

AN COIMISIÚN PLEANÁLA	
LDG-	_____
ACP-	_____
10 SEP 2026	
Fee: €	_____ Type: _____
Time: 9:35	By: RW 10/9/26

Tony Miller & Kristin Laubach,

Tooreen,

Dunmanway,

Co. Cork.

08th September, 2026.

REF: Maughanaclea Ltd. Case PAX04 324165

SID application for 14 No turbines at Maughanaclea etc.

Dear Sir/Madam,

We have submitted an observation on this SID application and have been asked to comment on new information supplied by the developer and do not, therefore, have to pay the usual fee in this case.

Ref: Section 4.3.2 Nature Conservation.

We have read the very justifiable concerns raised by the DAU about the impact this extra large wind farm would have on the vulnerable bird life of this very varied habitat. The area of the Maughanaclea wind farm is also so important as a transit route for many species crossing between the farmland in the low lands, the more rugged uplands and, in the case of the white-tailed eagle between the waters of Bantry Bay, where they are known to nest, and the inland waters where they have been seen around Gougane Barra, Lough Allua and the Gearagh. This wind farm would be yet another large barrier to the free movement of bird life, especially as each turbine sweeps an area of over 4 acres!

We would like to support the DAU in their other concerns. The developers and MKO try to justify their low significance modelling for specific species, namely Sea Eagles, Choughs, Hen Harrier, Peregrine, Kestrel, Snipe, Red Grouse, Buzzard and Sparrowhawk by comparing collision risk modelling with all the other wind farms locally with similar habitats. This is a very strange way to justify Maughanaclea when bird species are collapsing catastrophically, possibly in large part to the other wind farms in the area! Even the SACs put in place for these species are now recognised to be mostly in very poor condition and hardly fit for purpose. MKO also use the presence of the Gortloughra wind farm data in connection with the Kestrel without explaining that the high Kestrel collision risk modelling for Gortloughra was one of the reasons the Council refused the application.

We would also like to remind ACP that MKO did not carry out a night time bird survey which is a requirement under the Scottish Nature Guidelines which have been adopted here as an industry standard. A night time survey is essential in order to have an idea of how much the area is used by birds after dark. This is important for such species as Barn and Long-Eared Owls, Snipe, Woodcock, nightjars

and Whooper Swans. The northern part of this proposed development is very close to Lough Nambrackderg on Shehy Mountain which is known to attract Whooper Swans.

**NatureScot**
NàdarAlba

Scotland's
Nature Agency
Buidhannan
Nàdar na h-Alba

Search NatureScot

3.7.6 Nocturnal species, especially owls

Species which are exclusively or largely nocturnal pose particular problems for survey as activity and use of the site occurs mainly during restricted visibility. Nocturnal activity may pose greater hazards for birds at wind farms therefore nocturnal species should be surveyed. Breeding survey should be undertaken and should extend out to 500m beyond the proposed site for non-owl species and 1km for owls.

Survey methods have been published for owls (Hardey *et al.*, 2009) and nightjar (Gilbert *et al.* 1998). In Scotland, nightjars are largely restricted as a regular breeding bird to a few areas of Dumfries & Galloway (D&G) and are unlikely to be encountered elsewhere. A radio-tracking study on nightjars in D&G showed that home range size was variable, ranging from approximately 90 to 600ha (Spray, 2007). Owls and nightjar can be surveyed by listening for calling birds around dusk at appropriate times of year: early spring from February onwards for owls and May-July for nightjar.

For owls, late evening survey for calling juveniles in May-July can also be useful to detect successful pairs. Adults may also be active during this time. Surveys for owls can be complemented by signs of occupation, such as moulted feathers and pellets.

Scottish Nature Guidelines

This is such an important issue as, along with biodiversity in general; bird populations in Ireland are in severe decline. It is especially species using farmland and the uplands which are being most affected. Wind farms are now such a large part of the land area in sensitive parts of the country, including West Cork, that they now have to take a much larger responsibility for species decline.

This can also be seen in the 'anthropogenic' disturbance concerns raised by the DAU for various bird species. We believe that the two years of construction with heavy machinery, rock breaking, road construction, lorries and concrete suppliers etc. would have a significant impact on birdlife in the greater area including ground nesting birds such as Hen Harrier. Two breeding seasons could be lost with serious implications for species population numbers.

It all comes down to cumulative effect. MKO and other developers are trying to justify the effects created by one wind farm almost in isolation. There are now such a large number of wind farms within 20km (28 in total) that they are having a real cumulative impact.

We would ask that ACP take the concerns raised by the DAU concerning the very real concerns for the vulnerable bird life of the area, and refuse this SID application

Yours sincerely,

Kristin Laubach + Tony Miller

Kristin Laubach & Tony Miller.