proposed development referenced above. My family home is at Goulanes, Bantry, P75 XN61, approximately 2 km from the nearest proposed turbine. I have lived here all my life. My points are set out below.

landscape and visual impact: The turbines will be visible from my home, from the yard, and from the road and fields around it. At a tip height of 169 m each turbine is more than twice the height of the floodlight pylons at Croke Park. There are seven of them, lined along the ridge. Six lit at night. From a quiet valley with no skyline interruptions at present, this is not a minor change. The Mealagh Valley landscape that I grew up looking at will be a different place.

cumulative effect: West Cork already carries a heavy share of onshore wind development. Adding seven more turbines of this scale on top of what is already present, and what is already permitted, is excessive. The combined visual, noise and ecological effect of the existing and proposed wind farms in the wider area has not, in my view, been properly assessed in the EIAR. The cumulative picture is what matters to people living here, and it is the picture that has been dealt with most thinly.

residential amenity: Goulanes is a quiet rural place. The peace and quiet of this house is not background scenery; it is the thing itself. The construction phase is projected to last 18 to 24 months, with heavy haulage, dust, blasting and rock-breaking. That is two years of daily disruption to ordinary life at the house. After construction, the operational noise carries on for the lifetime of the development.

property value and the future: I am in my early twenties. Like many young people in the area, I had assumed that one day I would build a home on family land here. A peer-reviewed Irish study by Gillespie and McHale at the University of Galway found that house prices within 1 km of a turbine were on average 14.7 percent lower than comparable houses further away, with effects detectable beyond 1 km and persisting for around a decade after construction (see source A). I am not making a speculative complaint. There is published Irish evidence that this development will reduce the value of the house I grew up in and will make it harder for me to build a future on this land. That is a real loss, and one the Commission should weigh.

health in the household: My mother suffers from debilitating migraines that are triggered by flickering light. The prospect of red aviation lights flashing on the ridge above the house, every night, for the lifetime of the development, is a serious source of anxiety in our family. My grandparents have sensory sensitivities and would also be affected by night-time light and by the noise of the turbines carrying across the valley. The systematic review by Onakpoya and colleagues (see source B) found a significant association between wind turbine noise and annoyance, and reported that wind turbine noise is associated with sleep disturbance and reduced quality of life, with the effect more pronounced in quiet rural areas than in noisy ones. Goulanes is a quiet rural area.

shadow flicker: Our home is within range of the modelled shadow flicker zone. The rooms and outdoor spaces my family uses every day are within that range. Given the migraine condition in the household, I do not accept the modelled exceedance figures in the EIAR at face value. The model assumptions, the receptor list and the residual risk to identified sensitive receptors should be re-examined.

noise: I want to set out the noise concerns clearly, as a stand-alone ground of objection. The proposed turbines sit on a ridgeline, with our home on the valley floor below. Peer-reviewed work by Van Renterghem of Ghent University, published in Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society, demonstrates that sound propagation from a ridge wind turbine across a valley behaves very differently from sound propagation over flat ground; ridge-mounted turbines produce a complex sound pressure distribution across the valley which is not captured by standard flat-ground models (see source C). I do not believe the noise assessment submitted with the EIAR has properly accounted for this terrain. There are also separate concerns about low-frequency noise, amplitude modulation, night-time noise, and construction-phase rock-breaking echoing across the valley for the duration of the works. I reserve all rights in respect of noise as a ground of objection.

dark skies: The night sky above Goulanes is, at present, very dark. Recent modelling by Bará and Lima, published in the Journal of Quantitative Spectroscopy and Radiative Transfer, shows that medium-intensity aviation lights of the type proposed for these turbines can appear brighter than Venus up to approximately 4 km from the turbine and brighter than Sirius, the brightest star in the night sky, up to about 10 km (see source D). At 2 km from the nearest turbine, six lit red lights flashing on a ridge above my home will be the dominant feature of the night sky. This is not a small effect, and it is irreversible for the operational life of the development.

tourism: The Mealagh Valley falls within the Fáilte Ireland West Cork Coast Destination and Experience Development Plan area. Dark skies and unspoiled landscape have been specifically identified by Fáilte Ireland as tourism assets along the Wild Atlantic Way, with West Cork named among the parts of Ireland still holding Class 1 and Class 2 dark skies (see source E). Industrial lighting on the ridge above the valley directly undermines that designation and the small tourism businesses that rely on it.

habitat and biodiversity: The site lies within an area used by protected species including pine marten, red squirrel and Irish hare. The EIAR has not, in my reading, fully addressed habitat fragmentation effects on these species, or the loss of native woodland on parts of the site. Bird survey effort across breeding seasons appears to me to fall short of what would be needed to draw confident conclusions about raptor activity in the area.

archaeology and heritage: The applicant's own Environmental Impact Assessment Report records 11 archaeological sites within the wind farm site itself, a further 210 sites within 5 km, and 6 National

Monuments within 10 km. Among these is the Kealkill Stone Circle, which has the protection of a Preservation Order under the National Monuments Act (PO 69/1938). The cultural heritage chapter of the EIAR concedes that there will be visual impacts on heritage settings that cannot be mitigated. The Mealagh Valley's prehistoric monument cluster and the St Finbarr's Pilgrimage Path / Mealagh Valley Loop Walk run through this landscape. A turbine line of 169 m structures on the ridge above is not a setting these monuments were left to us in.

road closures and access to Cork: I travel between Goulanes and Waterford regularly. The applicant's proposals include closures and diversions on the R586 over an extended construction period. The R586 is also the route to Cork University Hospital, which is the receiving hospital for emergencies in this area. Closures on a route of that kind are not a minor logistical inconvenience. They have direct implications for emergency response times and for ordinary access to medical appointments in Cork.

safety on local roads: Heavy haulage of turbine components and construction materials over small, winding local roads is a serious concern. The geometry of these roads was not designed for vehicles of that scale, and the cumulative volume of HGV movements over an 18 to 24 month period creates a sustained safety risk for residents, walkers, cyclists and farm traffic.

landslide risk: Construction works on steep, peat-influenced slopes carry a recognised risk of slope instability. The history of peat movement on Irish upland wind farm sites is well documented, and I do not consider that the site's ground conditions, drainage and slope geometry have been assessed conservatively enough.

process and consent: The community has not given meaningful consent to this development. Engagement by the applicant was not, in my experience or my family's experience, transparent. The proposed Community Benefit Fund is not adequate compensation for a permanent industrial installation on the ridge above the valley, and is not a substitute for consent.

climate: I am not opposed to renewable energy. I support climate action. But renewable energy should be sited where it does the least harm. This site is the wrong place. Offshore wind, brownfield sites and rooftop solar should be prioritised over the industrialisation of an intact upland landscape with significant heritage, ecological and amenity value, and with a settled community living in close proximity to it.

For the reasons set out above, I respectfully request that An Coimisiún Pleanála refuse permission for the proposed development.

Yours faithfully,

Patrick O'Sullivan
Goulanes, Bantry, Co. Cork, P75 XN61

Sources cited

A. Gillespie, T. & McHale, P. (2023). *Wind Turbines and House Prices Along the West of Ireland: A Hedonic Pricing Approach*. CERIS Working Paper 2023/01, University of Galway. Available from the CERIS

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B. Onakpoya, I.J., O'Sullivan, J., Thompson, M.J. & Heneghan, C.J. (2015). *The effect of wind turbine noise on sleep and quality of life: A systematic review and meta-analysis of observational studies*. Environment International, 82, 1–9.

C. Van Renterghem, T. (2017). *Sound propagation from a ridge wind turbine across a valley*. Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society A, 375: 20160105.

D. Bará, S. & Lima, R.C. (2024). *Quantifying the visual impact of wind farm lights on the nocturnal landscape*. Journal of Quantitative Spectroscopy and Radiative Transfer, 329: 109203.

E. Fáilte Ireland / CHL Consulting (2019). *Feasibility Study for Maximising the Tourism Potential of Dark Sky Assets on the Wild Atlantic Way*. Final Report, April 2019.