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► An Coimisiún Pleanála
64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1
D01 V902

Ref; Objection Submission on Case Number PAX16.324258

Tirawley Wind Farm Consisting of 16 Wind Turbines, a permanent 110Kv Substation, underground cable and grid connection and ancillary development in the townlands of Ballymurphy, Ballynaleck, Barnhill Lower, Upper, Barroe, Billoos, Carn, Carrickanass, Carrowmore, Castlelacken Demesne and various other surrounding townlands

Dear Sir/Madam

I am writing with grave concern to formally oppose the development of the proposed Tirawley Wind Farm as described above.

1. As an active member of the Ceide Coast Community Company, (a registered charity), I simply cannot, in conscience support anything that threatens to undo our hard fought and very valuable work: dedicated to the purpose of rebuilding a local sense of pride in our community, increasing real opportunities for our local businesses and farmers to thrive and grow, and creating a future for our children that is bright and full of possibility.

The wind farm threatens all of this.

2. Zero Public Consultation

There was zero local public consultation, and I am particularly offended to hear that the Developer claims to have spoken to the community. On the contrary, the first we heard of this was fearful whispering through our small community, after a very poorly publicised meeting took place in a town called Ballina, a 40-minute drive away. This feels very unfair, unethical, and immoral.

3. Wild Mayo Destination and Experience Development Plan (DEDP)

May 1st saw the public launch of the Mayo DEDP for Wild Mayo as an adventure and outdoor activity hub. Tourism Ireland, Mayo CC, The Minister for Social Protection and Rural Development Dara Calleary, the Minister for Small Business and Retail, Alan Dillon and the Senator Mark Duffy all gathered at the Ballinglen Art Foundation in Ballycastle to celebrate this momentous occasion.

The highlight of the wild Mayo development plan is the coastal pathway stretching from the Ciede Fields to Downpatrick Head. Dun Briste is an official discovery point on the Wild Atlantic Way, and this pathway is set to cover a total of 15kms. A budget has been set and awarded to ensure that this pathway, including 12 bridges will act as a **global** point of tourism and is seen as the crown jewel of the Wild Mayo DEDP.

Why then, would An Coimisiún Pleanála even consider granting planning permission which would directly undermine another government agency's fiscal and strategic planning? The construction disruption, the damage to an already frail infrastructure and the visual impact totally threatens the existence, let alone the success, of the Wild Mayo development plan.

A plan designed to position the destination of North Mayo as wild and unspoiled. A plan designed to "extend the tourism season, thereby bringing real value to the towns and villages as vibrant hubs, that encourage dwell time, exploration and year-round use". ***

A plan that is "sustainable, a plan that celebrates the environment, and the heritage of the area, a plan that champions sustainable and slow tourism models"

***. A plan designed to increase business and the livelihoods of all in the area.

The potential construction of the wind farm would decimate the Wild Mayo DEDP.

4. Previous UNESCO Heritage Neolithic Site

The Ceide Fields was a UNESCO designated and protected site. Someone apparently "forgot" to apply to update this status recently. Anyone who has visited the site knows how important it is for the area and indeed the whole of Ireland. It is the oldest settled farmer community in the world. At 6000 BC, the Neolithic area of

settled farmland covers an area that stretches from the Ceide Fields all the way across to the far side of Lacken, or in other words, exactly where the proposed site would be built. Most of this land is designated blanket bog. If this plan goes ahead, soakage will be compromised, or even lost, the plan is for these 16 turbines to be erected on elevated ground, increasing the likelihood of flooding our land and homes and also increasing the risk of bog slippage, as has already occurred in Co Galway. On this fact alone, it completely beggars belief that this location would even be remotely considered for a large industrial infrastructure. There has simply been inadequate, if any, archaeological and/or heritage assessments.

5. Life Savings, Our Homes and Our Futures

Some turbines are planned to be 400 to 750 metres away from family homes and farms. The constant humming noise, and shadow flicker experienced by our neighbours in Bellacorick has completely ruined their lives. They live in constant stress and fear. Their property values are totally diminished, they cannot get mortgages or remortgages if they need to raise money to help their children fund a University education, they cannot sell their properties, and should anyone want to build close to turbines on family land they cannot get planning permission.

I personally had to fight for over 2 years to build a small home on family land, and I know plenty of others who have struggled, some have been challenged for up to 4 year, simply to build a home, a small domestic dwelling, and yet it seems that there is a different set of rules for this large developer when they want to come into a peaceful rural habitat to build a large industrial infrastructure.

6. Doubts Over Energy End User

It is unclear if the energy will even go to the National Grid to support the Government's net zero targets, in one particular document the developer cites 3 end users. Firstly, a Hydrogen Plant, secondly, a Data Centre, and only thirdly, the Grid.

Reference the document

7. Palmerstown Bridge and Related Frail Infrastructure

For anyone living in the Ballycastle and Lacken areas, Palmerstown Bridge is a key access point. The bridge is over 200 years old and has not been properly surveyed. We have been informed that at the height of construction up to 11,000 wagons will need to pass over the bridge, this will cause massive stress and also physical constraints on the bridge and the rest of our rural infrastructure, it will also be a massive inconvenience for people trying to get to school at St Patrick's College at

Lacken Cross, and indeed for anyone trying to get to their work or to go about their daily business.

8. Environmental Concerns

This development poses significant and irreversible risks to the local environment, and biodiversity: critical habitats for protected species, and substantial other habitats will be removed, and ruined (in terms of approximately 4 kms of hedgerow). There are significant shortcomings in the Environmental Impact Report, and again, this alone should justify a refusal of the development.

There are several other self-evident reasons that this development is a ridiculous idea. Whilst I recognise the important need of renewable energy, this simply cannot be done at all costs.

I'm grateful to you for taking time to read my concerns
Yours sincerely

Bernadette Bourke
