

JESUDOSS SANTHOSH

Ealga Lodge Nursing Home
Main Street,
Shinrone, Birr.
Co. Offaly.

27/05/2026

Dear Sir/Madam,

AN COIMISIÚN PLEANÁLA	
LDG-	088446-26
ACP-	
02 JUL 2026	
Fee: €	10
Type:	RC
Time:	16:15
By:	1727

Ealga Lodge Nursing Home is a residential care facility located approximately 3.5 km from the proposed Ballincor Wind Farm development site. We provide 24-hour residential care services for elderly and medically vulnerable residents and are a registered provider under HIQA. We write to bring several serious operational concerns to the attention of An Coimisiún Pleanála arising from the proposed construction phase of this development and its associated infrastructure and road works.

This correspondence is not intended as a formal objection to the principle of the development or to renewable energy policy generally. Our concerns relate specifically to the practical operation of a registered residential care facility during what is proposed to be an extended and intensive construction period, involving significant traffic volumes and road works across the surrounding rural road network, including the R492 and its adjoining local roads.

Our facility is entirely dependent on the surrounding road network for its day-to-day operation. Safe and reliable access is always required for ambulances and emergency services, healthcare professionals and visiting medical specialists, residents' transport to and from hospital appointments and outpatient services, staff commuting from the wider area, family and visitor access, and medical supply deliveries. Any significant or prolonged disruption to road access has direct consequences for the health, safety and wellbeing of our residents.

Having reviewed the application documentation submitted to An Coimisiún Pleanála, we are concerned that the scale and intensity of the proposed construction programme has not been adequately assessed in terms of its impact on healthcare access and emergency services in this area. We are also aware of the proposed Shannon Pipeline development and its anticipated impact on the same local road network. The cumulative effect of both the Ballincor Wind Farm construction programme and the Shannon Pipeline works occurring within the same period and on the same network of narrow rural roads is a matter of very serious concern. Project in isolation would impose a significant burden on this road network. The potential for to interact simultaneously could render reliable access to our facility fundamentally compromised for extended periods.

Our specific concerns include the following:

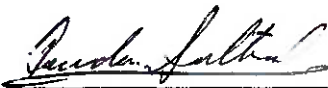
- Emergency ambulance access: Our residents are elderly and medically complex. Ambulance callouts are a regular and time-critical feature of our operations. The introduction of 54 or more HGV movements per day on the R492 and all associated traffic management plans pose a realistic and serious risk that emergency vehicles will be delayed in reaching our facility. Even a short delay in a cardiac or respiratory emergency can have fatal consequences.
- Healthcare professional and GP access: Our residents are attended by GPs, public health nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech and language therapists and visiting specialists on a scheduled basis. Unpredictable road closures, traffic management arrangements and significant delays caused by construction traffic will disrupt this schedule of care. The applicant's proposed mitigation measures do not address the particular needs of healthcare service delivery in a residential care context.

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- Hospital and outpatient transport: Residents regularly attend hospital appointments at the Midland Regional Hospital Portlaoise, Midland Regional Hospital Tullamore, and University Hospital Limerick, as well as local outpatient and day services. Medical transport services and private transport providers use the R492 and adjoining roads to facilitate these appointments. Rolling road restrictions will cause repeated appointment disruptions, with potential clinical consequences for residents awaiting diagnostic procedures, specialist review or treatment.
 - Staff access and continuity of care: Our facility depends on the ability of nursing and care staff to arrive reliably for shift changes. A residential care facility cannot have shift handovers delayed or staff unable to access the building. Prolonged construction activity during peak commuting hours, or unplanned road closures, creates a direct risk to staffing continuity and therefore to the standard of care provided to residents.
 - Family and visitor access: For many of our residents, regular visits from family members are an essential component of their wellbeing and quality of life. Prolonged and unpredictable disruption to access roads will inevitably reduce the frequency of family visits, with a measurable impact on the mental health and emotional wellbeing of residents, many of whom have dementia or other cognitive conditions that make routine and familiar contact particularly important.
 - Road surface deterioration and post-construction damage: The applicant's assessment acknowledges that HGV traffic will cause progressive surface wear. Our experience of rural road works is that temporary backfill settlements, edge-breaking and pothole formation occur rapidly under heavy vehicle loading. These road surface conditions pose a particular risk to medical transport vehicles, ambulances and specialist mobility vehicles carrying our residents.
 - HIQA regulatory context: Residential care facilities operating under HIQA registration are required to always maintain safe and accessible environments for residents. Prolonged external disruption to access routes is not a matter we can manage internally. If access for emergency services or healthcare professionals is compromised, we have a regulatory duty to report this and to escalate to HIQA. We raise this not as a threat but as a statement of our legal obligations under the Health Act 2007 and associated regulations.
 - We respectfully request that An Coimisiún Pleanála give specific and careful consideration to the following matters, and that, should planning permission be granted, appropriate conditions be imposed to address them:
 - That the developer be required to engage directly with our facility and other healthcare providers in the area prior to any construction or road works commencing, with a view to agreeing an Emergency Access Protocol that guarantees unobstructed ambulance and emergency vehicle access to our facility at all times throughout the construction period, including during concrete pours, trench works, and AIL delivery operations.
 - That the developer provides a minimum of 72 hours' advance written notice to our facility of any planned road closure, temporary restriction or significant traffic management intervention on roads forming part of our access routes, to allow us to make alternative transport arrangements for residents and to notify emergency services.
 - That a specific Traffic Management Plan condition require that unobstructed emergency vehicle access be maintained at all times on the R492 and all local roads within 5 km of our facility, and

that no complete road closure of any access route to the facility be permitted without a pre-agreed, signposted and suitable alternative route being in place and notified to the HSE and ambulance services in advance.

- That an independent before-and-after structural survey of all roads forming part of our access network be conducted and published, with a binding commitment from the developer to restore road surfaces to a safe standard within a defined timeframe following the completion of construction.
- That the cumulative impact of both the Ballincor Wind Farm construction programme and the Shannon Pipeline work on the same road network be formally assessed and that a coordinated traffic management approach be required if both programmes overlap in time.
- We appreciate the opportunity to raise these concerns, and we trust that the welfare and safety of some of the most vulnerable members of our community will be afforded appropriate weight in the Board's consideration of this application.

Yours faithfully,



Jesudoss Santhosh
Person In charge
Ealga Lodge Nursing Home

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