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Pat Mann,
Sharavogue,
Birr,
Co Offaly
R42AV66
30/06/2026

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

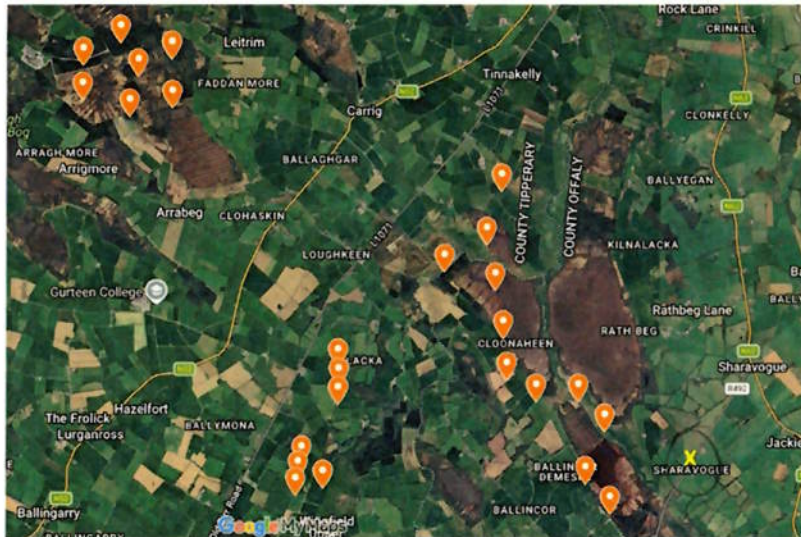
To Whom It May Concern,

I wish to formally object in the strongest possible terms to the proposed windfarm development. I submit this objection as a lifelong resident of Sharavogue, whose family home place and land bounds the proposed site along the Little Brosna river for 400 metres. I am someone with a deep, lived knowledge of this land, this valley, and this community.

Personal Experience of the Land and Area

I was born and reared at Sharavogue and I have spent my entire life here. This is not an abstract concern for me — this is my home and the landscape I see from my kitchen and living room every single day. I am now retired, and where I once looked forward to the peace and quiet of my garden and the beauty and calm of the river valley, I now face the prospect of an industrialised skyline on three sides.

I already have a clear view of 8 turbines on Knockshegowna from my home. I can hear those turbines on windy days — they are smaller than those proposed, and further away, and they are already a distraction. If this development proceeds, I will have the added burden of 11 turbines in Ballincor and the granted 7 in Carrig which are on their way. The yellow x in the image below is my home.



*R37



Image above of Proposed turbines with Knockshegowna (8) on the West and Carrig (7) North. All 3 windfarms will be visible from my living-room window. Image below captures my house on the right handside and the view of Ballincor development all the way back.



As you can see, I will face full visual impact across three separate developments simultaneously. No independent assessment of cumulative visual impact adequately captures what it means to live inside this triangle.

I live less than 1km from the nearest proposed turbine T9. The same view will be visible from two bedrooms in my home. At the public clinic in Birr on 4th February 2026, I was told there would be little or no noise from the turbines, no flicker effect, and only a very small chance of shadow. I find this very difficult to accept and the studies now available from the Application show that this is demonstrably untrue.

I can already hear the turbines on Knockshegowna — turbines that are smaller and further away. I was given no credible technical explanation for why these new and larger turbines, closer to my home, would be any different.

Floodplain

I could not believe the suggestion that a windfarm was proposed for this site when word spread initially. From lived experience, the proposed site is fundamentally and unsuitable for development of this scale. It sits in the valley of the Little Brosna, positioned between Sharavogue and Rathbeg on one side and Corolanty and Cloonaheen on the other, in the shadow of Knockshegowna. Most dwelling houses in the surrounding area sit on significantly higher ground than the proposed development site. This is a low-lying, waterlogged valley, not an industrial development platform.

The site is adjacent to a bog and callows — a natural floodplain where floodwater regularly reaches depths in excess of one metre. In one location, the distance between the bog and the river is less than 20 metres. This is precisely where the proposed access road is planned to run. An access track surface in this location will fundamentally alter the hydrology of the area. Flood waters that currently disperse naturally into the bog will be blocked and redirected, increasing flooding on the

northern side of the river and critically, backing up on the Roscrea side of Sharavogue bridge where they will have nowhere to go.

The proposed access roadway will be constructed on extremely soft, waterlogged ground. It will encircle the commercial peat harvesting site on three sides. The volume of engineered fill required to create a stable road base, a construction compound, and crane stands in this terrain will be enormous, and the environmental and drainage consequences have not been adequately assessed or disclosed.

What makes this even harder to understand is that an existing roadway on firm ground already runs to within metres of Turbine 10. This road is in continuous use by 40-foot container trucks removing peat from the harvesting site — it is demonstrably capable of bearing heavy loads. There is no credible engineering justification for running a new road beside bog and river when a proven, load-bearing alternative already exists on solid farmland ground immediately adjacent to the site.

The Little Brosna river and its surrounding callows, bog, and the otter and swans nesting areas on the margins constitute a habitat of exceptional biodiversity. This is not a hypothetical concern — these are species I observe from my own land on a regular basis.

Along the banks of the Brosna and across the proposed development site, one can observe swans — some of which nest on the riverbank within 100 metres of Turbine 9 — wild geese, wild duck, corncrake, otters, and badgers with multiple live setts recorded across the site. Fish can be seen leaping in the river. The adjacent SAC and raised bog are designated precisely because they support a wide and irreplaceable range of protected wildlife that moves freely throughout the area and feeds in the remoter stretches of the riverbank on **both** sides.

At present, the only sounds in this valley are birdsong, the river, and the distant occasional passing of traffic. Cattle graze in the callows. This is not a degraded landscape, it is a functioning, living ecosystem of considerable conservation value. The construction of an industrial access road through the heart of this habitat, followed by the long-term operation of turbines in close proximity to nesting and feeding sites, would cause serious and likely irreversible harm.

Visual Impact

The cumulative visual impact on the residents of this valley will be severe and unavoidable. As set out above, I will have direct line-of-sight to three separate wind energy developments from my home — Knockshegowna (already operational), Ballincor (11 turbines proposed), and Carrig (7 turbines granted). The geometry of this valley means that residents living along its floor and lower slopes have no natural screening whatsoever from these developments. They are, quite literally, surrounded.

I accept that wind energy has a role to play in our national energy transition. But the siting of this particular development in this particular valley — a low-lying, enclosed floodplain, surrounded by higher ground on which every local home is situated — creates a uniquely severe and disproportionate visual impact on the existing community. That burden falls not on those making the investment, but on those who live here. This is wholly unnecessary given the availability of alternative sites in designated areas in both the County and the region.

Roads and Traffic Safety

The road between Sharavogue Cross and Sharavogue Bridge is approximately 1.1 miles in length. Along this single stretch of road there are 15 dwelling houses, 2 houses under construction, 2 properties to be refurbished, 4 farmyard entrances and 10 field entrances. This is an exceptionally busy local road, carrying not only residential and agricultural traffic but also commuters using it to avoid Roscrea town, travelling from the Dunkerrin and Cloughjordan direction. It is narrow. It has hidden dips. The majority of its length is subject to a continuous white line. Near Sharavogue Bridge, the road narrows to the point where large trucks and buses already have significant difficulty meeting one another.

The proposed site entrance is located on a bend, immediately after a humpback bridge, on a continuous white line. The application drawings do not adequately represent the reality of this location. There is a pronounced dip before the humpback bridge that severely restricts the line of sight from the Sharavogue direction. Construction traffic — including abnormal loads, heavy-lift vehicles, and the volume of material required for foundations and road-building — using this entrance point would represent a serious and unacceptable road safety risk.

Shannon-Dublin Water Pipeline

A planning application for the Shannon-Dublin Water Pipeline is also currently before the relevant authorities. The proposed pipeline route would cross the same local road approximately 250 metres from the proposed windfarm site entrance. The compound associated with that project is proposed on the Roscrea side of Sharavogue Cross.

The cumulative impact of these two major infrastructure projects on the local road network, considered together and not in isolation, would be severe. Construction traffic from both sites converging on this narrow, heavily-used local road at the same or overlapping periods would create congestion and safety conditions entirely incompatible with its capacity and its existing use by the local community. These projects must be considered together, not separately, and I strongly urge that the cumulative traffic and infrastructure impact be given full consideration. Local residents should have priority access to their local road network, their homes and their businesses.

Consultation

I wish to place on the record my serious dissatisfaction with the manner in which RWE has conducted its public consultation process for this development.

A letter dated 24th July 2023 from RWE stated that they would be calling to local residents to discuss questions and concerns. This did not happen. Instead, flyers were posted through letterboxes. When I came to the door, there was nobody there to speak with. I do not consider a flyer in a letterbox to constitute consultation in any meaningful sense. If one were to attend a doctor, an accountant, or an engineer with a significant concern, one would expect — and receive — a personal meeting.

The public clinic held in Birr on 4th February 2026 fell far short of what is required. The RWE representative I spoke to was unable to explain markings on the planning maps. He assured me there would be little or no noise, no flicker effect, and minimal shadow from the turbines — assurances which are contradicted by the Application now before the Board. He spent considerable time speaking about community benefit funds, apparently without appreciating that this development affects multiple communities and parishes across county boundaries, we are not a single local community.

Most tellingly, the representative attended this consultation meeting with neither a pen nor a sheet of paper. There was no record taken of residents' concerns, no follow-up offered, and no mechanism by which any concern raised could be recorded and addressed. This is not consultation. It is a process designed to fulfil a legal requirement on paper while avoiding meaningful engagement in substance.

Additional issues

Given my local interest and knowledge I engaged and participated in the community submission effort. I defer to that submission for the expert analysis on birds, wildlife, fish, flora/fauna and the protection of Sharavogue Bog SAC, all of which matter a great deal to me.

I would also draw the Board's attention to the proximity of Birr Airport. I regularly observe training pilots using the River Brosna as a navigation reference on their training circuits. The presence of eleven or more turbines in this valley raises serious and unresolved concerns for flight safety, concerns which I understand are shared by the Ilofar consortium at Birr Castle.

Finally and for completeness, I note that this site is designated in the Offaly County Development Plan as NOT suitable for wind energy development. Given all that I know from my lived experience in the area and all that I hope to have shared here you will understand WHY it is designated as NOT suitable.

Conclusion

This proposed development is sited on a flood plain, in an enclosed river valley, on ground that is demonstrably unsuitable for the construction that is proposed. It will cause serious harm to a protected natural habitat and its wildlife. It will impose severe and cumulative visual impact on the surrounding community. It will create unacceptable road safety risks on a narrow, heavily-used local road. Its combined effect with the proposed Shannon-Dublin Pipeline has not been properly assessed. It is not consistent with the Offaly County Development Plan. And it has not been subject to a genuine or adequate process of public consultation.

I respectfully but firmly urge the Board to refuse this application.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Pat Mann", written in dark ink.

Pat Mann