

Kilbride
Ballycastle
Mayo

23 Jun 2026

An Coimisiún Pleanála, Dublin 1

Dear Commissioners,

Re: Barony of Tirawley Wind Farm. Application number: PAX16.324258

I object to this proposal because of the detrimental effect it will have on my enjoyment of my home, my farm and my area. Furthermore:

1. Danger to natural springs and lack of alternative domestic water sources

I object to the proposal because it will interfere with the natural springs and aquifers on which Kilbride and Carrowmore villages depend for drinking water. Other villages are also likely to be impacted. **No public water supply is available** to houses in these areas, and houses here depend on unreliable, shallow groundwater springs for domestic and agricultural uses.

With no public water supply available locally, households here **depend exclusively** on natural groundwater sources and are uniquely vulnerable to changes in the aquifer and/or to underground flow paths feeding natural springs. Even now, we suffer through Summer droughts with frequent outages. If this proposal proceeds, with massive foundations penetrating our aquifer, and disrupting groundwater flowpaths, a worsening of our already precarious water supply is to be feared.

Even if the water flow is not interrupted, contamination from the building of these structures or their eventual degradation is a risk. Therefore, any plan to dig extensively into the aquifer must be viewed with alarm. It is not an exaggeration to say a serious worsening of natural water sources here could end this entire village as a viable place to live.

The entire project is sited on an area classed as high or extreme on the GSI's map of Groundwater vulnerability. Therefore, the impact on available groundwater must be a very serious consideration for any and all of these wind turbines. Something that Inland Fisheries raised with the applicant in their scoping reply, but seem to have been ignored.

Given the precarious water situation of local residents, this proposal appears contrary to CAP 9 of the County plan:

- *Climate Action Policy 9: To support Ireland's renewable energy commitments outlined in national policy by facilitating the development and exploitation of all appropriate renewable energy sources at suitable locations within the county, **where such development does not have a negative impact on the surrounding environment (including water quality), landscape, biodiversity or local amenities, so as to provide for further residential and enterprise development within the county.***

Further, I invite ACP staff to visit this village where I can exhibit the precarious water situation we live in, with no alternative to natural groundwater springs coming down from a fickle hill, and the concerns about turbines disrupting underground water flows. I know you have a difficult task to be fair to both sides, but am willing to demonstrate the problem and let it speak for itself.

2. Drinking Water Directive not considered

The EIAR **does not consider the Drinking Water Directive 2020**, which includes the following:

"Article 16

Access to water intended for human consumption

*1. Without prejudice to Article 9 of Directive 2000/60/EC and to the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality, whilst taking into account the local, regional and cultural perspectives and circumstances for water distribution, Member States shall take the necessary measures to improve or maintain access to water intended for human consumption for **all**, in particular for vulnerable and marginalised groups, as defined by the Member States. For that purpose, Member States shall:*

- a. identify people without access, or with limited access, to water intended for human consumption, including vulnerable and marginalised groups, and reasons for such lack of access;*
- b. assess possibilities for improving access for such people;*
- c. inform such people about possibilities for connecting to the distribution network or about alternative means of having access to water intended for human consumption; and*
- d. take measures that they consider necessary and appropriate to ensure that there is access to **water intended for human consumption** for vulnerable and marginalised groups."*

Source: Official Journal of the European Union L 435/28 23.12.2020

This is a European Directive, which is clear, precise and unconditional when it states that it is necessary to "improve or maintain" the water supplies of "all", without reservation. As it is only a directive, it does not have direct legal effect on the

applicant, but it does have direct effect on this decision, An Coimisiun Pleanala and the State. It can be relied upon by anyone whose drinking water supply is diminished or polluted by this development (Van Gend en Loos). Particularly, those houses in the vulnerable position outlined above.

3. Built on top of the Ceide Fields

I object to this proposal because it is built partly on top of a prehistoric field system of global archaeological significance. The field network known as the Ceide fields has been mapped across Belderrig, Ballycastle, Lacken and Kilfian. The proposed turbines are located inside this zone. The applicant repeatedly refers to the Ceide Fields as though they are in Ceide. It is true that the visitor centre is located at Ceide, but the monument is much more extensive and the proposed development is **inside the Ceide Fields**. This proposal is therefore contrary to Built Environment Objectives 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6 of Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028:

- *BEO 1: "To protect the archaeological heritage and sites identified in the Record of Monuments, and Places, National Monuments in the ownership or guardianship of the State in addition to National Monuments that are the subject of Preservation Orders, and to safeguard the **integrity** of the archaeological sites in their **setting**."*

The field network mapped under parts of the proposed development has survived undisturbed for 5 millennia (we are told). It lies under blanket bog, but is still visible here and there on the ground and in satellite images. The current proposal would entail significant interference with the prehistoric walls in the construction phase. And even after construction is complete, the "setting" would be altered dramatically.

- *BEO 2: "To protect the tentative World Heritage Site in Mayo on the UNESCO Tentative List - Ireland 2010, The Céide Fields - from inappropriate development and support its nomination to World Heritage Status."*

The County Plan names only one archaeological heritage site in County Mayo for specific protection – the Ceide Fields. The northern end of this application builds on top of a portion of the Ceide Fields network which appears to be inappropriate development. I do not know that a windfarm on the site will absolutely prevent it achieving UNESCO WH status: but it surely does not support the site to achieve that status.

- *BEO 4: "To ensure that development in the vicinity of a Recorded Monument or Zone of Archaeological Potential is sited and designed in a sensitive*

manner, avoiding adverse effects on landscape setting and context of monument.”

The landscape setting will be transformed by very large installations, which cannot be installed sensitively and their ongoing function and operation (i.e. motion) adversely impact the landscape setting and context.

- *BEO 5: “To protect all sites and features of archaeological interest discovered subsequent to the publication of the Record of Monument and Places, in situ (or at a minimum preservation by record), having regard to the advice and recommendations of the National Monuments Service of the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.”*

This site is of global archaeological interest and has provided us with the key insights into the sophistication and social structure of neolithic farming settlements. It has transformed thinking on neolithic society, and deserves special protection.

Other neolithic monuments in the area, that would otherwise be considered ordinary, are invested with a **special significance at this site**, because of how they relate to the field system that is lost elsewhere.

- *BEO 6: To protect archaeological sites, monuments, underwater archaeology and archaeological objects in their setting, which are listed on the Record of Monuments and Places for Mayo.*

4. National and local objectives to develop UNESCO sites

I object to this proposal because it will undermine the ambitions of the local community and County Mayo, to achieve UNESCO World Heritage status for the Ceide Fields.

The application does not consider Goals 1 or 4 of the Strategy for World Heritage in Ireland 2025-2035:

- *“Goal 1: Increase the number of Irish sites inscribed on the World Heritage List and undertake a regular review of Ireland’s Tentative List.”*
- *“Goal 4: Support the protection, conservation, management, interpretation, and presentation of Ireland’s World Heritage Properties and Tentative List sites. - Strategic Objectives: 1. Seek to ensure, in partnership with key stakeholders, that the Outstanding Universal Value and **authenticity and integrity** of World Heritage Properties is protected and managed through the adoption of best practice management strategies;”*

The application also does not consider BEO 2 of the County Development Plan, which specifically identifies this region for special protection, to realise our UNESCO ambitions.

- *“BEO 2: To protect the tentative World Heritage Site in Mayo on the UNESCO Tentative List - Ireland 2010, The Céide Fields - from inappropriate development and support its nomination to World Heritage Status.”*

It should be noted that BEO 2 was adopted by MCC after the Ceide Fields fell off of the tentative list, and therefore implicitly expresses the desire/intent of Mayo County Council to restore it to the tentative list in future. If it does, clearly it will be a strong asset to achieving Goal 1 of the Strategy for World Heritage in Ireland 2025-2035.

Arguably, BEO 2 confers the status of a tentative World Heritage Site to Ceide Fields even before it returns to the Tentative List – at least within the planning process.

It is a source of great disappointment locally that we missed out on the last iteration of the tentative list because of local political concerns that were not connected with the significance of the site. On the contrary, the archaeological significance of the site is beyond question. The Ceide Fields are more than just a national monument. They are an insight into neolithic civilisation that exists in just a handful of places on the earth, and nowhere else in Europe. I believe that with proper commitment, this monument will not only get onto the tentative UNESCO list, but actually go all the way to achieve World Heritage status. Even more so, because the fields contain a potential candidate for World Natural Heritage status also (Downpatrick Head/Dun Briste).

The available guidance suggests that the Ceide Fields, with their insights into an era of human development which is largely untraceable globally, is a strong contender for World Heritage status:

“For a nominated property to be inscribed on the World Heritage List, it must:

- a. demonstrate Outstanding Universal Value by meeting one or more of ten criteria required for inscription (described below),*
- b. meet the conditions of **integrity and/or authenticity** (for cultural and mixed sites),*
- c. demonstrate community and stakeholder support and engagement, and*
- d. must have an **adequate protection** and management system in place.*

The ten criteria for inscription are:

- 1. Represent a masterpiece of human creative genius;*

2. *Exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design;*
 3. ***Bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilisation which is living or which has disappeared;***
 4. *Be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which **illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history;***
 5. *Be an outstanding **example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use** which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change;*
 6. *Be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance. This criterion should preferably be used in conjunction with other criteria;*
 7. ***Contain superlative natural phenomena*** or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance;
 8. *Be outstanding examples representing major stages of earth's history, including the record of life, significant ongoing geological processes in the development of landforms, or significant geomorphic or physiographic features;*
 9. *Be outstanding examples representing significant ongoing ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of terrestrial, fresh water, coastal and marine ecosystems and communities of plants and animals; and/or*
 10. *Contain the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of Outstanding Universal Value from the point of view of science or conservation."*
- (Strategy for World Heritage in Ireland 2025–2035)*

with the right support at local, county and national level, Ceide Fields is certainly capable of achieving UNESCO status and therefore a strong asset to achieving Goal 1 of the Strategy for World Heritage in Ireland 2025-2035. This development will seriously hamper that aim.

5. Figure 2.3

I object that this application proposes to build a major windfarm in a populated area.



LEGEND  Residential Curtilage Points  2km Buffer  Met Mast Location Point  Turbine Location Points  Wind Farm Site Redline	Client Representative  JENNINGS O'DONOVAN an RSK company © COPYRIGHT OF JENNINGS O'DONOVAN AND PARTNERS LIMITED FINISKILN SLIGO IRELAND Tel (+353) 719 161 416 Email: info@jodireland.com www.jodireland.com  @JOD_Slgo  Jennings O'Donovan & Partners  Jennings O'Donovan  Tailte Eireann CYAL50512615 © Tailte Eireann – Surveying.	Client CONSTANT ENERGY LIMITED. Project TIRAWLEY WIND FARM, CO. MAYO Title RESIDENTIAL DWELLINGS WITHIN 2KM OF THE WINDFARM SITE	Drg. By DT Job No. 6289
	Checked By MG Figure 2.3		
	Approved MG Rev 1		
	Scale 1:26,000 (A3)		
	Stage Planning		
	Date 20/04/2026		

Figure 2.3 displays the houses within 2km of the turbines. It is a stark image and possibly the most compelling reason to decline permission. The proposal is within a populated area, and the applicant thinks that if they drop a turbine or two anywhere where there is a gap between houses, then that is fine and the resident population does not matter. They then **gerrymander** a ridiculous site boundary to pretend that they have miraculously found a site for 16 turbines away from residential homes and population and call it an SID.

To me, Figure 2.3, on its own, is sufficient reason to decline the proposal. This is not a serious approach to development.

6. Landscape Matrix and policy utterly ignored

I object to this proposal because of its impact on the landscape of the area. The Landscape Appraisal of County Mayo (that accompanies the County Development Plan) designates this area as a “*protected view*” (page 62). It identifies the area as “*Policy Area 1*” which is “*particularly sensitive to inappropriate development*”.

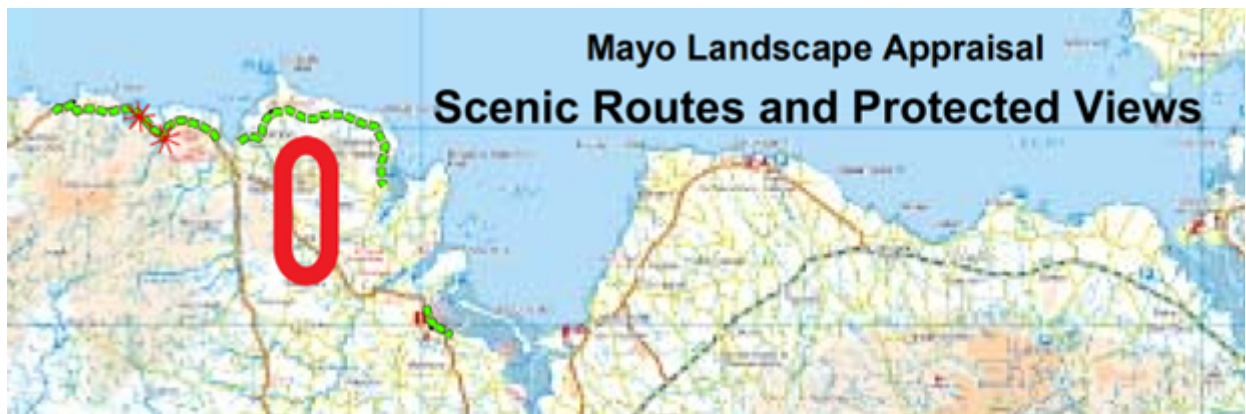
Policies 3-6 of the Landscape Appraisal therefore apply:

- *Policy 3: “Encourage development that will not have a disproportionate effect on the existing character of the coastal environment in terms of location, design, and visual prominence.”*

The size of these installations, will transform the character of the area. At 137m tall, and in continuous motion, they will arrest all attention away from the pastoral-coastal landscape we currently enjoy. They will in fact be taller than the hills on which they are built, dwarfing the existing landscape. If that is not a “*disproportionate effect on the existing character of the coastal environment*”, what would be?

- *Policy 4: Consider development that does not significantly interfere or detract from scenic coastal vistas, as identified in the Development Plan, when viewed from areas of the public realm.*

The following map is taken from the Landscape Appraisal for County Mayo. I have marked the approximate location and area of this project in a red Oval shape. The green dotted line is a Scenic Coastal Vista as presented in the Landscape Appraisal. This clearly locates the project within a scenic coastal vista. I believe it will significantly interfere and detract from this scenic vista. It is hard to conclude otherwise.



Mayo County Plan reinforces the Landscape Appraisal's protection of scenic routes by stating that it will "safeguard these routes from inappropriate development, which would detract from the enjoyment of Mayo's Landscape".

- *Policy 5: Encourage development that will not interrupt or penetrate distinct linear sections of primary ridge lines and coastlines when viewed from areas of the public realm.*

The low, open hills of this area mean that even relatively small turbines will be highly visible over a large area. They will in fact be visible from Sligo, Donegal etc., as well as within Mayo, as far South as Loch Conn.

- *Policy 6: Preserve any areas that have not been subject to recent or prior development and have retained a dominantly undisturbed coastal character.*

Self-explanatory.

Pages 79-81 of the Landscape Appraisal examines the types of development permissible in different Policy Areas. Wind farms are **specifically** excluded from Policy Area 1 because it is "*unlikely that ... impacts can be reduced to a widely acceptable level*".

Therefore, this proposal appears contrary to Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028. Specifically, Natural Environment Objectives (NEOs) 25 and 27 and Renewable Energy Objective (REO) 8.

- *"REO 8: To encourage the development of wind energy, in accordance with Government policy, and having regard to the Landscape Appraisal of County Mayo and the Wind Energy Development Guidelines (2006) and Mayo*

Renewable Energy Strategy, or any revisions there of or future guidelines, and ensure consistency with the provisions of RPO 4.16 and RPO 5.2(b) of the RSES (2020-2032).”

- NEO 25: To consider applications for development, along Mayo’s’ Scenic routes, that can demonstrate a clear need to locate in the area concerned, whilst ensuring that it:
 - i. Does not impinge in any significant way on the character, integrity and distinctiveness of the area.
 - ii. Meets high standards in siting and design.
 - iii. Contributes to and enhances local landscape character.
 - iv. Satisfies all other criteria, with regard to, inter alia, servicing, public safety and environmental considerations.

Rural housing applications along Scenic Routes must comply with the requirements set out in Objective RHO 3 (Chapter 3).

- NEO 27: To ensure **all development proposals are consistent with the Landscape Appraisal of County Mayo and the associated Landscape Sensitivity Matrix** and future editions thereof.”

As discussed above, this proposal is quite inconsistent with both the Landscape Appraisal and the Matrix. The Matrix refers to windfarms in this area as having “High potential to create adverse impacts on the existing landscape character. Having regard to the intrinsic physical and visual characteristics of the landscape area, it is unlikely that such impacts can be reduced to a widely acceptable level.” (Landscape Matrix, Policy Area 1, MCDP Map 10.1 and Figure 10.1).

Development Impact - Landscape Sensitivity Matrix								
	Wind farms	Power lines	Quarrying/ Extraction	Forestry	Commun- ication Masts	Industrial/ Commercial	Rural Dwellings	Road Projects
Policy Area 1								
Policy Area 2								
Policy Area 3								
Policy Area 4								

Key

-  = High potential to create adverse impacts on the existing landscape character. Having regard to the intrinsic physical and visual characteristics of the landscape area, it is unlikely that such impacts can be reduced to a widely acceptable level.
-  = Medium potential to create adverse impacts on the existing landscape character. Such developments are likely to be clearly discernible and distinctive, however with careful siting and good design, the significance and extent of impacts can be minimised to an acceptable level.
-  = Low potential to create adverse impacts on the existing landscape character. Such development is likely to be widely conceived as normal and appropriate unless siting and design are poor.

Missing landowner consents

The document “6289-PL-100A SITE LAYOUT PLAN OVERALL WIND FARM & GRID ROUTE.pdf” displays a large territory under the control of the applicant (Blue outline).

A full list of all the folios claimed to be under the Developer’s control is below.

Folios for which a consent letter is supplied by the applicant are coloured green. Folios for which no consent letter is supplied, but where no physical development is sought are yellow. Folios with no consent provided and where development is planned (cable laying, access roads, public road widening) are marked red:

Folio	Consent on file	Construction planned
MY28002	Yes	Yes
MY39417F	Yes	Yes
MY28441	Yes	Yes
MY40485F	Yes	Yes
MY38228	Yes	Yes
MY38282	Yes	Yes
MY83077F	Yes	Yes
MY46067	Yes	Yes
MY10087F	Yes	Yes
MY38230	Yes	Yes
MY38714F	Yes	Yes
MY76397	Yes	Yes
MY28446	Yes	Yes
MY85163F	No	No
MY38227	No	No
MY49933	No	No
MY20440	No	No
MY56148F	No	No
MY56149F	No	No
MY60953F	No	No
MY38233	No	Yes
MY74914F	No	Yes
MY43319	No	Yes

MY41313	No	Yes
MY56150F	No	Yes
MY20448	No	Yes
MY28440	No	Yes
MY25829	No	Yes
MY58347F	No	Yes
MY52871F	No	Yes
MY39419F	No	Yes
MY54704F	No	Yes
MY28445	No	Yes
MY28444	No	Yes
MY37138	No	Yes
MY14413F	No	Yes

This begs the question, do they have consents to develop these lands at all? And if yes, why have they not supplied this?

Furthermore, beyond these private landowners, the largest part of the development is proposed to be built under the public road (over 12km of buried cables). The largest landowner, Mayo County Council, is also not included amongst those consenting to this application.

Finally, Folios MY83077F and MY46067 do not have a specific consent letter, but a contract between the applicant and the relevant landowner is included with all the other consent letters. However, this contract is only partly reproduced, several pages are missing, and although the text does give consent to the applicant to take steps in preparation of a planning application, the pages supplied in the application do not actually include a consent to apply for planning. ACP should satisfy itself that consent exists for the applicant to develop these folios also.

7. Extent of IROPI??

EIAR 4.4.5 refers to Regulations 2022/2577 and 2024/233, granting the presumption of “*Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI)*”, and allowing ACP to favour renewable projects where they are legally balanced with the Habitats, Birds and Water Framework Directives.

However, both of these regulations have expired and need not be considered. They have been replaced by the more limited (though permanent) provisions of RED III. EIAR 4.4.2 also notes the presumption of “*Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI)*” has been repeated in RED III.

However, it appears that unlike the expired regulations, the statute giving effect to RED III does not grant IROPI against the Water Framework Directive. Section 177AA of the Planning and Development Act 2000 refers to the Habitats and Birds Directives, but appears not to encompass the Water Framework Directive. Therefore, I request ACP satisfy itself about the applicability of Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest under current Irish law, and with regard to the WFD particularly.

In any event, Section 177AA of the 2000 Act does not withstand the Habitats, Birds

and Water Framework Directives, or any other laws (e.g. Drinking Water Directive), and I note that a specific case must be made to exercise this authority under 177AA(1).

I also note in this context that Lacken Salt Marsh, where all the surface waters from the site coalesce, contains a Priority Natural Habitat (Grey Dunes), and therefore the use of this authority may also be subject to 177AA(4).

8. High groundwater vulnerability

I object to the application because of the groundwater impacts of the development

Geological Survey of Ireland has mapped the entire area of the wind farm as being “high” groundwater vulnerability. Meaning the groundwater here readily accepts pollutants which rapidly discharge into springs and surface waters. They can go on to transmit high amounts of pollutants to a single receptor and/or stream in a short period of time.

Receptors in the area include the SAC into which all of the surface waters from the windfarm drains, and also (something not considered in the EIAR) many **natural springs in use for domestic water supplies** by local homes – including some homes that are especially vulnerable.

Inland Fisheries Ireland, in their scoping reply advised that no turbine or associated building be built on areas of high groundwater vulnerability. Yet, **every single turbine in this proposal is planned to be built on an area of high groundwater vulnerability.**

The EIAR really dodges groundwater vulnerability as a problem, and dismisses it as a serious concern. This is a serious mistake, as not only is this an area of high vulnerability, but it also has some particular local conditions that make groundwater a really vital part of any assessment of this proposal, as the next few paragraphs will try to explain.

9. No mapping of springs done

The applicant’s map of local springs and wells in use for residential supply is inadequate.

Relying on GSI mapped wells, and assuming all houses in the area have a bored well outside the house itself (incorrect), they assume that a setback distance around these houses is enough to remain distant from all residential watersources (figure

5.4).

In fact, many houses here **cannot bore for a well**, as the deep water is tainted with arsenic and is bright red -unusable, even for washing. Instead, these houses rely on shallow natural springs, draining down from the hilltop and emerging high up the hillside. This is the only available water, as no public supply is available.

A reasonably detailed EIAR should have picked up on this problem, and this inaccuracy in a core assumption, but this EIAR dismisses groundwater as a consideration repeatedly – and I would argue designedly.

This is the type of information that can only be gathered in consultation with homeowners, which the applicant has been careful to avoid. They have been gathering information on us for 15 years, but (aside from a single consultation event, held in another part of the county, with minimal advertising) they have avoided releasing any information about their project to the local population until this application was lodged. Therefore, they were unable to gather data on local water abstraction points.

In particular, there are villages here in an extremely precarious position with drinking water that have not been considered in the EIAR or mapped.

A preliminary map of some wells/springs in the area is included with this submission. It has been produced with much less time than the applicant had, and with zero resources, and only shows some of the most impacted springs in the area, as well as the groundwater vulnerability status mapped by GSI. It is too bad that the applicant did not include anything like this in the EIAR.

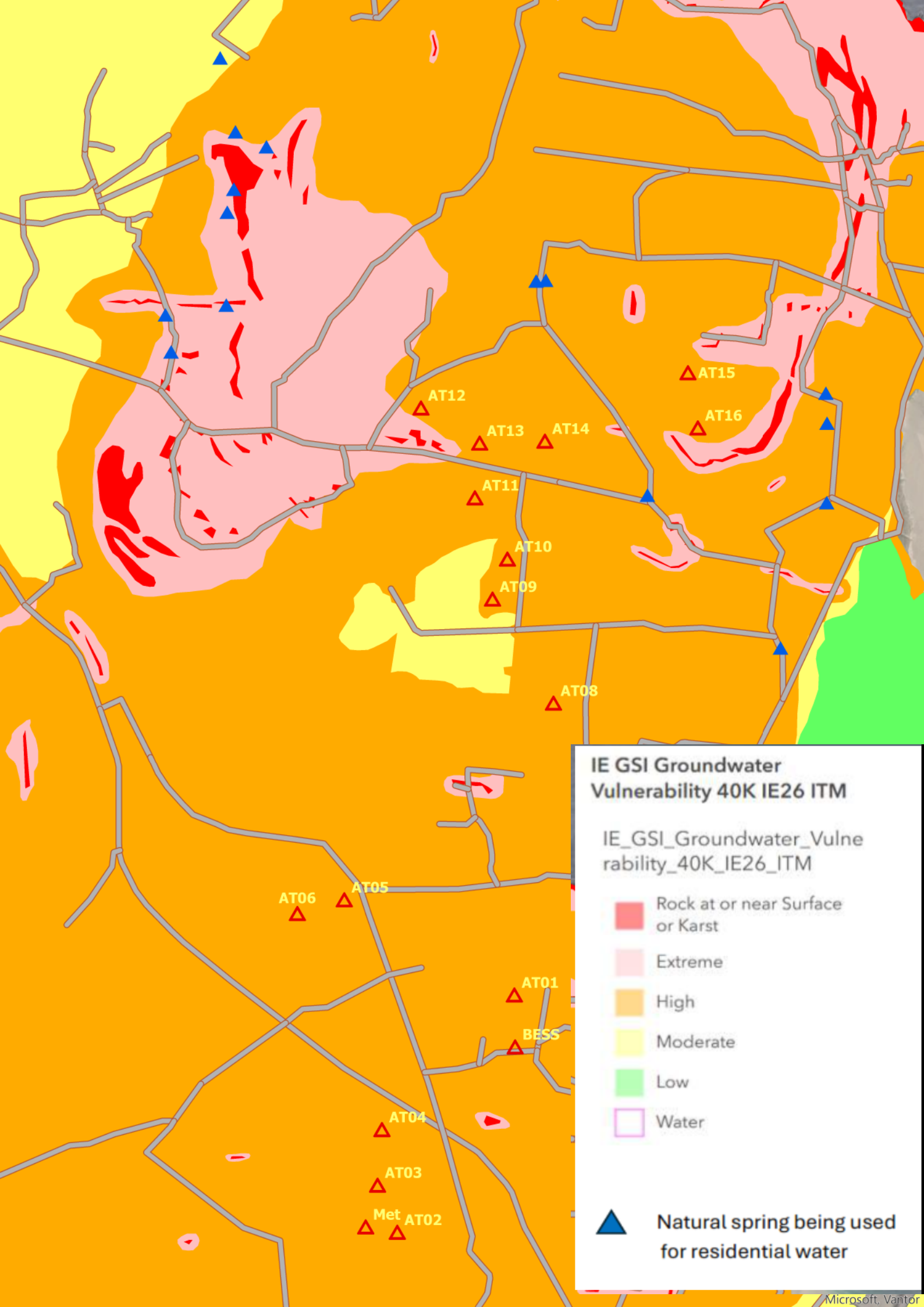
There is every reason to think that dirty water arising from the construction phase, and lasting several years after it, will seep into the groundwater these houses are using.

Likewise, there is every reason to believe that these excavations will impact groundwater levels and **flow paths**, not just during construction, but during the operational life of the wind farm, and even after decommissioning.

The applicants main defence against this problem is to say that foundations will be shallow – though the precise depth is left uncertain (see below), and to say that flow paths here are short and will be unaffected, which contradicts local experience, and is based on general study over a much larger area (see below).

Some households in the vicinity of the turbines (Kilbride and Carrowmore) are in an especially vulnerable position because:

- i. They have **no public water supply**, despite years of trying to get one.



- ii. They cannot bore for a well, because the water that comes up from deep underground is tainted from sandstone, contains arsenic, is coloured bright red and is unusable even for washing. Therefore, the applicant's assumption that every house in the area has a bored well (9.4.2.9) is inaccurate and undermines their overall position that groundwater is a non-issue.
- iii. The **only** semi-reliable water source for these homes is shallow groundwater springs that they pipe to their homes. Many of these natural springs are high up on the hill, at a similar elevation as the turbine foundations, and susceptible to changes in either groundwater levels or flow paths arising from the development. They already run dry in protracted droughts, and any deterioration from large excavations and/or piling beneath turbine stands could worsen this.
- iv. Some of them are located in a **karstified aquifer** and ABP should be extremely careful that these vital and vulnerable natural springs are fully protected, otherwise what future might there be for the villages depending on them as the only available water supply?
- v. The EIAR does not appear to have considered the fact that many of the houses in the area are supplied with their drinking water from these shallow springs, even though it acknowledges that most groundwater here emerges in this way (9.5.1.9).
- vi. Most of these shallow springs are also in the extreme groundwater vulnerability area mapped by GSI, and pollution is also a major concern. Pollution needs to be considered not just as a surface water and environmental issue, but in relation to drinking water supplies too. Pollution is a concern from the development itself, but also from any action (e.g. pile driving) that mixes red water from inside the hill with clean surface water feeding domestic supplies.
- vii. EIAR figure 9.8 shows a fault leading directly from AT09 and AT10 to this area, which adds to the concern.
- viii. The characterization of the hill gently sloping eastward is technically true (9.3.1.1), however, it is a very gentle slope (this is also noted in 9.5.1.6), and really, it is a plateau, which absorbs rainfall and discharges it in all directions, including the extreme groundwater vulnerability areas to the North and West.

Given this extremely precarious position, these villages already live under the constant threat of having no water for long periods, and a worsening of the aquifer, could literally make some villages uninhabitable. Sandwiched between no available public supply and no usable deep water, natural groundwater springs must be taken as a very serious issue. Yet the EIAR does not truly engage with this as an issue at all.



10. Turbine foundations indeterminate

The turbine foundations are intended to be shallow. The issue of groundwater is repeatedly dismissed in the EIAR on this basis.

Even if this logic is taken at face value, the application leaves wiggle room for deeper foundations to be dug, where bedrock is inadequate (see 2.6.3), and there is also mention of pile driving (see Appendix 9.3, WFD assessment, section 4.1, page 20). Therefore, there is no guarantee that foundations will be as shallow as outlined, or that groundwater will not be subjected to much deeper excavations or pile driving. There appears to be no maximum depth contemplated.

If the proposal does receive permission, in the interest of local drinking water supplies, and groundwater sources that feed surface waters, ABP should set a maximum depth permissible to excavate, and/or pile drive and someone reliable and independent should be required to certify that this maximum is actually observed in construction. Otherwise, flow paths feeding natural springs could be impacted.

11. Faults carrying pollution far

The danger of groundwater contamination is exacerbated by the location of mapped faults in the bedrock (EIAR figure 9.8) that lie directly beneath turbines AT01, AT05 and AT09 (Other turbines, though not directly on top of these faults, are also quite close, including AT06, AT10). *“Groundwater flow in this area will be concentrated in the vicinity of faults”* (9.3.8.1) and allow rapid and long distance flows of pollution from these sites, far in excess of the short distance flow paths envisaged in the EIAR (9.3.8.1).

This is consistent with local experience of groundwater flows being easily disturbed and rerouting over long distances.

The EIAR quotes a previous study (GSI 2004) of the Belmullet GWB to say that groundwater flow paths will be short and will not easily be disturbed. This is just not consistent with the experience and knowledge of the people on the ground, and draws upon a study of a much larger area extending across the whole of North Mayo -not the specific hill on which our springs and the proposed windfarm are proposed to coexist. No local survey/study was conducted.

Here, unexpected holes (Sousmerras) can appear and swallow up streams unpredictably, and springs dry up and reemerge hundreds of meters away. A well known example, is St Brigid’s well in Kilbride, which moved 940m Southwest to its present location at an indeterminate point in the past. Other, less dramatic, but still unpredictable movements of springs and groundwater (and surface water) have happened in living memory also.

12. Chemical additives in surface waters

The EIAR envisages use of “siltbuster” chemical as a last line of defence against heavy particle flows into surface waters (9.5.1.10). Ingredients include Poly Aluminium Chloride, Aluminium Sulphate, Ferric Iron, Ferrous Iron (9.4.2.10).

Is it safe for drinking water supplies coming out of the local groundwater?

EIAR 9.5.1.10 states that an alternative chemical agent may be used in sensitive locations. It does not name this alternative, its ingredients, or why it should be used in sensitive locations but not on a wider scale. It is impossible to tell if this unspecified alternative agent is really safer or less safe than siltbuster. But given that people are drinking untreated water out of this aquifer, these are questions that

need answers.

13. EIAR designedly ignores groundwater

Section 9.5.1.9 of the EIAR uses peculiarly emphatic language (“*Conclusive ...robustly*”) to express the applicant’s position that groundwater is not an issue in this project. This verbal emphasis is not accidental, and really reflects an insecurity around the issue of groundwater, private wells and springs. Careful reading of this chapter reveal further hints at this insecurity:

- i. Dismissal of Inland Fisheries straightforward requirement that the project “*must avoid high groundwater vulnerability areas*” (9.2.7). The applicant’s terse reply is that they have avoided “*extreme*” vulnerability areas. Is this good enough for ACP?
- ii. In a 100 page report on hydrology, one page only (9.3.9) is dedicated to groundwater vulnerability, even though the entire windfarm is built on a high groundwater vulnerability area. Is this sufficient?
- iii. No map of groundwater vulnerability accompanies the application, as one might expect in a report of this size. Similar, recent wind farm developments in this area have included a map of groundwater vulnerability – yet it mysteriously was forgotten in this application. Where it matters greatly, but inconveniently.
- iv. No attempt is made to map wells and/or springs in the vicinity of the turbines, even though the vulnerability of several important local springs is in the extreme zone and the houses are well known to be already in a precarious water situation. We cannot believe the applicant is unaware of this after 15 years of obsidiously gathering data about this area.

Knowing groundwater to be a serious, and unanswerable issue, the EIAR deliberately curtails its discussion of it, and does not engage with it as an issue. This is a quite unworthy decision and reflects poorly on the applicant.

14. Karst aquifer

AT12, AT13, AT15, and AT16 are all adjacent to Karst groundwater conditions.

Mayo Renewable Energy Strategy says the following about Karst Groundwater, further emphasising the risks of polluting groundwater, or disrupting underground flows. Yet the EIAR insists groundwater is not an issue:

*“Karst groundwater (the water in a karst aquifer) is a major water resource in many regions. **Karst aquifers have specific hydraulic and hydrogeologic characteristics that render them highly vulnerable to pollution from human activities.** Karst*

*groundwater becomes polluted more easily and in shorter time periods than water in non-karstic aquifers. Thus, arising from the karstified nature of an aquifer, additional precautionary measures should be implemented to ensure that groundwater quality will not be negatively impacted on. Mitigation measures shall relate to the **preservation of the existing subterranean drainage regime and the protection of groundwater.***" (Renewable Energy Strategy for County Mayo 2011-2020, 6.5.4)

15. Surface waters

I object to the proposal because of risks to surface waters. NEO 6 of the County plan states:

"Natural Environment Objective 6: To protect surface waters, aquatic and wetland habitats and freshwater and waterdependent species through the implementation of all appropriate and relevant Directives and transposed legislation and seek to protect and conserve the quality, character and features of inland waterways by controlling developments close to navigable and non-navigable waterways."

All the streams and surface water leaving the development eventually merge at a single location, creating a concentration of risks here. Unfortunately, this concentration of risks, also happens to be an SAC and a priority natural habitat (grey dunes). This SAC takes the form of a salt marsh, including a delta of many islands that is a refuge for birdlife, and rich with crabs and other prey.

Given the extent of this development, and the concentration of all surface flows at this sensitive spot, even with all of the mitigation measures envisaged in the EIAR implemented in full, a decline in water quality at this location is to be expected. The amount of peat and spoil to be excavated, transported, heaped etc seems virtually impossible to keep out of surface waters, even if the project is constructed exclusively by saints.

As discussed earlier, I do not believe "Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest" currently apply to the Water Framework Directive, in which case no reduction in water quality is allowed, especially in a European Site.

16. Bathing waters not studied

The EIAR assesses the nearest bathing waters to be at Ross beach (WFD assessment 2.7.2). There are a large number of daily swimmers at Lacken Pier, Kilcummin beach, and Kilcummin backstrand. All of which have had investment from Mayo County

Council as bathing spots, and all are fed directly by surface waters flowing off of the site. Kilcummin pier is also a popular bathing water nearby that should be assessed also.

17. High emissions of a substance that is harmful at very low levels

I object to the proposal because of the scope for microplastics to enter the environment, including groundwater springs, the public water supply for Ballycastle town, the area generally, and airborne.

Recent studies have shown that microplastics can be shed in large quantities from wind turbine surfaces, which are composed of a mixture of glass fibre and epoxy. These microplastics can enter nearby air, soil and water, causing human and animal health impacts of a quite serious nature.

The proposed turbines have a nacelle and blades composed of a mixture of fiberglass, plastic and epoxy (EIAR 2.6.2.1). These are durable materials, but in the extreme conditions of turbine blades, it can still be anticipated that a portion of this material will wear from the blade surface each year. This may be as much as 62kg per turbine per year (“Leading edge erosion and pollution from wind turbine blades”, 2021, Asbjorn Solberg et al).

Once in the environment, the microplastics in question, combining epoxy and fibred glass, release toxins such as phthalates and/or Bisphenol A (“Environmental occurrence and ecotoxicological risks of plastic leachates in aquatic and terrestrial environments”, 2024, Science of the total environment, <https://doi.org/10.1002/etc.3663>), which are harmful to human and animal health, and could disrupt the “*normal physiology of various species*”.

Bisphenol A is a particularly toxic leachate from these microplastics, with endocrine disrupting qualities at very low levels. The WHO guides that drinking water, such as the shallow springs and deep wells in this area, should have a maximum of **0.1 micrograms Bisphenol A per litre of water** (<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32020L2184&from=EN>) . An extremely high standard, and one that is inconsistent with the wearing of microplastics high up on a hill from which drinking water is being sourced.

Against this strict standard, the rate of microplastic shedding from turbine blades is unhappily quite high. As much as 0.276% for every 10 hours of saltwater rain (<https://doi.org/10.1007/s40735-021-00472-0> , Rain Erosion Maps for Wind Turbines Based on Geographical Locations: A Case Study in Ireland and Britain, K Pugh, 2020).

This can be worse in areas of salt and sand erosion of turbine parts, such as the proposed location of this wind farm (see “Wind turbine blade behaviour in abrasive wear conditions”, Cristian Muntenita et al, 2024, in Polymers, <https://doi.org/10.3390/polym16243483>).

Apart from the damage to drinking water, leachates from microplastics can disrupt the DNA of fish and other species (“Toxicity assessment of pollutants sorbed on environmental sample microplastics collected on beaches: Part I-adverse effects on fish cell line”, Pannetier et al, 2019, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envpol.2018.12.091>)

This is a new and emerging area of study, showing that wind turbine emissions of microplastics are both large in quantity, and high in impact to both human and animal health. This particular location magnifies these problems by being located

- i. on top of shallow springs, and wells used for human drinking water,
- ii. Above surface water flows flowing down into an SAC and priority natural habitat
- iii. In an area of aggressive salt and sand erosion.

The wind turbine industry has yet to respond to these new findings, but until they do, it seems prudent that a development, such as this one that is located at the convergence of multiple magnifying risks, should be refused.

18. Inappropriate method of calculating shadow flicker hours per day figures

I object to the very considerable shadow flicker that is predicted to arise from this project, and its heavy reliance (overreliance) on an IT system to rectify this.

Table 15.3 displays three measures of shadow flicker at relevant receptors. The hours per year, the expected hours per year, and the expected hours per day. The word “expected” is doing a great deal of lifting here, as the EIAR reduces shadow flicker per year by 85-90% for receptors, based on statistical probabilities of cloud cover and wind (15.2.3, p.8).

This 85-90% “expected” reduction, based on statistical probabilities, seems generous for the hours per year test. And no margin of safety appears to have been added to account for particularly sunny years.

However, its application is much worse in the case of the hours per day test, where statistical sunshine and wind records are inappropriate factors in calculating shadow flicker!!! It is a common and normal thing for a day to have weather that varies from the statistical norm, and any receptor can expect to have sunny-windy days. Despite this, no unaltered “hours per day” calculation has been supplied for receptors in the study area. This needs to be calculated for a proper assessment of

the hours per day test.

Even using this weather adjustment, many receptors are shown to be exposed to more than 30 mins per day on certain dates of the year (Appendix 15.1, pages 17-173).

If the hours per day limit is breached at many houses, even after reducing the measure by 90%, then clearly, this site wildly exceeds the limit on sunny-windy days. No amount of sophistry can escape this. The mere fact it is being attempted reflects poorly on all concerned.

19. Shadow Flicker study area too small according to report's own figures

The study area for Shadow flicker is inadequate i.e. 1.17km (15.2.4). Presumably, this area was chosen because of the 2006 Guidelines comment that *"at distances greater than 10 rotor diameters from a turbine, the potential for shadow flicker is very low"* (15.2.2). At first glance that seems reasonable, however, those guidelines are outdated, and for several reasons, the study area is too small:

- i. In table 15.3, many houses exceed the 30 mins per day limit, even when the absolute figure is reduced (inappropriately) by 90% to allow for weather.
- ii. The 2006 Guidelines may suggest that 10 times the rotor is beyond significant effects, but that same guidance limits flicker to 30 hours per year or 30 mins per day. Table 15.3 shows even houses near the edge of the study area are experiencing significant flicker and even breaching these limits. The fact that even the remoter houses in the study area are breaching the guidelines, (even using applicant's reduced numbers), demonstrates the study area is insufficient to achieve the protection the 2006 Guidelines envisage. If unaltered daily shadow flicker figures are provided, this situation will be much worse. The 30 minutes per day guideline is clearly to be exceeded at many receptors, including many not even in the study area.
- iii. This is a populated area! 89 out of the studies 100 receptors will experience shadow flicker. This figure will rise if the study area expands.
- iv. The elevation of this site above surrounding terrain, and above all receptors in the area requires a greater study area to capture the true extent of flicker.
- v. H102 is the local secondary school. i.e. in figure 2.3 ranking of homes according to distance from the turbines, H102 is the 102nd closest to a wind turbine. However, the shadow flicker study area only

embraces the 1st 100 houses and just excludes the secondary school. As the school is a place of work and study for a large quantity of people, some of whom have sensory issues, it seems appropriate that it receive special consideration.

20. Overreliance on a shadow control system to address extremely high shadow flicker

The EIAR relies very heavily on a single mitigation measure (Shadow Control System) to address shadow flicker concerns. Mitigation by avoidance is not considered in the EIAR.

The record of these control systems elsewhere in Mayo is abysmal, and while it may be useful in situations where shadow flicker is of marginal concern, **it is not equal to the shadow flicker challenge in this residential area.**

Even if we take it at face value, it is not absolutely clear which houses are to be protected by this system:

- i. Is it houses within 500m of a turbine (per 2006 guidelines). If so, the shadow control system is irrelevant, as the nearest home is 555m (H3).
- ii. Is it the 100 houses within the study area (10 times the rotor)? If so, we would ask that Lacken Cross School be added to the protected receptors.
- iii. Is it the 108 receptors referred to in 15.2.9.5, and if so, which houses are these?
- iv. Is it all houses everywhere, which would reflect the as yet unimplemented 2019 guidelines? It should be noted that the 2019 guidelines would require a much wider study area than undertaken here, as it covers all effected houses, which, given the altitude and size of these turbines, will cover a very wide area.

There is also little detail in the application about how this shadow control system will operate in practice. Important questions include:

- i. Is it proposed to reduce shadow flicker to zero, or to 30 mins per day? If the capability exists to eliminate shadow flicker, why wouldn't we?
- ii. Will the system be plugged in to the Met mast, and only operate when conditions are sunny/windy? This will give rise to failure if broken clouds passing over the Met mast cause the system to permit shadow flicker across the rest of the windfarm.

- iii. How long does the system stop the turbines? Will it kick in before alignment with one side of the house, and cut out after the sun has cleared the other side? Or will it be just a fleeting stoppage?

Finally, the applicant outlines a complaints process, where residents can apply to beg for consideration of their shadow flicker problems (15.2.9.3). The applicant has avoided all consultation with the local community, sworn the contracted landowners to secrecy, and avoided any type of engagement with local residents. How then can we have any faith that they will deal fairly with any complaints after planning is granted?

This complaints process, explicitly states that complaints will be assessed inter alia on the basis of how persistent and dogged the complainant is:

*“In the event that complaints of shadow flicker are received by the Developer / site operator or by Mayo County Council, an investigation will take place and the **complaints frequency, duration and time of complaints will be considered and specialist modelling software will be used to confirm the occurrence(s). Should the complaint persist, a shadow flicker survey involving the collection of light data will also be carried out at the property in which the complaint was made.**” (EIAR 15.2.9.3)*

That is really no way to run anything. If this is their level of commitment before planning, what will it be afterwards?

21. Tourism

I object to the harm this development will inflict on the local tourism market, which is a key part of the county and regional tourism offering.

- The turbines are located alongside the Wild Atlantic Way, the Lacken Trails, and the Western Way. All tourism offerings that market unspoilt countryside to tourists.
- A new landmark, 15km greenway from Downpatrick Head to Ceide has been granted planning permission and is shortly to be funded. It is planned to underpin the new Failte Ireland DEDP for the region (Ceide Coast walkway).
- The turbines will be plainly visible from 3 discovery points on the Wild Atlantic Way: Ceide Fields, Kilcummin Beach and DownPatrick Head.
- Downpatrick Head is also a Signature Discovery Point on the Wild Atlantic Way (one of only 12 nationally).
- Downpatrick Head is also one of the “Flagship” infrastructure proposals of Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028 *“To support the preparation of a*

masterplan and/or visitor traffic management plan at Downpatrick Head-Discovery Point.” (TRP 27-g).

- Tourism is the second largest employer in the area, and the only one available to many people. It is worth protecting.
- While damaging the local tourism economy, the turbines will give nothing back to the area. The power will be sold to the grid, and any contribution to the community fund, will be absorbed by Mayo County Council, in accordance with current council policy in this area. By contrast, the tourism impact will land first and foremost on the local area.
- Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028 includes the following paragraphs:

“Tourism and Recreation Policy 3: To support the work of Fáilte Ireland and the strategic growth of tourism development in the county through:
a. To support the implementation of the Wild Atlantic Way Tourism Strategy.
b. The implementation of Fáilte Irelands Destination & Experience Development Plans (EDP’s) for Clew Bay and North Mayo/Erris.”

“Tourism and Recreation Policy 8: To work with the relevant authorities to promote the concept of creating Ireland’s first “National Marine Park” in Killala Bay, from Easley Head to Kilcummin Head. This would enhance the Economic, Environmental and Social values of Killala Bay and promote the understanding and enjoyment of those special qualities by the public.”

“Tourism and Recreation Policy 13: To support local, national and international tourism agencies and bodies in their work to promote Mayo as a unique tourism destination and build on the ‘Wild Mayo’ adventure brand and to continue to position itself as ‘The Heartbeat of the Wild Atlantic Way’ through an interagency approach, utilising available funding streams to implement the tourism objectives of this plan.”.

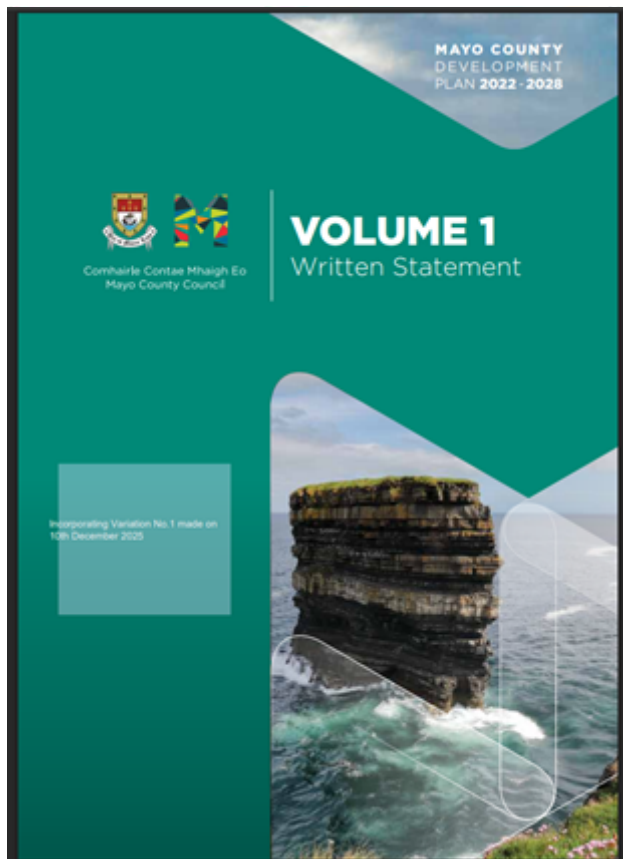
“Tourism and Recreation Objective 11: To utilise Mayo’s natural and heritage resources to foster the development of tourism as a viable sustainable sector of the economy, in a sustainable manner, which complements the scale, quality and unique features of the county.”.

22. Visual impact at scenic locations

I object to the visual impact of these devices. Not only are they very large, but also in continuous motion. They will dominate the view from my home and from my farm, as well as the appearance of the area. A famously scenic location, highlighted in the county plan as an area for scenic beauty and scenic preservation.

Mayo Renewable Energy Strategy includes the following: *“Objective 2.4 - It is an objective of the Council to ensure that renewable energy developments do not interfere with, damage, remove, or impinge on the **visual amenity** of, existing rights of way, public walking and cycling routes, **scenic routes and scenic views**, architectural heritage including protected structures and Architectural Conservation Areas, archaeological heritage including recorded monuments, Ballycroy National*

Park and vulnerable or sensitive landscapes in the County.”



Downpatrick Head is one of only 12 “Signature” locations on the Wild Atlantic Way because of its scenic beauty of national significance. It is therefore considered a major tourism asset to the nation and the county. In fact, if you look at Mayo County Development Plan, the front cover of the document is a picture of Downpatrick Head/Dun Briste, from where you will have a clear view of the proposed development.

Many public documents are similarly adorned at county and occasionally national level.

23. Appalling approach to public consultation. Shameful

I object to the secretive manner in which this development has been developed.

- i. The applicant claims to have conducted informal door-to-door consultations with local residents, which no one I know can affirm. It must have been a very poor attempt at door-to-door consultations – if it happened at all.
- ii. The few local landowners involved have signed non-disclosure agreements, and there has been no discussion of the agreements they have signed locally. The entire project has been developed in extreme secrecy
- iii. A public consultation event was held in the Great National Hotel in Ballina on Tuesday 6th June 2023. No event was held in Lacken or

Ballycastle, where it should have taken place. Nor even was any event held in Killala. Glenora Windfarm, and Keerglen Windfarm both managed to hold consultations in Ballycastle Hall. But the applicant found it necessary to go as far as Ballina to find a venue.

- iv. The Ballina consultation event was poorly attended. It was advertised in a single paper, the Western People, and if it had not been for a whatsapp message I received on the day of the consultation, (after it had already started), I would have known nothing about it. Even then, the wording of the advertisement did not describe where the windfarm would be, and I did not realise in advance that it was to be sited on the populated side of the parish.
- v. Further, the actual advert in the paper did not describe the effected townlands, as the image in the EIAR suggests it did.
- vi. After the consultation event, and right up until the applicant sought permission for the development in late 2025 (over 2 years), no information was available on the development's website, even though they had prepared all the documentation to display at the consultation event
- vii. The very name of the windfarm "Barony of Tirawley Windfarm" is vague and undescriptive. Instead of calling it Lacken or even Ballycastle Windfarm, the developer has chosen an out of date placename, that covers a much larger territory. The Barony of Tirawley existed prior to 1898, embracing much of North Mayo, but is an antiquated placename, out of common usage
- viii. The ultimate owners of the applicant are a mystery, and the applicant is owned by a holding company based in the British Virgin Islands.

Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028 says the following:

"Renewable Energy Policy 4: To ensure that developers of proposed large-scale renewable energy projects carry out community consultation in accordance with best practice and commence the consultation at the initiation of project planning."

Does the above sound like "best practice" in community consultation?

24. Community benefit needs to be outlined

Objective 4.3 of Mayo Renewable Energy Strategy requires developers to detail some community benefit alongside their planning application.

- *"Objective 4.3
It is an objective of the Council to require developers to incorporate the concept of community benefit into any renewable energy development proposal. Details of the particular form/model of community benefit proposed*

by the developer shall be submitted with the planning application for agreement by the Council at planning stage.”

This does not seem to have been supplied in this application.

There is reference to a contribution to the community fund in Chapter 4. However,

- i. This is a compulsory levy imposed on developers by Mayo County Council. It is hardly a “Community Benefit”
- ii. This fund is administered by Mayo County Council, largely collected from wind developments in this Municipal District, and largely spent in other Municipal Districts. Is that what community benefit should look like?
- iii. The applicant is owned ultimately by a holding company in the British Virgin Islands, and we do not even know the ultimate owners. Any credit given to the application for the rates payable to the LA, should be considered alongside the extra-territorial nature of the company in a tax-haven.

25. Noise

I object to the noise of these installations. The application describes the noise levels as being equivalent to bird-song. A delightful phrase for what in fact shall be a continuous, mechanical swishing overhead.

I have chosen to live here, in the face of great economic limitations, precisely for the peace and beauty of the area, and now this application proposes to take that away through unsuitable development. The size of these installations and their proximity to residential homes and residential areas is intolerable.

26. SPA plan not considered – directly relates to Lacken Salt Marsh

I object that the application does not consider Objective 1 of the The Moy Estuary SPA Conservation Objectives (2013), which it endangers:

- *Objective 1: “To be favourable, there should be no significant decrease in the range, timing or intensity of use of areas by the waterbird species of Special Conservation Interest, other than that occurring from natural patterns of variation”*

Table 2.1 Site Designation Summary: species listed for Killala Bay/Moy Estuary Special Protection Area, plus site importance at national, regional and county scale

Special Conservation Interests	Annex I species	Baseline Population ^a	Population status at baseline	National Importance Rank ¹	Regional Importance Rank ²	County Importance Rank ³
Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>)		245	All-Ireland importance	6	2	2
Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>)	Yes	2,361	All-Ireland importance	21	3	1
Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>)		221	All-Ireland importance	14	2	1
Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>)		123	All-Ireland importance	11	3	3
Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>)		2,073	All-Ireland importance	17	4	1
Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>)	Yes	366	All-Ireland importance	16	3	2
Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>)		731	All-Ireland importance	15	4	1
Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>)		372	All-Ireland importance	18	6	2
Other conservation designations associated with the site ^b	SAC	RAMSAR SITE	IMPORTANT BIRD AREA (IBA)	WILDFOWL SANCTUARY	OTHER	OTHER
	000458 000516	Yes	Yes		pNHA	

^a Baseline data are the 5-year mean peak counts for the period 1995/96 – 1999/00 (J-WeBS).

^b Note that other designations associated with Killala Bay/Moy Estuary may relate to different areas and/or some of these areas may extend outside the SPA boundary.

¹ National importance rank – the number given relates to the importance of the site for the non-breeding population of a SCI species during the baseline period (1995/96 – 1999/00) relative to other sites in Ireland.

² Regional importance rank – the number given relates to the importance of the site for the non-breeding population of a SCI species during the baseline period (1995/96 – 1999/00) relative to other sites within the Western and Border Regions (cross-region site).

³ County importance rank – the number given relates to the importance of the site for the non-breeding population of a SCI species during the baseline period (1995/96 – 1999/00) relative to other sites within Counties Sligo and Mayo (cross-county site).

This document highlights the importance of this area for breeding and especially migratory bird life, including a number of threatened species:

27. Wildlife currently very strong in this area, despite EIAR

I object to the proposal because of the impact it will have on local wildlife, including sensitive bird populations. Since the year 2020, the following protected species have been recorded with the National Biodiversity Centre: Golden Plover, Redshank, Lapwing, Kestrel, Curlew, Golden Eagle, Hen Harrier. As well as a broad array of other non-protected species.

Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028 includes:

“Natural Environment Objective 6: To protect surface waters, aquatic and wetland habitats and freshwater and waterdependent species through the implementation of all appropriate and relevant Directives and transposed legislation and seek to protect

and conserve the quality, character and features of inland waterways by controlling developments **close** to navigable and non-navigable waterways.”

Mayo Renewable Energy Strategy says:

“Objective 2.3: It is an objective of the Council that all proposed renewable developments will be assessed on the principles of proper planning and sustainable development, ensuring minimal adverse environmental impact to biodiversity, flora and fauna; population and human health; soil; water; air and climatic factors; material assets; cultural heritage; and landscape. Full account shall be taken of the presence and requirement to protect all Natura 2000 sites, natural Heritage Areas, proposed Natural Heritage Areas, the national Park and Nature Reserves. Projects will be subject to Habitats Directive Assessment where considered appropriate.”.

Some examples of wildlife recorded locally:

Record Date	Common Name	Latitude	Longitude	Taxon Image
09/06/2026	Buzzard	54.23166487	-9.28864195	https://records.biodiversityireland.ie/storage/record-images/buteo_buteo_cf67e266cb72fefb7b25a852e439cc08.jpg
04/04/2026	Kestrel	54.29488848	-9.32430494	
14/03/2026	Kestrel	54.29208272	-9.33203309	https://records.biodiversityireland.ie/storage/record-images/falco_tinnunculus_270b30c39d8a812e35f86945eca5573c.jpg
08/03/2026	Hen Harrier	54.29522798	-9.32310251	https://records.biodiversityireland.ie/storage/record-images/circus_cyaneus_212d8de51a5afbd607ebd37c5ba530f8.jpg
26/02/2026	Kestrel	54.29514033	-9.32442568	https://records.biodiversityireland.ie/storage/record-images/falco_tinnunculus_e06ae1a7cbcc5fb6dbe3d73c285730c1.jpg
30/12/2025	Kestrel	54.29539984	-9.32385001	https://records.biodiversityireland.ie/storage/record-images/falco_tinnunculus_d3d7908b8384885219c2ce91c8b3b097.jpg
30/12/2025	Kestrel	54.29535966	-9.32387297	
30/12/2025	Kestrel	54.29148408	-9.33828147	

Record Date	Common Name	Latitude	Longitude	Taxon Image
29/12/2025	Peregrine	54.28709443	-9.34033654	
29/12/2025	Buzzard	54.26208816	-9.33172326	https://records.biodiversityireland.ie/storage/record-images/buteo_buteo_fbf6f164f00de7b8c755d5096dc431e0.jpg
20/12/2025	Kestrel	54.29512579	-9.32302638	
06/12/2025	Kestrel	54.29514166	-9.32305745	https://records.biodiversityireland.ie/storage/record-images/falco_tinnunculus_f4b004c6d705dc5cf0dfd8739f4a8381.jpg
20/11/2025	Barn Owl	54.24032233	-9.29914196	
20/10/2025	Long-eared Owl	54.27931335	-9.31362564	
13/10/2025	Buzzard	54.28655641	-9.34109003	
08/10/2025	Buzzard	54.29506278	-9.32308333	https://records.biodiversityireland.ie/storage/record-images/buteo_buteo_1f79b98d44a71336a54dd3dfbd87a11b.jpg
05/10/2025	Buzzard	54.29511799	-9.32305507	
20/09/2025	Buzzard	54.30620744	-9.31576495	https://records.biodiversityireland.ie/storage/record-images/buteo_buteo_730f9e27e8343a173759ce8b1865b324.jpg
07/09/2025	Buzzard	54.29154288	-9.32260291	https://records.biodiversityireland.ie/storage/record-images/buteo_buteo_b24ed05c234ca2b58b951c533deb5e9e.jpg
03/09/2025	Kestrel	54.29242353	-9.33268951	https://records.biodiversityireland.ie/storage/record-images/falco_tinnunculus_c3e4870a068386b9a099d209a7396aea.jpg
03/09/2025	Buzzard	54.29244241	-9.33275797	https://records.biodiversityireland.ie/storage/record-images/

Record Date	Common Name	Latitude	Longitude	Taxon Image
				images/buteo_buteo_4cb5a727e31bf9f3a1325bf60c337a98.jpg
25/08/2025	Buzzard	54.29180931	9.32046163	https://records.biodiversityireland.ie/storage/record-images/buteo_buteo_60dd9dfe667184dc2168cea7f31d9ea6.jpg
24/08/2025	White-tailed Eagle	54.29512903	9.32307575	https://records.biodiversityireland.ie/storage/record-images/haliaeetus_albicilla_15c6731d8f3b2653de22bed5249b3c62.jpg
08/07/2025	Sparrow hawk	54.29514417	9.32300502	https://records.biodiversityireland.ie/storage/record-images/accipiter_nisus_4ecc10a374b41e13a9632a54783cff2c.jpg
12/06/2025	Buzzard	54.28912131	9.33901048	https://records.biodiversityireland.ie/storage/record-images/buteo_buteo_2aac4f13ef8aa86db4c64fb7433b07ff.jpg
01/06/2025	Kestrel	54.29549911	9.32380134	
22/02/2025	Kestrel	54.29509926	9.32299899	
07/02/2025	Golden Plover	54.2951358	9.32302249	
01/01/2025	Kestrel	54.29537593	9.3238177	https://records.biodiversityireland.ie/storage/record-images/falco_tinnunculus_59d0264bbd67ecfeddad51169ecbcef5.jpg
27/12/2024	Kestrel	54.29548924	9.32351018	https://records.biodiversityireland.ie/storage/record-images/falco_tinnunculus_3380582723e74f6b3f5a1d1c73312e5c.jpg
15/12/2024	Buzzard	54.29056583	9.32927353	
16/11/2024	Kestrel	54.29526026	9.32328109	https://records.biodiversityireland.ie/storage/record-images/falco_tinnunculus_c7db48fed7250e7f6cabf4478728b42e.jpg
12/10/2024	Kestrel	54.29410921	9.3231743	https://records.biodiversityireland.ie/storage/record-

Record Date	Common Name	Latitude	Longitude	Taxon Image
				images/falco_tinnunculus_d877bf223387e5e1f38ccd8ef53e6117.jpg
28/09/2024	Kestrel	54.29406788	9.32327626	https://records.biodiversityireland.ie/storage/record-images/falco_tinnunculus_8598d0a325002bc82baad40090272111.jpg
06/09/2024	Corncrake	54.29511099	9.3230569	
01/07/2024	Kestrel	54.29501174	9.32159314	
01/07/2024	Kestrel	54.29446222	9.31993495	https://records.biodiversityireland.ie/storage/record-images/falco_tinnunculus_cb080f217e61c37b275cff51366634fa.jpg
01/07/2024	Kestrel	54.29541704	9.32093952	https://records.biodiversityireland.ie/storage/record-images/falco_tinnunculus_45c28530245cbb790d50e96b708ba170.jpg
15/04/2024	Kestrel	54.29524035	9.32298093	
27/03/2024	Kestrel	54.29507238	9.32290147	
21/03/2024	Kestrel	54.29528951	9.32392113	https://records.biodiversityireland.ie/storage/record-images/falco_tinnunculus_4412e01e487f3c7553b9626368d1134d.jpg
18/03/2024	Kestrel	54.29525301	9.32337488	
02/12/2023	Snipe	54.28698657	9.31712106	
15/10/2023	Snipe	54.28927399	9.31504126	
15/10/2023	Snipe	54.29120987	9.3140273	
30/09/2023	Merlin	54.29186433	9.33665869	https://records.biodiversityireland.ie/storage/record-

Record Date	Common Name	Latitude	Longitude	Taxon Image
				images/falco_columbarius_1d3c69fb27a12a01c7113b67c89efe5d.jpg
25/09/2023	Grey Heron	54.22727355	9.26437902	
19/08/2023	Golden Eagle	54.28549865	9.34311116	https://records.biodiversityireland.ie/storage/record-images/aquila_chrysaetos_04d59988b4879a9e0a3e2539f48defef.jpg
18/08/2023	Golden Eagle	54.28534711	9.34343697	https://records.biodiversityireland.ie/storage/record-images/aquila_chrysaetos_03fed1a62e8b17e58de025079443c229.jpg
10/08/2023	Kestrel	54.28530872	9.34349114	
05/08/2023	Kestrel	54.29502678	9.32313533	
18/06/2023	Kestrel	54.29180662	9.32126365	
07/06/2023	Kestrel	54.29121193	9.32030694	https://records.biodiversityireland.ie/storage/record-images/falco_tinnunculus_462f2dc2be0e4f6d1a6432f06b289701.jpg
04/10/2022	Kestrel	54.28554903	9.34327796	
03/05/2022	Grey Wagtail	54.29459122	9.31914177	
27/04/2022	Pied Wagtail	54.29457888	9.31971775	
27/04/2022	Small White	54.28642508	9.34155093	
26/04/2022	Cuckoo	54.27737648	9.43192054	
26/04/2022	Cuckoo	54.27738495	9.43196977	

Record Date	Common Name	Latitude	Longitude	Taxon Image
25/04/2022	Grasshopper Warbler	54.2950042	9.32484265	https://records.biodiversityireland.ie/storage/record-images/locustella_naevia_5fff87282cf65007fd6b782afd7361bb.jpg
02/04/2022	Common Frog	54.29523386	9.32397696	https://records.biodiversityireland.ie/storage/record-images/rana_temporaria_2cbfc86f0321a0aea35dacc794d1decd.jpg
27/03/2022	Pheasant	54.29462179	9.32523656	https://records.biodiversityireland.ie/storage/record-images/phasianus_colchicus_a079aad4703c66faf040ecbc424046f6.jpg
27/03/2022	Pheasant	54.29443924	9.32522687	https://records.biodiversityireland.ie/storage/record-images/phasianus_colchicus_d8106a6675c4f92eeb52ece22447ec36.jpg
04/09/2021	Kestrel	54.29171337	9.33901596	
26/06/2021	Pine Marten	54.29539372	9.32277164	https://records.biodiversityireland.ie/storage/record-images/martes_martes_1b4bd7724d03bc03f17a4e636b0ca50a.jpg
25/06/2021	Pine Marten	54.2948979	9.32278597	https://records.biodiversityireland.ie/storage/record-images/martes_martes_3bdb1cb3ca0761c6bcfe6969977dbfb6.jpg
14/06/2021	Irish Stoat	54.29598334	9.32788755	
23/04/2021	Golden Plover	54.29352304	9.32434167	https://records.biodiversityireland.ie/storage/record-images/pluvialis_apricaria_4aa5f4ecc3c640d54569c8220f8bd643.jpg
17/04/2021	Golden Plover	54.29508989	9.32298017	https://records.biodiversityireland.ie/storage/record-images/pluvialis_apricaria_487d9a861d61d003bf4625b6a24c5fb8.jpg

28. Planning Policy chapter is a shambles

Chapter 4 of the EIAR (Planning Policy) is riddled with errors, omissions and sophistry

- 4.4.5 refers to Regulations 2022/2577 and 2024/233, both of which have expired. They have been replaced by the more limited (though permanent) provisions of RED III.
- 4.5.1.5 suggests ACP is “*obliged*” by section 15 of the Climate Act 2015 to set aside the County Plan, following the Coolglass Judgment. However, this is exactly what the Coolglass Judgment does not say (see below).
- 4.5.2.1 refers to RPO 4.19 of the RSES, even though this is clearly inapplicable to onshore wind
- 4.5.2.2 speaks of the proposal as an investment in the region. This is rather galling, coming from an applicant that has its ultimate holding company in the British Virgin Islands.
- 4.5.3.1 is just a litany of errors.
 - i. REO 4 has no bearing on this decision at all
 - ii. The applicant says that the proposal complies with REO 6 and the Mayo Renewable Energy Strategy – clearly it does not
 - iii. The applicant says the proposal complies with REO 8 and NEO 27 and the Landscape Appraisal – clearly it does not
 - iv. The applicant cites REO 23, and the ambition of MCDP to achieve 600MW of renewables in County Mayo. This is no longer relevant to the decision, as Mayo currently has 714MW of renewables either built or permitted from Wind energy alone (and some further contributions from solar on top of this) (Report of meeting of SPC on Climate Action, Mayo County Council, Western People 11 Dec 2025).
- 4.5.3.8 says the turbines will not be visible from the Ceide Fields. This is doubly wrong. Firstly, the turbines are largely sited within the Ceide Fields, and secondly, the turbines will definitely be completely visible from the Ceide Fields Visitors Centre.
- 4.5.3.9 quotes the MCDP Landscape Matrix partially. i.e. it says “*Windfarms in Policy Area 1 as having an overall high potential to create adverse impacts on the existing landscape character*”. That is true, but it leaves out the kicker, as the Matrix refers to windfarms in this area as having “*High potential to create adverse impacts on the existing landscape character. Having regard to the intrinsic physical and visual characteristics of the landscape area, it is unlikely that such impacts can be reduced to a widely acceptable level.*” (Landscape Matrix, Policy Area 1, MCDP Map 10.1 and Figure 10.1).
- The Drinking Water Directive is not mentioned
- The Strategy for World Heritage in Ireland 2025-2035 is not mentioned
- The Aarhus Convention is not mentioned (because, of course it isn’t).
- The Moy Estuary SPA Conservation Objectives (2013) are not mentioned.

29. Coolglass judgment totally misrepresented

EIAR 4.5.1.5 mischaracterises the Coolglass Judgment to say that “*the Commission is obliged to exercise their evaluative judgment to reach an outcome favouring policy goals*” i.e. to approve the application despite its conflicts with the County Plan and the Renewable Energy Strategy.

This is an accurate description of the High Court’s finding in that case, but is more or less the **opposite of what the Supreme Court found on appeal** (Coolglass v ACP - paragraphs 103-114):

- “103. The obligation to perform a function consistently with the climate objectives is itself qualified by the phrase “in so far as practicable”. This qualification was introduced by the 2021 Act, and was a deliberate introduction to which effect must be given. It is notable that the language is used elsewhere in the 2021 amendments, which introduced a new section 4(8)(g), s. 4(11), s. 6A(9)(ii)(IV), s. 6B(13) and s. 14B(3) as well as being included in the amendment to s. 15(1) under consideration. It is a term which has been interpreted by the courts on a number of occasions in a variety of different contexts.
- 104. It is important to recognise that this is a qualification of the obligation imposed by s. 15(1). That section could have been phrased as an unqualified obligation of performance of the function in a manner consistent with the s. 15(1) objective. It follows from this, that **the section necessarily contemplates that there may be circumstances in which the relevant body may not be required to perform its functions in a manner consistent with the s. 15(1) objectives** where it is not practicable to do so. Furthermore, the qualification is to be contrasted with phrases such as “insofar as possible” which is somewhat more demanding.
- 105. *O’Donovan v the Attorney General* [1961] IR 114, is perhaps the most well-known case in which the concept of practicability has been considered. In that case the High Court was required to interpret Article 16.2.3 of the Constitution which required the ratio of members elected to Dail Eireann to the population in each constituency as ascertained at the last preceding census, to be “so far as it is practicable” the same throughout the country. Budd J. construed the provision as meaning “as far as that is capable of being carried into action in a practical way having regard to such practical difficulties as exist and may legitimately... be taken into consideration”. He agreed with the approach of Goddard L.C.J. in *Lee v Nursery Furnishings Limited* [1945] 1 All E.R. 387, 389 which adopted the Oxford English Dictionary definition of practicable as capable of being carried out in action or feasible. The term was also considered in the context of insurance in *Re Butler* [1970] IR 45, in the context of an obligation to post a notice as soon as

possible, in the *Minister for Agriculture v Kelly* [1953] N.I. 151, and in the context of driving offences in *Hobbs v Hurley* (Costello J., Unreported, High Court, 10 June 1980) where it was stated that in construing the words, the surrounding circumstances and in particular the nature and purpose of the obligation imposed by the statute must be borne in mind. In *McC & McD v Eastern Health Board* [1996] 2 IR 296, Keane J. was satisfied that these authorities correctly identified the approach which should be taken, and confirmed that as soon as practicable was not to be equated with as soon as possible. More recently the phrase was interpreted in the context of disciplinary proceedings in *Gillen v Commissioner of An Garda Síochána* [2012] IESC 3, [2012] 1 IR 574.

- 106. In the light of this extensive and largely consistent jurisprudence it is unnecessary and potentially unhelpful to attempt any further elaboration of the concept of practicability. It is clear that it is **less demanding than “insofar as possible”, and more demanding than “reasonable”** and comprehends that something that is capable of being carried into action having regard to such practical difficulties as exist, but does not permit the taking of mere matters of convenience into consideration. It is to be contrasted with phrases such as “insofar as possible”, which are more demanding. **It signifies what is practicable in the circumstances and appropriate to the requirements of the situation.**
- 107. Putting these components together, and reading s. 15 in its entirety, in its statutory context, and having regard to the obvious purpose of the provision, and reminding ourselves of the key factor that it is intended to, and does apply to the full range of public sector bodies, it is possible to be clearer about its true interpretation.
- 108. Section 15 is not a stand-alone provision. It is not a single radical provision intended to carry the full weight of the State's response to climate change. Rather while not operating at a programmatic level, it does operate within the existing statutory scheme in respect of each relevant body. Accordingly, its impact in any given case, will depend upon the nature and extent of that statutory scheme. It applies to the functions of all relevant bodies, and obliges such bodies to exercise those functions consistently with the climate objectives so far as possible. **This operates as a form of climate sense check, and to ensure that decisions and actions of public sector bodies are all aligned with the climate objectives. The section 15(1) obligation is not more prescriptive than that:** first because the objective with which consistency is required, is stated at a level of significant generality; second, because consistency implies a range of possible outcomes; and finally, because even that degree of consistency is not required, if it is impracticable.
- 109. It follows that the section does apply at the granular level of an individual planning decision, because that is a function of a relevant body. In that context it may support climate positive planning decisions (whether the grant or refusal or a grant subject to conditions), but it is **perhaps less likely**

that it will have any decisive effect in the field of planning than in the case of other public sector bodies. That is because considerations of climate change mitigation are already woven into the detail of the planning code, sometimes in statute, and sometimes in the detailed strategies, guidelines, and plans, which planning authorities are required to have regard to, or indeed to implement.

- 110. For example, s. 14B of the 2015 Act (as amended) obliges local authorities to adopt a local authority climate action plan, which, insofar as practicable, is to be consistent with the climate action plan, and the National Adaptation Framework. In this case, as we have seen, the relevant county council had adopted a wind energy strategy. Furthermore, the production by a local authority of a development plan, is now subject to oversight and review by the Minister (s. 31 of the 2000 Act (as amended)) and by the Office of the Planning Regulator OPR (s. 31AM). The latter body is required to endeavour to ensure that the development plan addresses matters generally within s. 10 of the 2000 Act, and in this context, in particular, “subsection 2(n) of that section in relation to climate change”. Furthermore, the development plan, is required to either take account of, or itself be consistent with, policy guidelines and strategies already adopted. Section 15(1) does not introduce climate considerations into the planning process for the first time, and it is very far from being the sole or primary mechanism for ensuring that the planning process generally and any individual planning decision, is consistent with climate change policy.
- 111. Even without resort to s. 15(1) it would be correct to say that **climate considerations permeate the planning process**. When it is further recognised that s. 15 itself applies to each of the bodies involved, whether the Minister, the OPR, or a local authority, it becomes clearer that **the individual planning decision comes to be made against a background where it is required to have regard to, and is closely aligned to climate policy**. While s. 15(1) can be seen as reinforcing that alignment, the circumstances in which the section will have decisive impact will be necessarily limited.
- 112. It follows that a planning authority is entitled to approach its task on a presumption that any strategy or development plan adopted is consistent with climate objectives, and that any decision consistent with such a plan and strategy will itself be consistent with those objectives, and therefore in compliance with s. 15(1). That is so particularly having regard to the range of outcomes implied by the concepts of consistency, and practicability.
- 113. It is however conceivable that there will be marginal cases where s. 15 may have a significant impact even in the field of individual planning decisions. Coolglass suggested in argument that it would be open for an applicant for planning permission to contend that compliance with a particular development plan would not be consistent with the objectives set down in s. 15(1) and that the Commission, in order to comply with its own obligations under the section, would be obliged to depart from the

development plan and exercise its power under s. 37G(6) or, where applicable, s. 37(2). Similarly, since the sequence of production of plans and strategies is not precisely integrated, it is possible that a development plan, which covers a five-year period, may have been drafted by reference to earlier iterations of national climate action plans. It is possible therefore, that a development plan, although compliant with the then contemporaneous climate action plan, could be out of date and could no longer comply with the current climate action plan, or the long-term climate action framework, or national adaptation framework, or approved sectoral adaptation plan, as the case may be. Again, in such a case s. 15(1) might lead the Commission to use its power to grant permission notwithstanding the material contravention. Finally, at a more individual level, it might also be that the permission sought was itself at the borders of an area designated as not available for such development, or that it can be said that the position proposed was not one which particularly engaged with the values of preservation of areas of scenic or natural beauty which had led to the designation of the area as not available. At the same time, the demands of the climate emergency reflected in the most up-to-date climate action plan might tip the balance in such a case so that permission should be granted. In any of these cases, it can be argued that the duty imposed on the Commission by s. 15(1) should mean that the Commission should exercise its power to grant permission notwithstanding that the development would be a material contravention of the development plan.

- *114. More generally, in most cases it will be the case that a project will be entitled to permission, or to be refused, or to have permission granted with conditions, because of the correct application of considerations of proper planning and sustainable development, which themselves have been shaped by the State's plans and strategies for the achievement of the climate objectives, but s. 15 may reinforce that process, and in some cases be decisive. It follows that in the planning context, s. 15 need not be addressed by a planning authority of its own motion. However, if the section is relied on in support of an application, an authority should be able to explain why the decision to which it has come is consistent as far as practicable with the climate objectives. For the reasons already discussed, that in most if not all cases, ought to be a relatively simple exercise.”(Coolglass v An Coimisiun Pleanala, Supreme Court of Ireland, 4th February 2026)*

In summary, a planning authority must consider Section 15 of the Climate Act in making a planning decision. However, unless something is very wrong, the county plan and Renewable Energy Strategy will normally both have been written with climate goals fully accounted for, and the planning authority can normally meet its Section 15 commitments by following the County Plan and the Renewable Energy Strategy.

Only in a case where climate was insufficiently provided for by those documents would there be any obligation on the planning authority to set them aside. Clearly MCDP and the RES both take significant account of climate objectives – rightly so.

30. Renewable Energy Strategy quoted when helpful, ignored when not

I object to the siting of turbines outside of the designated areas of Mayo's Renewable Energy Strategy (RES). The planning report submitted with the application offers 3 justifications for this. All 3 justifications appear silly to me.

- a. The first justification offered is that the 5 turbines are located on lands that *"share the same physical, ecological, and environmental characteristics as the designated portions"* (3.5.3). This appears to be a meaningless phrase, that more or less negates the Renewable Energy Strategy as a document to be considered in the planning process. The mapping of tiers in the RES considered inter alia *"Scenic views/routes, cycle/walking route and populated areas"* (Renewable Energy Strategy section 6.4), and found these areas to be unsuitable - Even for the smaller wind turbine dimensions of that time. It is, if anything, too permissive for the scale of constructions contemplated here.
- b. The second justification offered is that many of the turbines are outside of Tier 1 and Tier 2 of the RES, but they are not that far outside the boundary, and are nearly within the Tiers (EIAR 3.5.3.5).

The RES itself has generously zoned almost half of the county as open to consideration for wind turbines. That seems to leave ample scope for developments to operate within it.

In particular, Tier 2 of the RES designates certain areas as open to consideration for wind turbines. That to me means that wind turbines can be permitted in these areas, but only if they are sufficiently justified, and with no guarantee of support from the RES. This application stretches the RES to say that some turbines should proceed, because they are only "close" to "open to consideration" zones, which appears to stretch things beyond sense.

It is a poor rule that can't work both ways. By the logic of this application, I could equally object to wind turbines within Tier 1 and Tier 2 of the RES, arguing that they are "close" to undesignated areas. I am not making that argument, but I think it illustrates the weakness of the applicant's approach.

- c. The third justification offered by the application for including turbines outside of the RES designated zones, is that the RES does not explicitly say

that turbines should not be built in the undesignated zones.

The RES has 2 tiers, one of which is called “open to consideration”, but the applicant is claiming that the undesignated areas are also open to consideration.

This is a disrespectful and unworthy argument. And I would encourage the Commission to specifically mention and reject this sophistry.

This application disregards Mayo’s Renewable Energy Strategy and places 1/3 of its turbines outside of the areas designated under the RES. The justifications offered in support of this are weak and self-serving. This proposal cannot proceed if the RES has any meaning in the planning system.

EIAR Chapter 3 admits as much with its constant requests for the Board to set aside the County Plan to approve the development, or to ignore the RES and approve turbines based on “proper planning”. But the Board would be well to consider why it would depart from the County Plan, and why it would ignore the Tiers mapped in the RES. Can the Board justify the actions that the applicant is requesting?

31. Tier 2 turbines

The Renewable Energy Strategy makes clear that approval of turbines in Tier 2 will be decided on “*the visual impact on sensitive or vulnerable landscapes, listed highly scenic routes, scenic routes, scenic viewing points and scenic routes*” (Renewable Energy Strategy 6.4.1). There seems to be no special consideration of these Tier 2 turbines (or any turbines) in line with this requirement, and it seems the applicant simply wishes ACP to ignore the Renewable Energy Strategy and approve without reference to it. Does this document have meaning in the planning process?

32. Group submission

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.

33. Con Sheehan

I likewise want to adopt and support the report of Con Sheehan, submitted to this application.

34. Chapter 3 is a fairytale. The truth is squalid.

Chapter 3 of the EIAR describes how this unsuitable site came to be selected. ACP should be aware that this whole chapter is largely a fairytale.

Chapter 3 describes a judicious, reflective and above all impersonal approach to site selection, where the applicant has worked through many difficulties of terrain and constraints. Despite these painstaking efforts, they have found an ideal site (if we only forget about the groundwater vulnerability, the significant population, the Renewable Energy Strategy, the tourism industry, and the Ceide Fields).

I would like to describe the actual process as we have experienced it. The reality is that carpetbaggers have been roving the area for the last 15 years, trying to identify which landowners could be induced to sign binding contracts with promises of wealth. Then binding them to secrecy to prevent knowledge of their plans from leaking out to the community. Far from being an impersonal, logical process of site selection, it has been **entirely personality-driven** and they have compiled this incredible hodge podge of a site not because it is a suitable location, but because that is how the susceptible landowners broke down for them.

This has been a divisive and humiliating process for everyone concerned, and the scars of it will last long after this decision is made - one way or another.

Meanwhile, the key beneficiaries are not known to us. They have developed this project as secretly as possible and done everything to avoid engaging with the local population. They continue to hide behind their Virgin Islands holding company, and wreak havoc on a politically unimportant community. And other similar communities elsewhere.

For all of these reasons, I object, and I hope the Commissioners will refuse permission to this proposed development.

Sincerely

Martin Tighe