

Alan Coyle  
Geesala  
Ballina  
Co. Mayo

7 August 2026

**To:** An Coimisiún Pleanála

**Re:** Formal Objection to Proposed Muingmore Wind Farm Development  
**Planning Reference:** PAX16.324387

Dear Sir/Madam,

I wish to formally object to the proposed Muingmore Wind Farm development under Planning Reference PAX16.324308.

As a resident of the Geesala area, I have witnessed the significant efforts made over many years by local landowners, farming families, conservation organisations and public bodies to protect and enhance the unique natural heritage of this part of north Mayo. While I recognise the importance of renewable energy and support Ireland's transition towards cleaner sources of electricity, I believe that this particular proposal raises serious concerns regarding the protection of a highly sensitive rural landscape and the biodiversity that it supports.

## **1. Protection of the Corncrake and Sensitive Bird Habitats**

One of my principal concerns relates to the conservation of the corncrake and the wider network of habitats that support this iconic and endangered species.

For many years, considerable effort has been invested in protecting corncrake populations throughout the Geesala and north Mayo area. Local farmers have participated in conservation measures, adjusted traditional farming practices and worked alongside State agencies and conservation organisations to improve breeding success and safeguard suitable habitat. These efforts have required significant commitment from the local community over several decades.

This work has also been supported by substantial public investment. Following the successful Corncrake LIFE Project, the European Union committed **€4.35 million** to the **Natura Communities for Birds Programme**, recognising the importance of continuing conservation work for threatened bird species, including the corncrake, and supporting local communities in protecting these internationally important habitats.

The existence of this significant investment demonstrates the recognised ecological importance of this area and the value placed on preserving its biodiversity. It would be deeply concerning if a development of this scale were permitted without absolute confidence that these long-standing conservation achievements and the substantial public investment made to support them would not be compromised.

Although detailed environmental assessments accompany developments of this nature, I believe particular caution is required where internationally and nationally important bird habitats are involved. The cumulative effects of turbine operation, construction activity, increased human disturbance and associated infrastructure should be subject to the highest level of scrutiny.

Given the extensive investment by local communities, the Irish State and the European Union in protecting the corncrake and its habitat, I believe every precaution should be taken to ensure those efforts are not undermined.

## **2. Biodiversity and Ecological Impact**

The wider area supports an exceptionally rich range of habitats, including peatlands, wetlands, coastal grasslands and agricultural landscapes that provide important ecological value.

These habitats support numerous species of birds, mammals, insects and plant life and form part of an interconnected ecosystem that has developed over generations.

I am concerned that the construction and operation of a large-scale wind farm, together with associated roads, drainage works, cabling and other infrastructure, has the potential to fragment habitats and alter sensitive ecological systems.

Given the environmental significance of the area, I believe that all direct, indirect and cumulative ecological impacts require particularly careful consideration.

## **3. Landscape and Rural Character**

The landscape surrounding Geesala is recognised for its open, unspoilt character and outstanding natural beauty. The area's appeal lies not only in its scenery but also in its sense of openness, tranquillity and connection with nature.

The proposed development would introduce large industrial structures into a landscape that has remained predominantly rural for generations. Their scale, movement and visibility would permanently alter the character of the area and diminish many of the qualities that make north Mayo unique.

Once this landscape is changed, it cannot easily be restored.

## **4. Impact on the Local Community**

The natural environment has always formed an important part of community life in this area. Many residents take great pride in protecting the landscape and wildlife that make this part of Mayo distinctive.

Over many years, local communities have supported conservation initiatives, participated in environmental schemes and worked to preserve habitats for future generations. Those efforts,

together with the significant investment made through national and European conservation programmes, deserve considerable weight when assessing developments that may permanently alter the character of the area.

I believe that protecting biodiversity and preserving our natural heritage should remain a central consideration in the planning process.

## 5. Need for a Precautionary Approach

While renewable energy is an important component of national climate policy, its development should be carefully balanced against the protection of environmentally sensitive locations.

Where there is uncertainty regarding potential impacts on protected species, biodiversity or important habitats, I believe a precautionary approach should be adopted.

In my view, the ecological importance of the Geesala area, together with the extensive conservation work and significant public investment undertaken over many years, warrants the highest level of protection.

## Conclusion

For the reasons outlined above, I respectfully request that An Coimisiún Pleanála give full and careful consideration to the potential impacts of the proposed Muingmore Wind Farm on the unique biodiversity, protected habitats and landscape of the Geesala area.

In particular, I ask that the long-standing efforts to conserve and protect the corncrake, supported by both national initiatives and the European Union's **€4.35 million Natura Communities for Birds Programme**, be afforded significant weight in the assessment of this application.

In addition, I understand that the protected corncrake is present on lands within Folio MY48002 in close proximity to the proposed development. I have serious concerns that construction and the long-term operation of the wind farm could negatively impact this habitat and undermine years of conservation work.

I also seek clarification regarding the substantial concrete foundations and associated infrastructure. How will these impermeable surfaces affect natural water absorption? What measures are proposed to manage surface water runoff, and where will any overflow be directed to ensure neighbouring lands, peatlands and sensitive habitats are protected?

Finally, local residents are often required to demonstrate a genuine local connection when seeking planning permission. I respectfully ask what connection the companies promoting and funding this development have with the Geesala area, and why local residents are expected to satisfy such requirements while large commercial developers are not. I believe this issue deserves careful consideration in the interests of fairness and consistency.

Accordingly, I respectfully request that permission for the proposed Muingmore Wind Farm development be refused.

Yours faithfully,

**Gerard Alan Coyle**