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The Secretary
An Coimisiún Pleanála
64 Marlborough Street
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Re: Objection to the Proposed Tirawley Wind Farm Strategic Infrastructure Development
Objection Submission to An Coimisiún Pleanála

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

Case Number: PAX16.324258

I respectfully object to the proposed Tirawley Wind Farm. While I recognise the importance of renewable energy in addressing climate change, I believe this proposal represents an inappropriate location for industrial-scale wind energy development.

My objection is based on the unacceptable impacts the proposed development would have on:

- The coastal landscape of Lacken.
- My family home and residential amenity.
- My two young children and future generations.
- People living with disabilities, autism, ADHD and sensory processing difficulties.
- The Lacken Sensory Garden.
- Community wellbeing.
- Tourism and recreation.
- Biodiversity and natural heritage.
- The failure of the Environmental Impact Assessment to properly assess the community of Lacken.

This proposal would permanently industrialise a unique coastal community where my family deliberately chose to build our home.

My Personal Connection to Lacken

Several years ago, I made one of the most important decisions of my life by moving to Lacken and building my family home in accordance with the Mayo County Development Plan and all applicable planning requirements.

I invested in this community because of its outstanding natural beauty, peaceful rural environment, Atlantic coastline and exceptional quality of life.

My family now includes two young children who are growing up in an environment that is safe, healthy and closely connected to nature.

The planning system encouraged people like me to invest in rural communities. I trusted that this unique landscape would continue to be protected through proper planning.

The proposed development would fundamentally change everything that attracted us to Lacken.

Failure to Properly Assess Lacken

One of my greatest concerns is the applicant's failure to meaningfully acknowledge Lacken throughout the planning documentation.

Lacken is repeatedly overlooked despite being one of the communities most directly affected.

Our parish contains:

- Families.
- Homes.
- Children.
- Sporting facilities.
- Community organisations.
- Schools.
- Churches.
- Graveyards.
- The Sensory Garden.
- Residents with disabilities.
- Tourism amenities.
- Coastal recreation.

The Environmental Impact Assessment should identify all significant receptors before assessing impacts. The omission of Lacken raises serious concerns about whether the assessment is complete and reliable.

Residential Amenity

The proposed turbines would permanently alter:

- the views from my home;
- the peaceful environment in which my children are growing up;
- the enjoyment of our property;
- the character of the surrounding countryside.

No landscaping can screen structures of this magnitude.

The loss of residential amenity would be permanent.

The Coastal Landscape

The landscape surrounding Lacken is one of Mayo's greatest natural assets.

Its cliffs, beaches, Atlantic views and scenic roads attract visitors throughout the year and provide residents with an exceptional quality of life.

Industrial turbines of this scale would fundamentally transform this landscape into an industrial energy zone.

This impact cannot be reversed.

Children and Future Generations

One of my greatest concerns relates to my children.

Children deserve to grow up in peaceful environments where they can safely play outdoors, enjoy nature and develop strong connections with their community.

The proposed development would permanently alter the landscape they will inherit.

Article 3 of the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child** requires that the best interests of children are a primary consideration in decisions affecting them.

Article 31 recognises every child's right to rest, leisure, play and participation in recreational and cultural life.

I respectfully submit that these interests have not been adequately considered.

People with Disabilities

Our parish includes people living with:

- Autism.
- ADHD.
- Sensory processing disorders.
- Intellectual disabilities.
- Other additional needs.

Many rely on quiet natural environments to support their wellbeing.

Planning decisions should recognise that environmental impacts are not experienced equally by every member of society.

Ireland's obligations under the **UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** require public authorities to promote inclusion, accessibility and equal participation in community life.

The Lacken Sensory Garden

The Sensory Garden is one of the parish's most valuable community facilities.

Its therapeutic value depends on tranquillity, natural surroundings and freedom from industrial intrusion.

The planning documentation appears to give little or no meaningful consideration to this important facility.

That omission should be carefully considered by the Commission.

Community Wellbeing

Planning concerns people, not simply infrastructure.

This proposal would permanently change:

- how people experience Lacken;
 - the attractiveness of the area for young families;
 - opportunities for outdoor recreation;
 - the sense of peace that defines our community.
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Tourism

Lacken's economy benefits from tourism based on:

- beaches;
- coastal scenery;
- walking;
- fishing;
- surfing;
- heritage;
- the Wild Atlantic Way.

These assets rely upon an unspoilt landscape.

Industrial development on this scale risks damaging the area's tourism appeal.

Biodiversity

The Environmental Impact Assessment identifies sensitive ecological receptors including blanket bogs, hedgerows, forestry removal and protected species.

The precautionary principle should apply where uncertainty exists regarding long-term ecological effects.

Legal and Planning Policy

The Commission is required to determine whether this proposal represents the **proper planning and sustainable development** of the area. Renewable energy policy does not override the need to protect communities, landscapes, biodiversity and residential amenity. The planning framework requires a balanced assessment of all these factors.

In particular, I ask the Commission to have regard to:

- The Planning and Development legislative framework governing proper planning and sustainable development.
- The Mayo County Development Plan, including its objectives to protect landscape, residential amenity, biodiversity and coastal character while supporting appropriately sited renewable energy.
- The National Planning Framework.
- The Wind Energy Development Guidelines (2006), which require careful assessment of landscape, visual impact, residential amenity, noise, shadow flicker and cumulative effects.
- The Environmental Impact Assessment process.
- The Aarhus Convention on public participation in environmental decision-making.
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

- The precautionary principle in environmental decision-making.
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Conclusion

I chose to move to Lacken because it represents everything that rural Ireland should aspire to be: a peaceful coastal community with a remarkable natural environment, a strong community spirit and a safe place to raise children.

I built my home here in accordance with Mayo County Council's planning policies, trusting that the planning system would protect the qualities that made this place so special.

The proposed Tirawley Wind Farm would fundamentally and permanently alter that environment.

This is not simply a question of renewable energy. It is a question of whether an industrial-scale development is appropriate in this unique coastal landscape and whether the interests of local residents, children, vulnerable members of our community and future generations have been properly considered.

For all of the reasons set out in this submission, I respectfully request that **An Coimisiún Pleanála refuses planning permission** for the proposed Tirawley Wind Farm.

Yours faithfully

MaryEllen Keating