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Carrowmore
Ballycastle
Co Mayo
F26PFT7
Date 27TH May 2026

An Coimisiún Pleanála
64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1
D01 V902

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

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to formally oppose the proposed Tirawley Windfarm development consisting of 16 wind turbines, a permanent 110kV substation, underground grid connection, and ancillary infrastructure in the townlands of Ballymurphy, Ballynaleck, Barnhill, and surrounding areas in County Mayo. This development poses significant and irreversible risks to the local environment, biodiversity and local residents. In particular the proposal threatens critical habitats for protected species such as the Hen Harrier, involves substantial habitat removal including over 4 km of hedgerow, and raises serious concerns regarding visual impact, traffic disruption, and inadequate community consultation. These issues, coupled with shortcomings

in the Environmental Impact Assessment Report, justify a refusal of permission for this project.

My objection is based on the following principal grounds

1. IMPACT ON PALMERSTOWN BRIDGE – A PROTECTED STRUCTURE

Palmerstown Bridge is a protected structure under the Mayo County Development Plan and is recognised as a significant component of the eighteenth-century civil engineering heritage of North Mayo. The bridge dates from approximately 1777 and forms a critical transport link connecting Ballycastle, Killala, Ballina and surrounding communities.

The proposed development would subject this historic structure and adjoining road network to an extraordinary volume of heavy construction traffic over a prolonged period.

The applicant's own documentation estimates:

- 290 abnormal load deliveries associated with turbine components
- 2,622 HGV deliveries associated with grid works
- Approximately 4,957 HGV deliveries during civil and electrical construction works

The applicant further states that on peak concrete pour days:

- 140 concrete deliveries may be required per turbine foundation
- Between 14 and 18 deliveries per hour may occur

This scale of industrial traffic is entirely incompatible with:

- a narrow rural road network,
- a historic protected bridge,
- and the safety and wellbeing of local residents.

Mayo County Council itself expressed concern regarding:

- the poor structural condition of roads,
- restricted carriageway widths,
- abnormal loads,
- and wider impacts on infrastructure and activities along delivery routes.

The existing operation of Palmerstown Bridge already causes traffic difficulties, as vehicles frequently must wait for oncoming traffic to clear before crossing. Introducing years of heavy industrial traffic would create serious risks to:

- road safety,
- emergency access,
- local businesses,
- school transport,

- and everyday community life.

I am particularly concerned that the applicant's structural assessment of Palmerstown Bridge was only visual in nature. The report itself admits:

- foundations could not be fully inspected,
- and conclusions were based on structures that merely "appeared" to be performing adequately.

Such language is wholly insufficient when proposing thousands of HGV movements over a protected eighteenth-century structure.

2. IMPACT ON CULTURAL HERITAGE AND ARCHAEOLOGY

The proposed development is located within a highly sensitive archaeological and cultural landscape associated with the Céide Fields complex and numerous nationally important monuments.

The applicant's own documentation acknowledges that:

- several archaeological monuments,
 - protected structures,
 - and heritage receptors of high value
- exist within close proximity to the proposed development.

The submission materials also note that:

"the full extent of the Céide Fields archaeological site is not definitively known and may extend as far as the wind farm site."

This alone should warrant an extremely precautionary approach.

Killala Round Tower

The proposed development would impact the setting of the Killala Round Tower, National Monument No. 105, which is recognised as being of HIGH value.

The applicant acknowledges:

- negative long-term impacts,
- medium magnitude effects,
- and significant impacts on the setting of cultural heritage receptors.

The Round Tower is an irreplaceable part of Mayo's heritage and any industrialisation of its setting would diminish its historic and cultural significance permanently.

Rathfran Abbey

Rathfran Abbey, National Monument No. 269, lies approximately 3.3 km from one of the proposed turbines. The applicant acknowledges that turbines will be visible from the abbey's horizon view and that operational effects are considered significant and long-term.

Rathfran Abbey is described by Heritage Ireland as being "worth its weight in gold." The visual industrialisation of such a sensitive heritage landscape cannot be justified.

Rosserk Friary

The applicant further acknowledges moderate significant long-term impacts on the setting of Rosserk Friary, one of Ireland's finest preserved Franciscan monastic sites.

The tranquillity and historic character of these sites are central to their cultural importance and tourism value. Once industrialised, these settings cannot be restored to their original condition.

3. LANDSCAPE AND CHARACTER IMPACT

Mayo County Council stated that development should not:

"impinge in any significant way on the character integrity and distinctiveness of the area."

This proposal clearly conflicts with that objective.

The proposed turbines, associated substation infrastructure, haul routes and industrial traffic would fundamentally alter the character of the Ballycastle/Lacken landscape and wider North Mayo region.

The area is internationally recognised for:

- its scenic beauty,
- archaeological importance,
- Wild Atlantic Way tourism,
- coastal landscapes,
- and historical significance.

The proposal represents industrialisation on a scale entirely out of keeping with this sensitive landscape.

4. INADEQUATE COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

I believe the consultation process undertaken by the applicant was wholly inadequate.

The applicant's public information event was held in Ballina rather than within the affected local communities. Local residents have stated that they were not meaningfully consulted regarding the development.

The consultation process occurred during a period when many people remained cautious regarding public gatherings following Covid restrictions.

The applicant's extensive consultation documentation does not compensate for the absence of genuine engagement with affected residents.

For a project of this magnitude, meaningful local consultation should have occurred directly within the affected communities of Ballycastle and Lacken.

5. TRAFFIC ASSESSMENT DEFICIENCIES

The traffic surveys relied upon by the applicant were conducted:

- during school holiday periods,
- over a very limited timeframe,
- and during an atypical post-Covid period.

These surveys do not represent normal traffic conditions in the locality.

The submission also highlights inconsistencies and contradictory figures throughout Chapter 17 of the application documentation regarding traffic volumes and deliveries.

Such deficiencies undermine confidence in the reliability of the transport assessment.

6. CUMULATIVE IMPACT AND SATURATION OF NORTH MAYO

North Mayo is already subject to extensive wind energy development. The submission materials note the increasing proliferation of wind farm applications throughout the region.

The cumulative visual, environmental and social impacts of continued industrialisation of this landscape must be properly considered.

The people of North Mayo should not be expected to absorb disproportionate levels of industrial renewable energy infrastructure at the expense of:

- landscape quality,
 - heritage,
 - tourism,
 - and community wellbeing.
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7. LIMITED LOCAL BENEFIT

The application materials suggest that the operational phase of the wind farm would create only approximately two full-time jobs.

This minimal employment benefit does not justify:

- the scale of landscape destruction,
- the heritage impacts,
- the traffic disruption,
- or the long-term industrialisation of this area.

CONCLUSION

For the reasons outlined above, I respectfully request that An Bord Pleanála refuse permission for the proposed Tirawley Wind Farm development.

The proposed development would:

- seriously impact protected heritage structures,
- industrialise a culturally significant landscape,
- place unacceptable pressure on fragile infrastructure,
- undermine the character and integrity of North Mayo,
- and impose significant long-term impacts on local communities.

The concerns raised by Mayo County Council, together with the applicant's own acknowledgements regarding significant impacts on heritage and infrastructure, demonstrate that this is not an appropriate location for a development of this scale.

Yours faithfully,

Moirá Healy