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An Coimisiún Pleanála
64 Marlborough Street
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14th June 2026

Re: Objection — Planning Application PAX 92.324279 — Proposed Ballincor Wind Farm, Co. Offaly

Dear Sir/Madam,

My name is Jacqueline Stephens. My husband, our two children and I live at Corolanty, Shinrone, Co. Offaly. We bought our home here in 2017 and have raised our family in it since. We chose this place for the view as much as for the house itself. The front of the house has five large windows looking out across the open countryside towards the bog. We took down the original walls along the front and replaced them with a low picket fence so that nothing would block what we see from our living room. That view is part of why we live here. I work from home full-time and my husband works part-time from a yard at home; we are both self-employed and the house is also our place of work.

The proposed turbines at Ballincor would be built on lower ground, with the nearest one — Turbine 11 — approximately 1.45 kilometres from our front windows. Because our house sits higher than the turbine bases, our line of sight does not just catch the tips of the blades above a horizon. The whole rotating disc would be visible. The view we bought, the view we redesigned the front of the house to keep, would be replaced by a continuous, moving industrial structure across the full vista. This is not a passing view from a car or a walking route; it is the view from every front-facing room in our home, all day, every day, for the working lifetime of the development. The image below is taken 250m from our home, we will share this view.



The shadow flicker assessment carried out for this application troubles me for a particular reason. Our home is inside the developer's own study area for shadow flicker but when I look at the receptor data, our property has no predicted shadow flicker hours reported. We are inside the study area, we are above the blade bottom, and the developer has produced no figure at all for what we would actually experience. That is not the same as a finding of zero. It is silence where there should be an answer. My husband and I both work at home, our children play in the garden and our dogs spend much of the day in the yard. We are exactly the kind of household for which shadow flicker prediction matters most, and we have not been given a number.

On noise, the position is more concrete and, to my mind, more serious. The developer's own noise modelling applied what is known as the JOULE correction at our property. The JOULE correction is triggered when night-time noise conditions at a particular house are predicted to be problematic enough to require additional assessment. At our home the correction was triggered, but the developer did not then quantify how far over the limit night-time noise would be. The trigger is in their data; the answer is not. A correction was raised and then left unanswered. I do not think it is acceptable for a planning application of this scale to flag a likely night-time noise exceedance at a family home and then leave the figure blank.

I am writing this knowing my own health honestly. I have suffered from tension headaches across the top of my head for many years and I live with anxiety. These are not things I usually put on paper, but they are relevant. Low-frequency noise from wind turbines is associated in the published evidence with sleep disturbance, headaches and stress responses, and I am genuinely concerned that the chronic, low-level noise environment described above —

particularly at night when it has not been quantified — will make worse the conditions I already manage. Anxiety in particular is sensitive to sleep, and sleep is sensitive to night-time noise.

We also have seven family dogs at home. They live with us in and around the house and yard. Dogs are sensitive to low-frequency sound and to changes in their acoustic environment in ways that we are only beginning to understand properly. I am concerned about the welfare implications for them of living next to a turbine cluster, and I raise it because they are part of our household and depend on the same environment we do.

The wildlife question is the one I have spent most time thinking about and is, for me, the strongest reason to object. We regularly see barn owls in the immediate vicinity of our home and in the wider area within about a five-kilometre radius in the direction of the proposed turbines. One particular owl flies over our children's tree house at the back of the garden often enough that the children watch for it. It is a beautiful bird to see in flight. I did not realise until I read about this application that west County Offaly is the area of highest barn owl breeding density in Ireland, with as few as 562 to 702 breeding pairs in the entire country. I also did not realise until I read the independent reviews of the developer's ecology work that no dedicated barn owl survey was carried out at Ballincor, that no night-time survey of any kind was done despite the barn owl being a nocturnal bird, and that a dead barn owl was found about fifty metres from the proposed site boundary in October 2025 and was simply left as a record on a list. The barn owls we see flying around our home are part of the population that this development would put at risk, and the developer's own paperwork does not address that risk properly.

In addition to the barn owls, I have personally observed an otter at coordinates 53.025585, -7.977631 within walking distance of our home. Otters are protected under both Irish and European law. The same area supports red squirrels which we see regularly. The developer's biodiversity assessment does not appear to have engaged seriously with these species at the level of detail their legal status requires. I am putting my own observation of the otter on the record here so that it is in the application file and cannot be treated as something that nobody mentioned.

We walk in this area, often. The roads around Corolanty and Shinrone are quiet rural roads used by walkers, by families with children, by people exercising, and by farm traffic. The construction phase of an eleven-turbine development of this scale, with abnormally large component deliveries, road widening works and prolonged HGV movement, would close or divert these roads for extended periods. We are a self-employed household whose working day depends on being able to come and go from home reliably. The construction traffic and diversions associated with this application are not a minor inconvenience to us; they are a direct disruption to how we live and work.

I would also ask the Board to remember that this is not an empty landscape. The Lacka turbines are already in our wider view, approximately four kilometres from our home. The Carrig wind farm has been consented and will add seven further turbines to the same broader landscape. Adding Ballincor's eleven turbines, at 185 metres tip height — among the largest onshore turbines proposed anywhere in Ireland — would complete an encirclement of this community by industrial wind infrastructure on three sides. Each development was assessed on the assumption that its neighbours had no residual effect. That assumption cannot hold true forever. At some point the cumulative weight of these developments on the people who actually live here has to be acknowledged honestly, and I would ask the Board to acknowledge it in this decision.

We bought our home in 2014 in good faith. We invested in it, we shaped its front to open onto the view, we are raising two children in it, and we built our working lives around it. The view from our windows, the quiet at night, the barn owl over the tree house, the walk along the road are aspects we truly value. They are the substance of our daily life. The proposed Ballincor Wind Farm would degrade every one of them, and the developer's own paperwork either confirms the degradation or leaves the question unanswered where it should have been answered.

For the reasons set out above, the unavoidable visual dominance of eleven 185-metre turbines across the front of our home, the absence of a quantified shadow flicker prediction for a property the developer placed inside its own study area, *a night-time noise correction that was triggered and then left unquantified*, the health and animal welfare concerns that follow from these, the inadequate barn owl assessment in the area of highest national breeding density, my own first-hand records of protected species in the immediate area, the disruption of the road network we depend on, and the cumulative effect on a community already living between consented and operating wind farms, I respectfully request that planning permission for the proposed Ballincor Wind Farm under reference PAX 92.324279 be refused.

Thank you for considering this submission.

Yours faithfully,



Jacqueline Stephens

Corolanty, Shinrone, Birr, Co. Offaly, R42 AE77