

Rachel Sweetman & Chris Doris

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The Secretary
An Coimisiún Pleanála
64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1
D01 V902

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

Dear Inspector,

We, Rachel Sweetman Doris and Chris Doris, together with our family, wish to formally object to the proposed Tirawley Wind Farm.

Personal Background

Nearly thirty years ago, we made the decision to leave Dublin and establish our home in Castlelacken, Lacken. We chose this area because of its exceptional coastal beauty, tranquillity and unspoilt landscape. We invested our lives here because it offered the peaceful rural environment that is becoming increasingly rare in Ireland.

Our home is much more than a residence. It is where we live, create, welcome visitors and contribute to the local community. We cannot accept that this peaceful landscape should now become the location for a large-scale industrial energy development.

The proposed development would fundamentally alter the character of the place that has been our home for almost three decades.

Loss of Landscape Character

Lacken is recognised for its spectacular Atlantic coastline, rolling farmland, beaches and open views. The proposed turbines would become dominant industrial structures visible across a wide area, permanently changing the character of this landscape.

The scale of the turbines is entirely out of proportion with the existing rural environment. Once constructed, the impact would be irreversible.

The planning system has a responsibility to protect landscapes of high scenic quality, particularly those that contribute to the identity of local communities and attract visitors throughout the year.

Residential Amenity

We are deeply concerned about the impacts the development would have on our home and everyday life.

These include:

- Continuous operational turbine noise.
- Low-frequency and amplitude-modulated noise.
- Shadow flicker affecting our home.
- Continuous movement of turbine blades.
- Aircraft warning lighting during hours of darkness.
- Loss of peace, tranquillity and enjoyment of our property.

These impacts are not temporary. They would continue throughout the operational life of the wind farm and would significantly diminish our quality of life.

Impact on Our Livelihood

Our home also operates as an art studio and a venue for mindfulness retreats.

Both activities rely entirely upon the peaceful surroundings and natural environment that Lacken provides.

Visitors come here seeking silence, natural beauty and an escape from urban life.

The presence of industrial turbines, associated noise, visual intrusion and shadow flicker would fundamentally undermine these activities and would damage both our livelihood and the experience we offer our guests.

Tourism

Lacken has developed a reputation as one of North Mayo's hidden gems.

People visit to experience:

- the beaches,
- the coastal walks,
- the Atlantic scenery,
- the peace and tranquillity,
- the unspoilt landscape.

Our own family experiences this first-hand.

Our sons, Rian and Caelan Doris, regularly bring friends and visitors from Dublin, the United States and many other countries to Lacken.

Without exception, visitors comment on the extraordinary natural beauty of the area.

Introducing an industrial wind farm into this landscape risks undermining the very qualities that attract people here.

Drinking Water

Our family relies on a private well for our drinking water.

We are concerned that extensive excavation, blasting, road construction and drainage works could alter groundwater flows or affect water quality.

We respectfully request that An Coimisiún Pleanála carefully consider whether sufficient certainty exists regarding the protection of private groundwater supplies during construction and throughout the operational life of the development.

Community Impact

Lacken is a close-knit rural community whose identity is closely linked with its landscape.

The proposal would not simply affect individual properties.

It would affect:

- residents,
- families,
- visitors,
- local businesses,
- artists,
- tourism providers,
- community groups,
- future generations.

The planning process should recognise that landscapes possess cultural, social and emotional value which cannot be measured solely in economic terms.

Intergenerational Responsibility

One of our greatest concerns is what we leave behind for future generations.

We chose to raise our family in Lacken because of the beauty that surrounds us.

We believe future generations deserve the opportunity to experience the same landscape that has enriched our lives over the past thirty years.

Once industrial infrastructure of this scale is constructed, the landscape cannot be restored.

Planning Considerations

We respectfully submit that the proposed development gives rise to significant concerns regarding:

- Residential amenity.
- Landscape and visual impact.
- Protection of scenic coastal landscapes.
- Impact on tourism and recreation.
- Impact on rural quality of life.
- Potential impacts on private groundwater supplies.
- The cumulative industrialisation of the Lacken area.

We respectfully request that these matters be carefully assessed having regard to the principles of proper planning and sustainable development, the protection of residential amenity, the landscape policies of the relevant development plan, and the environmental assessment obligations that apply to strategic infrastructure. 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."

Conclusion

After almost thirty years of living in Lacken, we cannot accept the permanent industrialisation of the landscape that has shaped our family's lives.

The peace, beauty and unique character of this area are irreplaceable.

The proposed Tirawley Wind Farm would fundamentally alter the environment in which we live, work and welcome visitors.

For these reasons, we respectfully request that An Coimisiún Pleanála refuse permission for the proposed development.

Yours faithfully,

Rachel Sweetman Doris

Chris Doris