

Objection to the Proposed Lisnagroagh Wind Farm

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Submitted by:

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Dear Sir or Madam,

We hereby submit our objections to the proposed Lisnagroagh Wind Farm development.

We make these objections as long-standing visitors to County Leitrim, and in particular to the area around Lisnagroagh, Tawnylust and Dough Mountain. For many years, we have spent our holidays there on a regular basis and have developed many friendships with the residents of this beautiful region. Furthermore, we are seriously considering purchasing and restoring a property in this area with the intention of living there permanently, or at least for extended periods.

Our objections are not directed against the use of renewable energy or the development of wind power in general. Rather, they relate solely to the proposed location and the scale of this particular development, and to its significant impacts on the landscape, the natural environment, tourism and the quality of life of local residents.

Having carefully reviewed the planning documentation for the proposed Lisnagroagh Wind Farm, we wish to raise the following concerns:

1. Tourism and Recreation

The construction of wind turbines with an overall height of up to 185 metres would fundamentally alter the character of the landscape surrounding Dough Mountain. Yet it is precisely this unspoilt landscape that forms the basis of the area's successful tourism industry, centred on walking, cycling, nature and wildlife observation, and outdoor recreation.

In our opinion, the attractiveness of the region for visitors would be significantly reduced, and the tourism sector, which County Leitrim has supported and developed over recent decades, would suffer lasting damage. Many local businesses and private individuals whose livelihoods depend directly or indirectly on tourism would be adversely affected.

We ourselves would no longer choose to spend our holidays in this area, as the unique tranquillity and scenic value of the landscape would be lost. This is particularly regrettable given that the area has been recognised by Leitrim County Council as a landscape of high scenic value.

2. Construction Traffic and Noise

From the perspective of both visitors and, more importantly, local residents, the impacts during the construction phase alone would be considerable. This proposal does not involve small-scale wind turbines but structures reaching heights of up to 185 metres, with rotor diameters of up to 150 metres. Their construction will require extensive earthworks and the transportation of exceptionally large components.

According to the planning documents, access roads through Cherrybrook (L6184) and Skreeny (L61801), both of which pass through residential areas, would require substantial upgrading. In addition, extensive construction works would be necessary on existing forestry tracks, including in the Boleyboy area.

While visitors may be able to avoid construction activity temporarily, local residents would be exposed over an extended period to heavy goods traffic, noise and significant disruption. At the same time, these works would permanently alter the appearance of the landscape.

3. Operational Noise, Shadow Flicker and Night-time Lighting

Once operational, the turbines will generate continuous noise emissions. In addition, periodic shadow flicker and the mandatory aviation warning lights will be visible across large parts of the surrounding landscape during the night.

In our view, these factors will reduce both the recreational value of the area and its attractiveness as a tourist destination.

Visitors can choose alternative holiday destinations; local residents do not have that option.

Furthermore, there is concern that residential properties located near the turbines may experience a decline in value.

4. Location and Environmental Concerns

The proposed site is situated within an area of blanket bog characterised by soft and, in places, unstable peat soils. Owing to the size of the proposed turbines, extensive excavation and ground engineering works will be required.

The planning documentation itself acknowledges these challenges and indicates that the stability of the site will require monitoring throughout the operational lifetime of the project. This demonstrates the particular sensitivity and complexity of the location.

The area also provides important habitat for numerous wildlife species. During our visits, we have repeatedly observed Hen Harriers and several species of bats, all of which have become increasingly rare in our own country. We are concerned that the proposed development would damage valuable habitats and require extensive ecological mitigation measures.

The area surrounding Dough Mountain also forms part of a wider water catchment. Local communities depend upon these water resources for domestic use, agriculture and essential ecological functions. The proposed drainage works and disturbance of peat soils are likely to affect surface water, groundwater and, consequently, local water supplies, while also creating additional long-term environmental and financial costs.

5. Scale and Size of the Development

With an overall height of up to 185 metres and rotor diameters of up to 150 metres, the proposed turbines will dominate the landscape over considerable distances. At the same time, the demands placed on road construction, turbine foundations, construction logistics and ground engineering increase significantly as turbine size increases.

In our opinion, the scale of this development is incompatible with the character of this relatively sparsely populated and largely unspoilt rural landscape. It is precisely the area's outstanding landscape quality that provides the foundation for tourism, outdoor recreation and the quality of life enjoyed by both residents and wildlife.

Conclusion

In our view, the exceptional size of the proposed wind turbines is the principal factor underlying many of the adverse impacts described above.

We believe that the anticipated effects on the landscape, the natural environment, tourism, residential amenity and local infrastructure are substantial and extend well beyond what could reasonably be considered acceptable within such a sensitive landscape.

We therefore have serious doubts that the long-term impacts on the region and its communities can be adequately avoided or mitigated.

We respectfully request that our objections be given full and careful consideration during the planning process and, in particular, that careful assessment be given to whether this location, given its landscape, ecological and tourism value, is an appropriate site for a wind energy development of this scale.

Yours faithfully,

Andrea Meuret and Carsten Hofrath