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The Secretary
An Coimisiún Pleanála
64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1
D01 V902

Re: Objection to the Proposed Tirawley Wind Farm Strategic Infrastructure Development
Objection Submission to An Coimisiún Pleanála

Re: Planning permission for the construction of Tirawley Windfarm consisting of 16 no. wind turbines, a permanent 110kV substation, 110kV underground cable and grid connection, and ancillary development in the townlands of Ballymurphy, Ballynaleck, Barnhill Lower & Upper, Barroe, Billoos, Carn, Carrickanass, Carrowmore, Castlелacken Demesne, and other townlands in County Mayo.

Case Number: PAX16.324258

Dear Sir/Madam,

I have lived in Lissadrone all my life, the fourth generation of my family to do so. As did my Grandfather and Great Grandfather I farm the land and work locally as an agricultural fitter while carrying out my farming duties. It is a simple but rewarding way of life and has sustained families like mine for generations. My ancestors have held onto and farmed their land through bad times, recessions and emigration. Every member of my Great Grandfather's family emigrated to the States except him and he stayed here at home. He would be horrified to see what developers and the government can inflict on our rural population. A huge industrial Wind Farm on their doorstep, 6 turbines surrounding my home house and this is meant to be ok??? My own ancestors fought in the Easter Rising and were jailed so that Ireland would be an independent republic. They also fought in world wars for freedom and peace for all of us. As a young man, where does this industrialisation and walking on the ordinary people end? Do we live in a democracy or have any say in what happens to us, our homes or our way of life?

I strongly object to the proposed Tirawley Wind Farm on the grounds that it represents an inappropriate industrialisation of one of County Mayo's most sensitive and valuable rural landscapes.

This particular development is proposed in the wrong location, at the wrong scale, and with potentially irreversible consequences for the environment, local communities, tourism, and the long-term future of rural Mayo.

The issue is not whether Ireland should pursue renewable energy. The issue is whether one community should be asked to bear a disproportionate burden for a development of this scale while suffering the permanent loss of landscape character, visual amenity, and future development opportunities.

Destruction of an Outstanding Rural Landscape

The proposed turbines would dominate the skyline across a vast area of North Mayo. These are not modest structures integrated into the landscape. They are industrial-scale machines that would permanently transform the character of the area.

The landscape surrounding Lissadrone, Lacken, Kilcummin and the wider coastal hinterland is one of Mayo's greatest assets. It is defined by open vistas, traditional farming patterns, peatlands, drumlin landscapes, and uninterrupted views towards the Atlantic coast.

Once turbines of this scale are erected, the landscape can never be restored to its original condition. The development would introduce a permanent industrial presence into an area whose identity and attractiveness depend upon its natural and undeveloped character.

The claim that the landscape can absorb turbines approaching 200 metres in height defies common sense. Such structures would be visible for many kilometres and would become the dominant visual feature of the region.

The Potential Impact of the Tirawley Wind Farm on Farming Families, Rural Communities, and Property

The proposed Tirawley Wind Farm is often presented as a clean energy project that will benefit the nation. However, for farming families living within and around the development area, the reality will not be further from the truth.

The people who will experience the greatest consequences are not policymakers in Dublin or investors in energy companies. They are the families who live beside the turbines, farm the land, raise livestock, and hope to pass their holdings to future generations.

For these families, the project represents a fundamental and potentially irreversible change to their environment, their quality of life, and the future of their communities.

The Industrialisation of a Farming Landscape

The proposed development would transform a traditionally agricultural landscape into a major energy production zone.

The scale of the turbines means they will dominate the skyline and become the defining feature of the area.

What is currently a landscape of farms, homes, peatlands, hedgerows, and rural communities would become a landscape characterised by industrial infrastructure.

This change would not be temporary.

It would endure for decades and fundamentally alter the character of the area inherited and maintained by generations of farming families.

Impact on Livestock and Animal Welfare

The scientific evidence regarding direct impacts of wind turbines on livestock remains incomplete.

While some studies have found little measurable effect, farmers in a number of countries have reported concerns including:

- Changes in grazing behaviour.
- Increased nervousness during construction periods.
- Disturbance from noise and vibration.
- Avoidance of areas close to turbines.
- Stress caused by heavy construction traffic and ongoing maintenance activity.

Even where no direct physical harm can be proven, farming is heavily dependent on animal behaviour and productivity.

A small reduction in performance or increased management requirements can have significant economic consequences over time.

Farmers, rather than developers, would carry the financial risk of any unforeseen impacts.

Microclimate Effects Around Wind Turbines

Research has shown that large wind turbines can alter local atmospheric conditions.

As turbine blades rotate, they mix air between different layers of the atmosphere.

Studies in several countries have observed effects such as:

- Changes in local temperature patterns.

- Increased turbulence.
- Altered moisture distribution.
- Changes in frost occurrence.
- Variations in dew formation.

These effects are often referred to as turbine-induced microclimate changes.

Research conducted around large wind farms in the United States and Europe has demonstrated measurable localised temperature changes, particularly during nighttime conditions when turbines mix warmer air from higher altitudes with cooler air closer to the ground.

Although the extent of these effects varies according to weather conditions and topography, they demonstrate that wind farms do not simply occupy a landscape; they actively alter the local environment around them.

The long-term implications of such changes for grass growth, soil conditions, frost-sensitive areas, and agricultural productivity remain insufficiently understood.

For farmers whose livelihoods depend upon predictable environmental conditions, this uncertainty is a legitimate concern.

Property and Land Value Concerns

For many rural families, land and property represent the largest financial assets they will ever own.

The introduction of large-scale industrial infrastructure raises unavoidable questions regarding:

- Property values.
- Future marketability.
- Residential desirability.
- Potential buyers' perceptions.

Even where evidence regarding value impacts is debated, the uncertainty itself creates risk.

Potential purchasers may be reluctant to buy homes located close to large turbines.

Families who have spent decades building homes and improving farms should not be expected to absorb that risk without consequence.

Impact on Future Housing and Farm Succession

Many local farmers hope that their children will remain in the area, build homes, and continue farming traditions.

However, the attractiveness of rural living depends heavily on environmental quality and landscape character.

The presence of multiple industrial-scale turbines may influence decisions by younger generations about whether to remain, return, or invest in the area.

If younger people choose to leave, existing patterns of rural depopulation may accelerate.

A community cannot remain sustainable if each generation finds it harder to establish roots than the one before.

Noise, Shadow Flicker, and Loss of Amenity

The impact of turbines extends beyond visual appearance.

Residents living near wind farms frequently raise concerns regarding:

- Continuous mechanical and aerodynamic noise.
- Intermittent low-frequency sound.
- Shadow flicker during certain times of year.
- Flashing aviation warning lights.
- Loss of tranquillity.

Even when noise limits are technically met, the character of the countryside can be fundamentally altered.

Many people choose to live in rural areas because of peace, quiet, and natural surroundings.

These qualities cannot easily be replaced once lost.

Construction Impacts on Farming Operations

The construction phase would involve years of disruption.

Potential impacts include:

- Heavy goods vehicle movements.
- Road closures and restrictions.
- Damage to rural roads.
- Interference with livestock movements.
- Increased dust and noise.
- Restrictions on farm access.

For farmers operating tight seasonal schedules, even temporary disruption can have lasting economic consequences.

Social Division Within Rural Communities

One of the least discussed impacts of large wind developments is community division.

Where some landowners receive significant financial payments and others receive none, tensions can emerge.

Communities that have worked together for generations may become divided between supporters and opponents of the development.

The resulting social damage can persist long after construction is complete.

An Unequal Distribution of Costs and Benefits

The benefits of the project are largely national:

- Renewable energy generation.
- Climate targets.
- Grid security.
- Corporate revenue.

The costs are largely local:

- Visual impacts.
- Environmental change.
- Construction disruption.
- Property concerns.
- Social division.
- Landscape transformation.

This raises a fundamental issue of fairness.

The people who bear the greatest burden are not necessarily the people who receive the greatest benefit.

The Tirawley Wind Farm represents far more than a renewable energy project.

For local farmers like me it could mean permanent landscape change, uncertainty regarding livestock and agricultural productivity, potential effects from turbine-induced microclimate changes, disruption to farming operations, concerns about property values, and a diminished quality of rural life.

While renewable energy development is necessary, serious questions remain regarding whether this particular location is suitable for a project of such scale and whether the long-term interests of farming families and rural communities have been given sufficient weight.

Once the turbines are built, the landscape and the communities that depend upon it will be changed forever. The decision therefore requires the highest level of scrutiny and caution.

Damage to the Wild Atlantic Way and Tourism Economy

The Wild Atlantic Way is one of Ireland's most successful tourism initiatives. Visitors travel to Mayo specifically because of its unspoilt scenery, sense of remoteness, and natural beauty.

Our home operated as a seasonal Bed & Breakfast meeting people from all over the world.

Tourism within the area is not dependent upon industrial development but rather upon the preservation of the natural landscape, coastal scenery, tranquility and cultural heritage that attract visitors from across Ireland and abroad.

Our visitors came here for the following reasons:

- The Céide Fields cultural landscape.
- Downpatrick Head.
- The Wild Atlantic Way.
- The North Mayo coastal scenery.
- The Western Way and local walking routes, the Blue, Green & Red loops.
- Local heritage sites and monuments - The Lacken Gazebo.
- The area's dark skies and natural tranquillity.
- Historic locations associated with General Humbert's 1798 landing and campaign.

The introduction of sixteen turbines reaching approximately 135 metres in height, together with aviation lighting, a large BESS facility and a major substation, would industrialise a landscape that is currently marketed and valued precisely because it remains largely undeveloped.

The Environmental Impact Assessment acknowledges significant visual impacts from numerous viewpoints. These impacts will not be experienced solely by residents but also by visitors using scenic roads, walking routes and tourism facilities throughout the area.

The Protected Western Way National Waymarked Trail passes through the wider landscape and visitors using this route will experience the turbines at close range. The quality of this walking experience will be significantly diminished.

The cumulative effect of existing, permitted and proposed wind energy developments throughout North Mayo must also be considered. The gradual industrialisation of the Mayo landscape threatens the long-term viability of tourism across the wider region.

The Lacken Gazebo is a Folly, one of the most unusual protected structures in Ireland which can be viewed from Sligo, Leitrim, Donegal and all over Mayo. It is formed from a double arch of rough stones. It is situated on the summit of Lacken Hill to the rear of Castle Lacken: seat of the Palmer family from the sixteenth century. This was constructed during the latter part of the eighteenth century by either Sir Roger or Sir John Palmer. This structure is located 300m from

the nearest turbine AT16, how can this historical monument be protected in light of the planned development?

The Tirawley Wind Farm proposal faces significant challenges regarding compliance with local renewable energy zoning policies, potential adverse effects on sensitive natural and cultural heritage environments, impacts on landscape and visual amenity, and local infrastructure. The presence of turbines outside designated areas, proximity to protected landscapes and structures, and community opposition grounded in environmental and visual concerns present strong grounds for refusal of planning permission.

Tourism businesses have spent years building a reputation based on these qualities. The proposed development risks undermining that reputation.

Visitors do not travel across the world to view industrial infrastructure. They come to experience the unique landscapes of the west of Ireland.

Any decline in visitor numbers, length of stay, or visitor satisfaction would have direct consequences for accommodation providers, restaurants, shops, activity operators, and local communities that depend on tourism income.

The long-term value of the landscape as a tourism asset may far exceed the short-term economic benefits claimed by the developer.

A Threat to Rural Regeneration

Public policy repeatedly speaks about supporting rural communities, encouraging people to return home, and reversing decades of depopulation.

Yet developments of this scale can make those objectives harder to achieve.

Young people considering returning to the area to farm, build homes, establish businesses, or raise families may think twice if the surrounding landscape becomes dominated by industrial energy infrastructure.

Rural regeneration depends upon maintaining attractive places to live. The permanent industrialisation of the countryside sends the opposite message.

Communities should not be expected to sacrifice their future development potential in order to meet national energy targets.

Impact on Property Values and Residential Amenity

Residents living closest to the proposed development will bear the greatest burden while receiving few of the benefits.

The project introduces concerns regarding:

- Visual dominance.
- Noise.
- Shadow flicker.
- Night-time aviation lighting.
- Construction disturbance.
- Increased heavy traffic.
- Loss of tranquillity.

Property owners have invested their lives, savings, and futures in homes located within this landscape.

The possibility of diminished property values and reduced residential amenity cannot simply be dismissed as acceptable collateral damage.

Environmental Uncertainty

The development is proposed within a landscape containing peatlands, watercourses, sensitive habitats, and areas of ecological importance.

Experience elsewhere has demonstrated that large-scale developments can have unintended consequences despite extensive environmental assessments.

The construction of roads, foundations, drainage systems, cable routes, and borrow pits inevitably alters natural systems.

Where peatlands are disturbed, the environmental consequences can be significant and long-lasting.

Given the scale of the proposal, the precautionary principle should apply. If there is uncertainty regarding environmental impacts, permission should not be granted.

Inadequate Consideration of Cumulative Effects

The planning system must consider not only the impacts of this project in isolation but also its cumulative impact alongside existing and future renewable energy developments.

If every suitable ridge, plateau, and upland area is gradually industrialised, the cumulative transformation of the Mayo landscape will be profound.

The question facing decision-makers is not whether one wind farm can be accommodated, but how many such developments can be tolerated before the character of the region is fundamentally altered.

Community Benefit Funds Cannot Compensate for Permanent Loss

The proposed community benefit fund is frequently cited as justification for the development.

However, no amount of financial compensation can replace a lost landscape.

A community fund is temporary. The turbines and their impacts may remain for decades.

The planning system should determine whether a development is acceptable on its merits, not on the basis of financial incentives offered to affected communities.

Conclusion

This proposal represents an industrial-scale development in a highly sensitive rural landscape that is central to the identity, economy, and future of North Mayo.

The likely impacts on landscape character, visual amenity, tourism, rural regeneration, residential quality of life, and environmental integrity are too significant to ignore.

Renewable energy may be essential, but not every location is suitable for industrial wind development. There are places where the balance between national energy objectives and local impacts can be achieved. This is not one of them.

For these reasons, planning permission should be refused.

Heritage and Tourist Attractions of the Lacken and Ballycastle Area

The Lacken and Ballycastle areas of North Mayo are renowned for their rich cultural heritage, outstanding natural landscapes, and significant archaeological resources. Located along Ireland's dramatic Atlantic coastline, the region combines ancient monuments, protected habitats, and spectacular scenery, making it an important destination for tourism, recreation, and heritage appreciation.

Some of the most notable nearby attractions are the Céide Coast and Downpatrick Head, both of which are internationally recognised for their dramatic coastal landscapes and historical significance. These locations attract visitors throughout the year and form an important part of the region's tourism offering.

The landscape surrounding Lacken contains a remarkable concentration of archaeological monuments and historic structures. Significant heritage sites include Carn House, the extensive Carn archaeological complex, the distinctive Lacken Gazebo, ancient cairn sites, the RathLacken archaeological complex and court tomb, the wedge tomb at Rathfrankpark, the Rathfrank stone circle, and the historic Rathfrank Abbey. Together, these monuments provide a tangible connection to the area's prehistoric and medieval past.

One of the most recognisable local landmarks is the Lacken Gazebo, a striking obelisk-topped folly that forms an important feature within the local landscape. Its prominence contributes to the distinctive character of the area and its cultural identity.

The region is also an important part of the Wild Atlantic Way, Ireland's premier coastal touring route. Several designated viewing points and scenic stops allow visitors to experience panoramic views of the Atlantic Ocean, rugged cliffs, and rolling countryside.

In addition to its archaeological and architectural heritage, Lacken benefits from an abundance of natural attractions. The wider North Mayo landscape includes mountains, dramatic coastal scenery, beaches, inland waterways, and protected natural habitats. These assets contribute significantly to the area's reputation as a tourist destination and provide opportunities for outdoor recreation, nature-based tourism, and sustainable economic development.

Natural Heritage and Protected Landscapes

Lacken is particularly notable for its natural heritage and environmentally important habitats. The area encompasses Lacken Bay and the Lacken Saltmarsh and Kilcummin Head Special Area of Conservation, both of which support a diverse range of coastal ecosystems.

These protected habitats include saltmarsh communities and specialised vegetation adapted to coastal environments. The ecological value of these areas is enhanced by their connection to local watercourses, which help sustain the habitats and biodiversity found throughout the region.

Another notable feature is the abandoned quarry at CastleLacken Demesne. Over time, the site has developed into a valuable ecological resource, supporting habitats such as blanket bog, willow scrub, ponds, and associated wildlife. The area demonstrates how former industrial landscapes can evolve into important biodiversity assets and contribute positively to the natural environment.

Tourism and Landscape Value

The combined heritage and natural assets of Ballycastle and Lacken create a landscape of exceptional character and appeal. Visitors are drawn to the region by its rich archaeological legacy, historic landmarks, protected habitats, and spectacular coastal scenery.

As part of the Wild Atlantic Way, the area benefits from national and international recognition as a destination offering authentic cultural experiences and outstanding natural beauty. The coastline, cliffs, beaches, and scenic viewpoints provide some of the most memorable landscapes in County Mayo.

The sensitivity of the landscape and the concentration of heritage features have resulted in a strong emphasis on balancing development with the protection of cultural, archaeological, and environmental resources. This approach seeks to ensure that the unique character of the region

is preserved for future generations while continuing to support tourism and local economic activity.

The Lacken and Ballycastle area represents one of North Mayo's most significant heritage and tourism landscapes. Its combination of ancient monuments, historic structures, protected habitats, and spectacular coastal scenery creates a unique destination that attracts visitors from Ireland and abroad. The area's cultural and natural assets remain central to its identity and continue to play a vital role in supporting tourism, recreation, and community life.

I wish to adopt and support the detailed submission made by the Lacken Ballycastle Community Landscape Protection Group in relation to the proposed Tirawley Wind Farm development (PAX16.324258). In particular, I endorse the concerns raised regarding cumulative wind farm development across North Mayo, impacts on the Céide Fields cultural landscape, effects on tourism and recreation, biodiversity impacts, inadequacies in community consultation, and the assessment of the Battery Energy Storage System. While I do not repeat those detailed arguments in full, I request that they be considered as forming part of this submission.

In conclusion, I respectfully submit that the proposed Tirawley Wind Farm project is not appropriate for this location due to the significant negative impacts on residential amenity, local landscape, ecology, infrastructure, and the community. I urge An Coimisiún Pleanála to refuse permission for this development in the interests of proper planning and sustainable development.

Thank you for considering my submission.

Yours faithfully,
Cormac Jackson