

## **PLANNING APPEAL / OBSERVATION**

**To:** An Coimisiún Pleanála

**Re:** Case number: 324258. Proposed Wind Farm Development comprising 16 Wind Turbines, Battery Storage Facilities, 110kV Substation, Grid Connection Infrastructure, Access Road Upgrades and Associated Works

Dear Commissioners,

I wish to formally object to and appeal the proposed wind farm development described in the above mentioned planning application on the grounds that the development will have significant adverse impacts on my quality of life, safety, accessibility, health, and welfare as a disabled resident living within the affected area. Below I detail how this will affect me and my reasons for objecting.

### **1. Disproportionate Impact on a Disabled Person**

The Planning and Development Act requires that planning authorities and decision-makers consider the impacts of development on all members of the community, including disabled people like myself. I don't believe this has been adequately considered. The proposed development will impose a disproportionate burden on me due to my disability.

The scale of the project is exceptional and includes:

- Sixteen wind turbines with a tip height of 135 metres
- Extensive underground cabling works
- Construction of a new 110kV substation
- Multiple new site entrances and road widening schemes
- Significant forestry felling
- Construction compounds
- Battery energy storage facilities
- Long-term operational traffic and maintenance activities.

The prolonged construction phase and associated roadworks will severely affect my ability to travel safely and independently. As a pensioner and disabled resident, I rely on consistent and predictable access to roads for essential activities including healthcare appointments, shopping, social participation and emergency services access.

### **2. Emergency Access and Ambulance Delays**

I am extremely concerned that the extensive road upgrades, widening works, abnormal load deliveries and construction traffic will create a significant disruption across local roads for a prolonged period.

The proposal identifies upgrades and alterations to numerous local roads and entrances. These works, together with the transportation of oversized turbine components, have the potential to:

- Cause temporary road closures and traffic restrictions
- Delay emergency vehicles responding to incidents
- Obstruct routes relied upon by ambulances
- Reduce road safety for vulnerable road users like myself.

Given my disability, timely access to emergency medical assistance is of particular importance especially as this is already an area with long ambulance wait times. Any development that introduces a foreseeable risk of delaying emergency response times raises serious concerns regarding public safety and the protection of vulnerable residents such as myself.

I respectfully submit that insufficient consideration has been given to the cumulative impact of roadworks and abnormal load transportation on emergency service access throughout the construction period.

### **3. Noise and Health Impacts**

The development will generate a significant amount of noise during both construction and operation.

Construction activities are likely to include:

- Excavation and blasting activities where required
- Heavy goods vehicle movements
- Crane operations
- Road widening and civil engineering works
- Forestry felling
- Substation construction

Operational noise from the turbines and associated electrical infrastructure may continue for the lifetime of the development, stated to be 35 years.

As a disabled person who spends extended periods at home, I am particularly vulnerable to persistent environmental noise and disturbance. The planning authority must carefully assess the cumulative effects of:

- Turbine noise
- Low-frequency noise
- Construction noise
- Traffic noise
- Substation and battery storage operational noise.

I submit that the potential effects on health, wellbeing, sleep quality and residential amenity have not been adequately addressed.

### **4. Traffic and Road Safety**

The proposal includes multiple new entrances, widening of local roads, and transportation of abnormal loads through extremely rural road networks.

The increase in heavy construction traffic will:

- Create hazards for disabled residents
- Increase journey times to essential care
- Affect accessibility for those of us with mobility impairments
- Reduce the safety of pedestrians and vulnerable road users like myself

The cumulative effect of these works over a prolonged construction period represents a substantial intrusion into the daily lives of local residents and a substantial effect on my quality of life and safety.

## **5. Inadequate Assessment of Vulnerable Residents**

I'm concerned that the planning documentation doesn't adequately assess the specific impacts on vulnerable individuals, including disabled people.

The project documentation should demonstrate:

- How accessibility will be maintained throughout construction
- How emergency response times will be protected
- How road closures and diversions will be managed
- What mitigation measures will be provided for disabled residents
- How complaints and access issues will be addressed during the construction phase.

Without such assurances, the proposal fails to adequately protect the interests of vulnerable members of the community.

## **6. Cumulative Impacts**

While individual elements of the project may appear manageable in isolation, the cumulative impact of:

- Wind turbines
- Battery storage facilities
- Forestry clearance
- Construction compounds
- Roadworks
- Grid connection infrastructure
- Heavy vehicle traffic
- Noise and visual impacts

creates a development of industrial scale in an unsuitable rural environment.

The cumulative burden placed on residents, particularly those of us with disabilities, has not been sufficiently recognised, addressed or mitigated.

## **7. Impact on Accessibility, Exercise, Air Quality and Health**

As a disabled resident, access to local roads and public spaces is an essential component of maintaining my health, independence and wellbeing.

The local roads affected by this development are the primary routes I use for walking, exercise, recreation and access to the surrounding environment. Due to my disability, regular exercise is an important part of managing my condition and maintaining mobility. The proposed construction works, road widening, abnormal load deliveries, increased heavy goods vehicle traffic and associated disruption will significantly reduce my ability to safely use these roads for exercise and recreation.

The prospect of prolonged construction activity over a number of years means that I may lose safe and reliable access to the outdoor environment on which I depend for physical activity and mental wellbeing. Increased traffic volumes, construction vehicles, temporary road restrictions and safety concerns will make walking and exercising along these roads substantially more difficult and potentially unsafe.

As a person living with a disability, I spend more time at home than the average resident and therefore experience a greater exposure to these impacts. The planning application does not adequately recognise the disproportionate effect that continuous noise and disturbance may have on vulnerable individuals like me.

Good air quality is also essential for my health and quality of life and is part of my treatment plan. The proposed development will generate substantial levels of dust, particulate matter and vehicle emissions during construction. Forestry felling, excavation works, spoil deposition, road construction and the movement of heavy vehicles all have the potential to reduce local air quality.

The loss of existing vegetation and forestry cover may further diminish the natural environmental protections currently enjoyed by local residents. Any deterioration in air quality would have a direct impact on my ability to safely spend time outdoors, exercise and enjoy my home environment.

The cumulative effect of restricted access to public spaces, increased traffic, prolonged noise exposure, reduced air quality and loss of recreational opportunities represents a significant adverse impact on my health, independence and daily life. I respectfully submit that these impacts have not been adequately assessed within the planning documentation and that insufficient weight has been given to the needs and rights of disabled residents.

## **Conclusion**

For the reasons outlined above, I respectfully request that An Coimisiún Pleanála refuse permission for the proposed development or, at a minimum, require a comprehensive reassessment of the impacts on disabled residents, emergency service accessibility, road safety, construction management, and noise impacts before any decision is made.

I believe the current proposal fails to adequately safeguard the rights, safety, accessibility and wellbeing of vulnerable members of the local community and does not sufficiently

address the significant adverse impacts that will arise during both construction and operation.

Yours faithfully,

Kathleen O'Hara

Barnhill, Carrowmore Lacken, Ballina, Co. Mayo

Case number: 324258

23/06/26