



An Coimisiún Pleanála
Case Reference: PAX16.324258
Proposed Development: Tirawley Wind Farm

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing in my capacity as Director of Erris Coast Hotel, Geesala, Co. Mayo, to express concern regarding the potential impact of the proposed Tirawley Wind Farm on the tourism industry and visitor economy of County Mayo.

Erris Coast Hotel is located on the Wild Atlantic Way and employs over 50 staff. Like many tourism businesses throughout Mayo, our success depends on visitors choosing this county because of its unspoilt landscapes, sense of wilderness, dark skies, outdoor activities and unique cultural identity.

I have particular concern regarding the cumulative effect of large-scale wind energy developments on the tourism brand of County Mayo. Visitors do not experience developments in isolation. Rather, they form an impression of an entire destination. Mayo has invested heavily in positioning itself as a world-class location for nature, outdoor recreation and authentic experiences. This reputation has taken decades to build and should not be placed at risk without careful consideration of the long-term consequences.

I was honoured to be invited to join the steering committee of the recently launched Wild Mayo Destination and Experience Development Plan, a Fáilte Ireland and Wild Atlantic Way initiative which seeks to position Mayo as a leading international destination for wilderness, culture and outdoor experiences. One of the central objectives of the Wild Mayo project is to celebrate and protect the county's natural heritage and unspoilt landscapes, recognising that these are among Mayo's greatest assets and a key driver of tourism and economic activity.

As someone involved in tourism on a daily basis and through the Wild Mayo initiative, I believe there is an urgent need to fully assess the cumulative impact of major infrastructure developments on the county's tourism offering. Visitors increasingly seek authentic, natural and remote experiences. The qualities that make Mayo unique cannot be taken for granted and, once lost or diminished, may be extremely difficult to restore.

I am concerned that tourism impacts are often considered locally and in isolation, whereas the visitor experience is regional in nature. The success of Mayo's tourism economy relies on preserving the county's reputation for natural beauty, wilderness and cultural authenticity across the entire destination.

Tourism businesses are rarely compensated if visitor numbers decline due to cumulative landscape change or a weakening of Mayo's reputation as an unspoilt destination. The benefits of major infrastructure projects may be temporary or concentrated elsewhere, but the consequences of altering the landscapes and character that attract visitors can be long-lasting and are borne by local businesses, communities and future generations.

I respectfully ask An Coimisiún Pleanála to give careful consideration to:

- The cumulative visual and tourism impacts of large-scale wind energy developments throughout County Mayo;
- The consistency of the proposed development with the objectives of the Wild Mayo Destination and Experience Development Plan;
- The long-term importance of tourism as a source of employment and economic activity in rural Mayo; and
- The need to protect the natural landscapes and sense of place that underpin Mayo's tourism brand and visitor experience.

County Mayo has worked tirelessly to establish itself as a destination of outstanding natural beauty and authentic experiences. Decisions taken today will shape how future generations, and future visitors, experience this county.

Yours faithfully,

Deborah O'Sullivan
Director
Erris Coast Hotel
Geesala, Co. Mayo

www.erriscoasthotel.ie