

AN COIMISIÚN PLEANÁLA
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Blathnaid and Kevin Purcell,

Rathbeg,

Sharavogue,

Birr,

Co. Offaly. R42 AX50

30/6/26

An Comisiun Pleanala,
64, Marlborough Street,
Dublin 1.

Case Reference: PAX92.324279: Proposed Ballincor Wind Farm Development and Associated Road and Infrastructure Works

To Whom It May Concern,

We are writing to strongly object to the above proposed wind farm which would be 2.28km from our house on Rathbeg Lane, where we live with our twins and older son who has significant special needs. We farm cattle and horses, and are worried about the impact the proposed development would have on the livestock.

We purchased our home (which includes 18 acres), in August 2021, having made the decision to move from Birr town to the rural area of Sharavogue, a decision we have always been extremely happy with, until the news of the proposed Ballincor wind farm and the implications this will have on our home, property, family, surrounding fields and countryside.

The Birr to Roscrea road at the top of our lane is a massively busy road with continuous traffic. The development of a wind farm at Ballincor will mean a further increase of traffic on this road, with heavy vehicles in particular adding to the volume of congestion, hazard and disruption.

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Navigating the junction at the top of our lane is not for the faint-hearted at the best of times, and the added construction traffic will increase the danger, especially for school buses which stop for children at busy points along this road. The underground grid connection route would involve nearly a year of trenching works on our roads, which would result in traffic delays and disruption to local daily life.

We are concerned about the effect that shadow flicker from the turbines will affect my son who has complicated medical needs, which include epilepsy, and how it will impact on his sleep. My elderly parents visit regularly and I would be concerned about my father who suffers from migraines.

One of the biggest threats of the wind farm will be to Sharavogue Bog, which, as a lowland bog, is a rare and fragile habitat. It supports species and ecosystems that have taken thousands of years to develop and cannot be replaced once damaged by construction traffic, drainage disruption or permanent infrastructure.

The bog itself is teeming with an incredible amount of wildlife, including the curlew, a rare species that has gone into a massive decline (90% of its breeding population lost since the 1970s). Dr. Pat Moran, an ornithological expert, has recorded the presence of two. This development would surely decimate any chance of their survival.

A total of 486 Little Egrets have been observed by the developer on the bog. We have ourselves seen bats, otters, hares and birds of prey there. They are an invaluable part of this delicate ecosystem and once disturbed are driven out of their natural habitat. This area is also important for Barn Owls, another protected species.

The developer's own assessment predicts the loss of the local Marsh Fritillary Butterfly and its habitat. It is important to note that this butterfly is protected under EU law.

The River Brosna corridor is an active bird flight path and should be protected. Survey data recorded large flocks of golden plover, whooper swan, wigeon and other protected wetland birds. We are very concerned that surveys carried out by the developer were incomplete and failed to capture dawn, dusk, night-time and migration activity.

The wind farm is proposed for an area that already floods October to March every year. Multiple turbines and roads will only increase this flooding and wreak havoc on so much of our agricultural land. We have seen the amount of concrete needed for turbine foundations and this will inevitably worsen our already precarious flooding situation.

In conclusion, we feel that RWE unfairly placed the burden of identifying problems with this development on our local community. There are clearly huge environmental concerns that appear to have been disregarded by the developers but they need to understand that renewable energy policy (already significantly outdated), does not override environmental law or proper site selection requirements. We strongly object to this wind farm and will stand with our community to challenge this proposal every step of the way.

Yours sincerely,


Kevin and Blathnaid Purcell